



'Be Filled with the Beauty of Truth'

Now in its second season, Podcast from Springfield Catholic High School explores 'Theology of the Body'



▲ **PODCAST PRODUCTION**—Now in its second season, the "Be Filled with the Beauty of Truth," Podcast is being produced by a team at Springfield Catholic High School. Pictured at a recent production session were Sr. Cecilia Ann Rezac, MS, Director of Springfield Catholic Schools, Rachele Parker, Katie Davis, and Patty Straus. The Podcast explores the rich treasure of Pope St. John Paul II's "Theology of the Body," and its teachings about the human person and God's redemptive plan for humanity. (*The Mirror*)

Springfield, MO

What is Theology of the Body (TOB)? It is not a new doctrine, but rather a lens through which one is to look at the Catholic teachings about the human person and God's wonderful, redemptive plan for humanity. The TOB text is a compilation of Pope St. John Paul II's writings that he shared at his Wednesday audiences in St. Peter's Square, in Rome, from 1979-1984.

"The Holy Spirit is always active in our lives and when we listen, amazing things happen!" said Sr. Cecilia Ann Rezac, MS, Director of Springfield Catholic Schools.

"Several years ago, a group of lay people met to discuss ways to share with their children the truth about God's plan for them," Sr. Rezac said. "They wanted their children to have a solid foundation and to grow into compassionate, caring, and loving people while also holding on to the Truth."

This discussion led to further discussions, research, and the discovery of the **ROOTED** Curriculum provided by Ruah Woods. The TOB curriculum provided by Ruah Woods helps us to understand:

- God is completely in love with us personally.
- God's intense love for us is written in our bodies as we are made in His image and likeness.
- The goal and purpose of life is to receive and give God's love to others with our entire being.
- Flowing from all of the above, we will have a deep desire to live out the love of God all our lives.

In 2021, Bishop Edward Rice asked the Catholic schools and PSR programs (as they are able) of the diocese to implement

Theology of the Body (TOB) into their curriculum(s).

"What a blessing this has been for our Catholic schools and parish families," said Sr. Rezac.

Patty Straus, Rachele Parker, Katie Davis, and Sr. Rezac had already started to brainstorm ways to bring the rich teachings of Theology of the Body into the classroom. So, they found affirmation and inspiration in Bishop Rice's request to implement TOB curriculum: they dovetailed their efforts into the diocesan initiative.

"In order for TOB to take root in our schools and in our lives, it was realized that both faculty and families needed some additional education and training," Sr. Rezac said. It is strongly believed that if we, as parents and educators, embrace and live out the truths of Theology of the Body, we will be able to transmit them to our children/students in our everyday lives and conversations."

In the fall of 2021 and the spring of 2022, presentations for parents and professional development for faculty were provided to help introduce TOB concepts and to allow for question and answer periods. Both Fr. Patrick Nwokoye and Fr. Allen Kirchner along with staff from Ruah Woods joined in these endeavors and shared their theological expertise. Father Nwokoye is pastor of Holy Trinity Parish, Springfield, and the diocesan Ecumenical officer and Director of Health Affairs. Father Kirchner is the Lead Chaplain of Springfield Catholic High School and a Regional Vocation Promoter for the Diocese.

From these presentations further collaborations led to the idea of beginning a local Podcast to further explain and apply TOB to our

personal lives.

"Theology of the Body is not meant to remain a mental exercise but is a guide for living out our daily lives as God intended," said Sr. Rezac.

After much prayer and discussion, Patty Straus, Rachele Parker, Katie Davis, and Sr. Rezac embarked on the adventure of spearheading a Podcast dedicated to the teachings of Theology of the Body.

"This new Podcast is called the 'Be Filled' Podcast. It is an effort to help families grow in their faith and to raise their children in the truths of God's beautiful plan for humanity," Sr. Rezac explained. "This is a good way for people at all levels to be introduced to Theology of the Body. Whether they have never studied it and just want to understand the main points, or they've been studying it and want to go deeper—there is room for all!"

Sister Rezac indicated that after taking a couple weeks off over the holidays, the team will begin uploading Podcasts every two weeks.

"We now have a new sound system so we are so excited about the improved quality," Sr. Rezac said. "In fact, the first episode with our new sound system recently went live, and stars Fr. Allen as our guest speaker. He gives an overview of JPII's TOB that will set the stage for our starting to review the actual text."

All are invited to embrace the beauty of God's plan for the human person and join the "Be Filled" Podcast listening audience! The Podcast can be found at: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/be-filled/id1707876363> ©TM



The next issue of **The Mirror** will be **January 19, 2024**. Sign up to receive the diocesan newspaper via Email in digital format: Contact Debbie Thompson at (417) 866-0841, or Email: dthompson@dioscg.org.



LISTEN to the PODCAST:
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/be-filled/id1707876363>





COME, AND
YOU WILL SEE

Bp. Edward M. Rice

May the year 2024 be *annus mirabilis*

As we continue with the Eucharist Revival throughout the United States, hopefully each one of us is being challenged in our attitude and our understanding of the unique treasure the Eucharist is in the midst of the Church.

Every year a list goes out to the pastors assigning a date to each parish for an **Annual Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament which may be found on pp. 6-7 of this issue.** The Code of Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church, Canon 942 states, "It is recommended that in these churches and oratories an annual Solemn Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament be held for an appropriate period of time." The traditional three-day celebration is referred to as "**40 hours**," but if that is not possible, at least one day of Adoration from morning until night should be held, ending with Mass or Benediction.

Extended Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament requires organizing adorers who will give themselves the gift of an hour (or more) of time before our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. I was recently having a conversation where I recalled my time as head of the Adoration Committee for the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Archbishop Rigali wanted Adoration offered in every parish every week, whether it be a simple holy hour or a 24/7 chapel, whatever the parish could do. And it was then that I came to realize that our most precious commodity is not our money, but rather our time. If I were a missionary asking for a donation, people could donate and be done with it. But asking for an hour of someone's

time was like pulling teeth. And yet, when one gives oneself the gift of an hour before Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, it becomes contagious! People look forward to their time alone with the Lord, they hunger for it, a desire grows for the silent presence with Our Lord and the Blessed Sacrament.

IMPORTANCE OF THE MASS FOR A CATHOLIC

I know that many of our parishes follow the schedule for Solemn Adoration but possibly the pastor could use your help to organize adoration volunteers. Fr. Pius Parsch, who wrote amongst other things the four-volume commentary on the liturgy reflected:

"Whoever intends to live with the church must make the Holy Eucharist the primary concern of his or her life. But they can accomplish this only by participating as actively as possible with the priest in offering the sacrifice and by receiving Holy Communion as part of the sacrificial banquet."

That statement, I believe, would be the beautiful impetus for a Eucharistic Revival not just in our diocese, but throughout the Church. It implies a two-fold understanding of the importance of the Mass in the life of a Catholic.

First, the Eucharist should be the primary concern of life because it is the greatest act of worship. In the Mass, we offer the Spotless Victim to the Father. In the Mass, we are in union with

2024

Christ who offers to God his life, and to the extent that each one of us unites ourselves with that offering, we receive the fruits of Christ's sacrifice. In other words, what on earth is more important than the Mass? Second, in receiving Holy Communion, we receive the Body

and Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus himself. There is no greater way to be united with Our Lord than receiving him in Holy Communion. But to receive worthily, fruitfully, one must examine him- or herself spiritually before coming to the Eucharist and if aware of mortal sin, they should receive the Sacrament of Penance & Reconciliation before receiving Holy

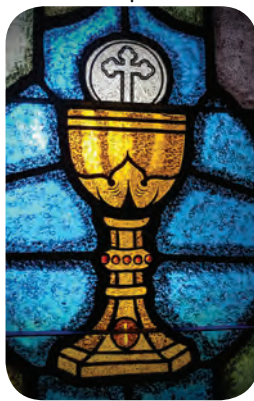
Communion. I am mindful of the quiet prayer the priest offers just before receiving Holy Communion, "May the receiving of your Body and Blood, Lord Jesus Christ, not bring me to judgment and condemnation ..." It is a daily reminder for the priest (and bishop) that he, too, must be in a "state of grace" to offer Mass and receive Holy

Communion worthily. If not, it leads to sacrilege and spiritual condemnation.

In 1992, after a fire in the royal palace and much family drama, the late Queen Elizabeth described the year as a "*annus horribilis*," a horrible year. As we enter into 2024, let our focus on the Eucharist set the tone for a "*annus mirabilis*," a wonderful, remarkable year, as we appreciate and grow in our love for Christ in the Eucharist. In the words of Pope St. John Paul II, "May our adoration never cease."

"O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, all praise and all thanksgiving, be every moment Thine."

Happy New Year to all and be assured of my prayers for a blessed new year of growing in holiness, becoming intentional disciples, and being sent to witness to the faith! ©TM



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Another Walk Through: 'Walking Together'

by Bishop Emeritus John J. Leibrecht

Before his retirement in 2008 as the Fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Bishop John Leibrecht wrote a standing column in *The Mirror* entitled, "Walking Together." At the end of each article, Bp. Leibrecht would normally share a funny story referencing his travels to the schools, or time with friends, family, or other bishops. *The Mirror* has decided to share a few of these in an ongoing series entitled, "Another walk through: 'Walking Together.'" We hope you enjoy them.

July 6, 1990 The discussion was lengthy regarding the possibility of building a new church. There was also a bit of confusion when the committee chairman tried to summarize the discussion. "I believe this is what we agreed to," he said. "We should build a new church; it is to be located on the site of the present church; material from the old church will be used in the new one; and, we shall continue to use the old building until the new one is completed."

July 20, 1990 A bishop told several of us about one of his priests, who is "a very fine fellow." The priest realized he was devoting too much time to golf, when he used an interlocking grip to elevate the chalice at Mass.

August 3, 1990 Two mothers were talking. "Before I got married," said the one, "I had four different theories about bringing up children." She added, "Now I have four children and no theories!"



VEN Y VERÁS

Obispo Edward M. Rice

Que el año 2024 sea un *annus mirabilis*



Mientras continuamos con el Avivamiento Eucarístico en todo Estados Unidos, espero que cada uno de nosotros estemos siendo desafiado en nuestra actitud y en nuestra comprensión del tesoro único que es la Eucaristía en medio de la Iglesia.

Cada año se envía una lista a los párrocos asignando una fecha a cada parroquia para una **Exposición Solemne Anual del Santísimo Sacramento**. El Código de Derecho Canónico de la Iglesia Católica de rito latino, Canon 942 establece: “Es aconsejable que en esas mismas iglesias y oratorios se haga todos los años exposición solemne del santísimo Sacramento, que dure un tiempo adecuado”. La celebración tradicional de tres días se conoce como “**40 horas**,” pero si eso no es posible, se debe celebrar al menos un día de Adoración desde la mañana hasta la noche, terminando con Misa o Bendición.

La Adoración Extendida del Santísimo Sacramento requiere la organización de adoradores que se darán a sí mismos el regalo de una hora (o más) de tiempo ante nuestro Señor en el Santísimo Sacramento. Recientemente tuve una conversación en la que recordé mi época como jefe del Comité de Adoración de la Arquidiócesis de Saint Louis. El Arzobispo Rigali quería que la adoración se ofreciera en todas las parroquias cada semana, ya fuera una simple hora santa o una capilla 24 horas al día, 7 días a la semana, lo que la parroquia considerara que podía hacer. Y fue entonces cuando me di cuenta de que nuestro bien máspreciado no es nuestro dinero, sino nuestro tiempo. Si yo fuera un misionero pidiendo una donación, la gente podría donar y listo. Pero pedir una hora del tiempo de alguien es como arrancarle una muela. Y, sin embargo, cuando uno se regala una hora de tiempo ante Nuestro Señor en el Santísimo Sacramento, ise vuelve contagioso! La gente espera su tiempo a solas con el Señor, tiene hambre de él, crece el deseo de la presencia silenciosa con Nuestro Señor y el Santísimo Sacramento.

IMPORTANCIA DE LA MISA PARA UN CATÓLICO

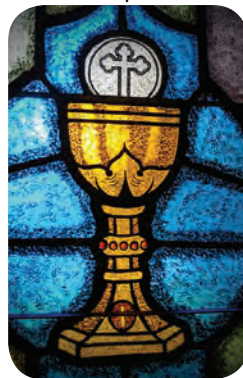
Sé que muchas de nuestras parroquias siguen el horario de la Adoración Solemne, pero

posiblemente al párroco le vendría bien tu ayuda para organizar a los voluntarios de la adoración. El Padre Pius Parsch, quien escribió, entre otras cosas, el comentario de cuatro volúmenes sobre la liturgia, reflexionaba:

“Quien pretenda vivir con la Iglesia debe hacer de la Sagrada Eucaristía la primera preocupación de su vida. Pero sólo pueden lograrlo participando lo más activamente posible con el sacerdote en el ofrecimiento del sacrificio y recibiendo la Sagrada Comunión como parte del banquete sacrificial”.

Esa afirmación, creo, sería el bello impulso para un Avivamiento Eucarístico no sólo en nuestra diócesis, sino en toda la Iglesia. Implica una doble comprensión de la importancia de la Misa en la vida de un católico.

En primer lugar, la Eucaristía debe ser la primera preocupación de la vida, porque es el mayor acto de culto. En la Misa, ofrecemos al Padre la Víctima inmaculada. En la Misa, estamos en unión con Cristo, que ofrece a Dios su vida, y en la medida en que cada uno de nosotros se une a esa ofrenda, recibe los frutos del sacrificio de Cristo. En otras palabras, ¿qué hay más importante que la Misa? En segundo lugar, al recibir la Sagrada Comunión, recibimos el Cuerpo y la Sangre, el Alma y la Divinidad de Jesús mismo. No hay mejor manera de unirse a Nuestro Señor que recibéndole en la Sagrada Comunión. Pero para



recibir dignamente, fructuosamente, uno debe examinarse espiritualmente antes de acercarse a la Eucaristía y, si es consciente de pecado mortal, debe recibir el Sacramento de la Penitencia y Reconciliación antes de recibir la Sagrada Comunión. Tengo presente la oración silenciosa que el sacerdote ofrece justo antes de recibir la Sagrada Comunión: “Que el recibir tu Cuerpo y tu Sangre, Señor Jesucristo, no me lleve al juicio y a la condenación...”. Es un recordatorio diario para el sacerdote (y el obispo) de que él también debe estar en “estado de gracia” para ofrecer la Misa y recibir

dignamente la Sagrada Comunión. Si no, conduce al sacrilegio y a la condena espiritual.

En 1992, tras un incendio en el palacio real y muchos dramas familiares, la difunta Reina Isabel describió el año

como un “annus horribilis”, un año horrible. Al entrar en 2024, dejemos que nuestra atención a la Eucaristía marque la pauta para un “annus mirabilis”, un año maravilloso y extraordinario, mientras apreciamos y crecemos en nuestro amor a Cristo en la Eucaristía. En palabras del Papa San Juan Pablo II, “Que nuestra adoración nunca cese”.

“Oh Sacramento Santísimo, Oh Sacramento Divino, toda la alabanza y toda la acción de gracias sean en cada momento tuyos.”

Feliz Año Nuevo a todos y tengan la seguridad de mis oraciones por un nuevo año bendecido en el que crezcamos en santidad, nos convirtamos en discípulos intencionales y seamos enviados a dar testimonio de la fe. ©TM

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Fr. Mark Binder, Co-Founder of Camp Re-NEW-All



By
Fr. Joshua
J. Whitfield

WHAT WE BELIEVE, PART 34: *Baptism in the Early Church*

Baptism's biblical themes remain salient in the theology and practice of the early Church. When we baptize an infant today, for instance, we don't immediately identify it with the death of Jesus. But in the early Church, they did. That's why it's worth our time exploring baptism as it was described and lived out in early Christianity. It helps us see better baptism's biblical essence.

Baptism in the early Church was a richer experience — biblically, culturally, psychologically, sensually — than it commonly is today. Fonts, for instance, (that is when Christians began using things like fonts) were often cut into the ground, tomblike in shape, sometimes with black floors. Some fonts have even been shaped like coffins. Also, in the early Church people were often baptized in the nude, as St. Cyril of Jerusalem put it, imitating Christ who hung naked on the cross (“Mystagogical Catechesis,” No. II.1). Perhaps the young man leaving his clothes at the foot of the cross in Mark 14:52 alludes to this practice. In some places, the newly baptized were given a bit of honey and milk to taste after baptism, a symbol of entering the Promised Land.

The Didache, basically a first- or second-century manual on Christian worship and practice, describes the ritual of baptism. “[I]mmers[e] in running water ‘In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit’. If no running water is available, immerse in ordinary water. This should be cold if possible; otherwise warm. If neither is practicable, then pour water three times on the head ‘In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit’” (Didache, No. 7). Baptism, according to this text, was to be performed in “living water,” that is, in a stream or river. Requirements such as these were less emphasized over time, obviously, as Christianity spread into areas where “living water” was perhaps less available or desirable. However, that baptism should be performed in the name of the Trinity, either by sprinkling or immersion, remained essential — as it does to this day.

In Matthew and in the Didache, we still see the command to baptize in the name of the Trinity. Also as in the Didache, we see the communal aspect of baptismal preparation. In the Didache, both the “baptizer and the baptized” are to fast before baptism (Didache, No. 7).

In an account from St. Justin Martyr, writing from second-century Rome, those already baptized are to pray and fast “with them,” that is, with those preparing for baptism. Here also we see



The fresco of the Baptism of Jesus. (Adobe Stock)

the traditional description of baptism as “illumination,” the spiritual liberation of the intellect to see things as they are. In Pseudo-Dionysius’s description of baptismal illumination, he wrote that first, the candidate for baptism had to admit “his lack of the truth beautiful” (“The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,” No. 396). Baptism was thought, you see, to be an initiation into light and truth, for Christ is light and truth (cf. Jn 8:12; 14:6).

But what’s the effect of baptism? Following the African theologian, Tertullian, like St. Justin Martyr, the effects of baptism were described in terms of cleansing, consecration, illumination and strengthening. He writes that in baptism the flesh is “cleansed,” “anointed,” “consecrated” and “signed.” These are all biblical images. The soul also is “fortified” and “illuminated.” The flesh is fed the body and blood of Christ, and the soul is “fattened on its God.” That is, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church states, baptism is a gateway and a door: it opens up for the baptized person new life in Christ and also life in the rest of the sacraments. Again, baptism is a kind of birth, after which that new life must be given the food necessary to grow — hence, the other sacraments.

We also learn a lot from St. Cyril of Jerusalem who clearly echoes Paul’s teaching, especially how the newly baptized are in Christ, taking on Christ, and sharing in his destiny. “Having been baptized into Christ and having put on Christ you have been conformed to the Son of God, for God predestined us to be adopted sons and made us to share in the likeness of Christ’s glorious body” (“Mystagogical Catechesis,” No. III.1). This is important because it makes clear

that baptism was not considered some mere symbolic ritual, but something more significant, more indelible. This was regeneration — a rebirth into a truly new life.

It’s a new life, in fact, in God himself. St. Augustine teaches this when he talks about baptism as the gift of the Holy Spirit, the gift which makes us one with the Father and the Son in the Spirit. The Father and the Son “wished us to have communion both with them and among themselves,” he wrote. So “the Holy Spirit who is God and the gift of God” is given in baptism, and by that gift, believers are “reconciled to the Godhead” and “enjoy the Godhead” (Sermon, No. 71.18). That is, in baptism believers are given the gift of sharing in God’s own life, sharing in his divine nature (cf. 2 Pt 1:4). It’s beautiful also how Augustine sees baptism as the way God accomplishes his desire to draw us into communion with him — the Father and the Son wished us to have communion with them. One can’t help but recall Jesus’s desire for his disciples in John 17:24 — which we explored at the beginning of What We Believe.

Baptism, in a sense, is the sacrament of God’s desire for us. I’ve said before, we can view the sacraments as sensual expressions of God’s love and desire for us. Isn’t that so beautiful?

These then are some of the themes salient in Catholic tradition regarding baptism. They’re the same as those found in the

Bible. Baptism is no mere ritual. Rather, it’s truly a rebirth in Christ. In baptism, we’re forgiven. We’re also given hope in all our moral struggles. Our mind is opened. We’re sealed and set apart.

We’re claimed by Christ, taken into his very life. As St. Thomas Aquinas said of it, Baptism “opens the gates of the heavenly kingdom” (“Summa Theologiae,” No. 3.69.7) Again, no mere ritual, we’re talking about something more real. The Church is no mere organization; it’s the body of Christ. The baptized Christian is no mere human being, but mystically and truly another Christ. We’re talking about something spiritually organic, to put it strangely. We’re not talking about some divine juridical act or some sinner’s acquittal, but about birth and growth in Christ as real children of God. We’re talking about a necessary rebirth, for how does one have life any other way? Which is why we Catholics have always insisted upon it. Because this is what baptism means.

NEXT EDITION: WHAT WE BELIEVE, PART 35

What About Infant Baptism?

Father Joshua J. Whitfield is pastor of St. Rita Catholic Community in Dallas and author of *The Crisis of Bad Preaching* (Ave Maria Press, \$17.95), and other books.

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“Our lives change when our habits change. Adopting the habits of Eucharistic Adoration will change every aspect of your life. We tend to emulate the people we spend time with. By spending time in the Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, we become more like Him.”

—EXCERPT FROM MATTHEW KELLY’S 33 DAYS TO EUCHARISTIC GLORY

Father Coon is Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Dexter. He serves the Diocese as Priest Minister for Spiritual Deliverance & Exorcism and the Confraternity of Priest Adorers of the Eucharistic Face of Jesus.

SCHS DECA recognized for Achievement Level Chapter Campaign

Springfield, MO

Springfield Catholic High School’s (SCHS) DECA was recently awarded the Membership Campaign for the 2023-2024 school year. Of the 3,800 DECA chapters, only 789 chapters earned recognition in DECA’s chapter campaigns.

DECA is a career and technical student organization that prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs with a career interest in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management. DECA enhances the preparation for college and careers by providing co-curricular programs that integrate into classroom instruction, apply learning, connect to business and promote competition. DECA student members leverage their DECA experience to become academically prepared, community oriented, professionally responsible, experienced leaders.

Each fall, DECA recognizes leading chapters that have built strong local programs focused on serving an exceptional number of members, advisors, alumni, and business partners. These chapters and individuals



START-UP BUSINESS PLAN—John Otto and Mary Avila-Wilkins, then juniors at Springfield Catholic High School, placed Third at the international competition for DECA (ICDC) in Orlando in May 2023. They competed in the Start-up Business Plan category and advanced through District and State competitions, and competed against 150 entries at the ICDC event to earn their Third place distinction. (SCHS)

dedicate their year to academic and career preparation, community service projects, membership recruitment, school outreach activities, and other DECA-related endeavors. The chapter’s advisor and student leaders have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to DECA.

“We have had great success at district, state, and international competitions over the past few years and our students are excited about the opportunities

for success in a professional business environment,” said Jody Pyle, SCHS DECA Advisor. “Having students advance throughout the competitions finding success at all levels – including a third-place finish at ICDC (our international competition) is creating excitement and motivating other students to join, compete and write their own success story! We grew our membership by 85% from last year and I’m really excited to see the rewards that this year’s competition season will bring.”

For more information about DECA, visit www.deca.org. ©TM

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ava—St. Leo Parish will have a **Fish Fry**, Fri., Feb. 23, 4:30-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$10, dine-in or carry-out.

Lebanon—St. Francis de Sales Parish will offer a **Eucharist Revival seven-week study**, “Jesus and the Eucharist,” beginning Wed., Jan. 10, 2024, 9:45 a.m., or an evening class at 6 p.m., in the Mumford building basement, located at 345 Grand Ave. For more information, contact Elizabeth Hempel, (417) 531-1399.

Sikeston—St. Francis Xavier Parish will begin a **Eucharist Revival seven-week study**, “Jesus and the Eucharist,” beginning the week of Jan. 21, 2024. Sessions will be offered Sunday, 4-6 p.m. and Thursday, 1:30-3:30 p.m., or 6:30-8:30 p.m. For questions or additional information, contact Toni Grojean, (573) 258-1172.

Springfield—Come and be present before our Lord during **Springfield’s Area Perpetual Adoration**. Hosted in Holy Trinity Chapel,

there is an urgent need of Adorers on Wednesdays, 3 a.m., Saturday, 8 a.m. and 9 a.m., and Sunday, 11 p.m. Substitutes are needed for all hours. For more information, or to sign up, please contact Marilyn Gibson at (417) 224-4043. Please consider spending time with our Lord in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Springfield—Praise & Worship Prayer Group offers a great opportunity to come together in praise, fellowship, and is a wonderful way to learn more about our faith. All are welcome to participate in a time of praise, inspired teaching, and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Thursday, 6:30-8 p.m., in St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, located at 2200 W. Republic Rd. Please join us! For more information, contact Shelly Pichler at (417) 838-2730.

Parishes and organizations are invited to submit notices of future events to be printed on a space-available basis. There is no fee.

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SCHEDULE OF ANNUAL SOLEMN EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

In the Code of Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church, Canon 942 states, "it is recommended that in these churches and oratories an annual solemn exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament be held for an appropriate period of time..." With that in mind, and in the spirit of our three-year Eucharistic Revival, please find the schedule for the observance of such in the parishes, missions, and institutions of the diocese. The bishop highly recommends that if the parish deems it unlikely to be able to have a three-day celebration, traditionally referred to as "40 hours," then at least one day of adoration from morning till night should be held, ending with Benediction. The dates given are coordinated with the other parishes of the Deanery. A change of dates can be approved upon request if it does not conflict with another parish or institution within the Deanery.

The following is a schedule for the observance of the Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the parishes, missions, and institutions of the diocese. Published Oct. 30, 2023, this schedule may contain some dates that have passed.

DEANERY I

CARTHAGE	Congregation of the Mother of the Redeemer	February 2, 3, 4, 2024
	St. Ann	February 9, 10, 11, 2024
JOPLIN	St. Mary	Thursdays
	St. Peter the Apostle	Wednesdays
LAMAR	St. Mary	Friday, March 1, 2024
NEOSHO	St. Canera	Sunday April 21, 2024
NOEL	Nativity of Our Lord	Sunday, May 5, 2024
SENECA	St. Mary	Sunday, June 9, 2024
WEBB CITY	Sacred Heart	Wednesdays

DEANERY II

AURORA	Holy Trinity	Friday, October 4, 2024
BILLINGS	St. Joseph	Wednesday evenings
CASSVILLE	St. Edward	Friday, September 20, 2024
GREENFIELD	St. Patrick	Wednesday, November 15, 2023
MONETT	St. Lawrence	Tuesday, February 6, 2024
MT. VERNON	St. Susanne	Friday evenings
PIERCE CITY	St. Mary	September 13, 14, 15, 2024
PULASKIFIELD	SS. Peter & Paul	Saturday, January 13, 2024
SARCOXIE	St. Agnes	Sunday, July 7, 2024
SHELL KNOB	Holy Family	Thursday, June 6, 2024
VERONA	Sacred Heart	Tuesday, February 27, 2024

DEANERY III

BOLIVAR	Sacred Heart	First Fridays, Second & Third Wednesday
BUFFALO	St. William	Sunday, February 4, 2024
CONWAY	Sacred Heart	Saturday, November 4, 2022
EL DORADO SPRINGS	St. Elizabeth of Hungary	January 5, 6, 7, 2024
HUMANSVILLE	St. Catherine of Siena	
LEBANON	St. Francis de Sales	Friday, January 5, 2024
MARSHFIELD	Holy Trinity	January 19, 20, 21, 2024
STOCKTON	St. Peter, Apostle	Sunday January 14, 2024

DEANERY IV

BRANSON	Our Lady of the Lake	Tuesdays, Thursdays
FORSYTH	Our Lady of the Ozarks	Wednesdays
KIMBERLING CITY	Our Lady of the Cove	June 2024
NIXA	St. Francis of Assisi	Friday, October 4, 2024
OZARK	St. Joseph the Worker	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays
SPRINGFIELD	Holy Trinity	Perpetual Adoration
	Immaculate Conception	Thursdays
	Sacred Heart	Fridays, Sundays
	Cathedral of St. Agnes	Mondays
	St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	Mondays
	St. Joseph	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays

DEANERY V

AVA	St. Leo the Great	Friday, November 10, 2023
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BUNKER	Trappist Monastery	January 5, 6, 7, 2024
CABOOL	Christ the King	Sunday, October 6, 2024
EMINENCE	St. Michael	Saturday, September 7, 2024
GAINESVILLE	St. Sylvester	Monday, April 22, 2024
HOUSTON	St. William	Wednesday, November 1, 2023
LICKING	St. Mark	Friday, March 22, 2024
MANSFIELD	St. John the Baptist	Every Second Friday
MOUNTAIN GROVE	Immaculate Heart of Mary	Sunday, December 3, 2023
MOUNTAIN VIEW	Sacred Heart	Friday, September 6, 2024
	St. John Vianney	Monday, November 13, 2023
	St. Francis Hospital	Monday, February 19, 2024
ROBY	St. Vincent de Paul	Saturday, October 19, 2024
SALEM	Sacred Heart	Sunday, June 2, 2024
THAYER	Sacred Heart	Sunday, January 14, 2024
WEST PLAINS	St. Mary	Thursday, November 3, 2023
WHITE CHURCH	St. Joseph	Sunday, October 20, 2024
WILLOW SPRINGS	Sacred Heart	October 11, 12, 13, 2024

DEANERY VI

ADVANCE	St. Joseph	Sunday, April 21, 2024
BENTON	St. Denis	Friday mornings
CAPE GIRARDEAU	Cathedral of St. Mary of the Annunciation	First Sundays
	St. Vincent de Paul	First Fridays
	St. Ambrose	February 23, 24, 25, 2024
CHAFFEE	St. Michael the Archangel	Thursday evenings
FREDERICKTOWN	St. Anthony	Saturday evenings (5-6 p.m.)
GLENNON	St. Marie du Lac	September 28, 29, 2024
IRONTON	Immaculate Conception	Tuesdays, & Fourth Sundays
JACKSON	St. Augustine	Thursday a.m. until Friday a.m.
KELSO	St. John	Daily before Mass
LEOPOLD	Our Lady of Sorrows	Sunday, September 22, 2024
LESTERVILLE	St. Lawrence	Friday mornings
NEW HAMBURG	Guardian Angel	April 26, 27, 28, 2024
ORAN	St. Joseph	Wednesdays
SCOTT CITY		

DEANERY VII

DEXTER	Sacred Heart	March 15, 16, 17, 2024
DONIPHAN	St. Benedict	First Fridays & Third Thursday
CARUTHERSVILLE	Sacred Heart	Friday, June 7, 2024
CHARLESTON	St. Henry	First Fridays
GLENNONVILLE	St. Teresa	September 27, 28, 29, 2024
KENNETT	St. Cecilia	Sunday, November 19, 2023
MALDEN	St. Ann	Sunday, November 12, 2023
NEW MADRID	Immaculate Conception	Sunday, June 2, 2024
PIEDMONT	St. Catherine of Siena	Sunday, March 3, 2024
POPLAR BLUFF	Sacred Heart	Tues., Wed., September 10, 11, 2024
PORTAGEVILLE	St. Eustachius	September 6, 7, 8, 2024
SIKESTON	St. Francis Xavier	January 5, 6, 7, 2024
VAN BUREN	St. George	Saturday, February 24, 2024
WILLIAMSVILLE	Our Lady of Sorrows	Saturday, September 14, 2024

◆ Prayers to accompany ◆
EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION



The Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau

DIVINE PRAISES

Blessed be God. Blessed be His Holy Name. Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man. Blessed be the name of Jesus. Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart. Blessed be His Most Precious Blood. Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete. Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary Most Holy. Blessed be her Holy and Immaculate Conception. Blessed be her Glorious Assumption. Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother. Blessed be Saint Joseph, her most chaste spouse. Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints.

May the heart of Jesus, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, be praised, adored, and loved with grateful affection, at every moment, in all the tabernacles of the world, even to the end of time. *Amen.*

BISHOP RICE MARKS FEAST DAY
with COMMUNITY



FEAST OF ST. SYLVESTER—Bishop Edward M. Rice celebrated the 4 p.m. vigil Mass on Dec. 30 in St. Sylvester Mission Church, Eminence, MO, for the Feast of the Holy Family (Dec. 31) and the Feast of St. Sylvester (Dec. 31). Pictured were Bishop Rice, Fr. Jim Unterreiner, retired, and Fr. Joseph Stoverink, Parochial Administrator. *(The Mirror)*

“O Sacrament most holy, O Sacrament Divine
All praise and all thanksgiving, Be every moment Thine!” (Repeat 3x)

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.
—St. Alphonsus Liguori

VIRGIN MARY, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, glory of the Christian people, joy of the universal Church, salvation of the world; pray for us, and awaken in all the faithful devotion to the Holy Eucharist in order that they render themselves worthy to receive it daily. *Amen.*



SHORT PRAYER BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

I adore you Jesus, true God, and true man, present in the Holy Eucharist, kneeling before you and united in spirit with all the faithful on earth and all the saints in heaven. In gratitude for so great a blessing, I love you with all my heart, for you are worthy of all praise and adoration. Lord Jesus Christ, may I never offend you with my lack of love. May your Eucharistic presence refresh me in body and soul. Mary, Mother of the Eucharistic Lord, pray for me and obtain for me a greater love for Jesus. *Amen.*

THE PARDON PRAYER

My God, I believe, I adore, I hope, and I love Thee. I beg pardon for all those that do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love Thee. *Amen.* (Repeat 3x)

THE ANGEL'S PRAYER OF FATIMA

O Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I adore Thee profoundly. I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrage, sacrileges, and indifferences by which He is offended. By the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg the conversion of poor sinners. *Amen.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE CRUCIFIX

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, while before Thy face I humbly kneel and, with burning soul, pray and beseech Thee to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity; true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment. While I contemplate, with great love and tender pity, Thy five most precious wounds, pondering over them within me and calling to mind the words which David, Thy prophet, said of Thee, my Jesus: “They have pierced My hands and My feet, they have numbered all My bones.” *Amen.*

We adore You, Most Holy Lord, Jesus Christ, here and in all the churches of the whole world, and we bless You because by Your Cross You have redeemed the world. Have mercy on us.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

**2024
DYC**

Into the Deep

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23 @ 6PM – SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24 @ 5:30PM
VIETNAMESE MARTYRS RETREAT CENTER
CARTHAGE, MO

FRIDAY, APRIL 19 @ 6PM – SATURDAY, APRIL 20 @ 5:30PM
PINECREST CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER
FREDERICKTOWN, MO

All Catholic teens in 7th–12th grade are invited to DYC: Into the Deep.



REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS MONDAY OF THE WEEK OF THE CONFERENCE

DYC: INTO THE DEEP IS A CONFERENCE WITH A RETREAT FEEL LED BY YOUNG ADULTS WHO ARE SHARING THEIR PERSONAL FAITH EXPERIENCE WHILE TEACHING ABOUT LIVING A LIFE IN CHRIST. TEENS WILL PARTICIPATE IN FUN GAMES, SPIRITUAL EXERCISES, PRAYER, DISCUSSION, AND MORE.



BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD-CAPE GIRARDEAU

WHAT IS DYC: INTO THE DEEP? Experience the Diocesan Youth Conference with a retreat atmosphere.

On Feb. 23-24, 2024, 21 college students and their leaders from Benedictine College will be joining us in Carthage, MO, to lead a special day of retreat for all youth in 7th-12th grade. On April 19-20, we will have young adult leaders from Benedictine College, St. Louis, and our own diocese, joining us in Fredericktown. Throughout the weekend, the conference/retreat will have a great balance of inspirational talks, guided small group dialogue, prayer, Adoration, Mass, Confession, and games. Please join with other teens from across the diocese for this powerful encounter with Christ at **DYC: Into the Deep.**

'THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE BEAUTIFUL' shows Catholicism through and through

By
Cecilia
Cicone

The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful: History in Three Dimensions, by Joseph Pearce, Ignatius Press (2023); 300 pages, \$19.95

Whether it's the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, or Galileo, the apparent missteps of the Catholic Church within history are commonly used as arguments against her claim to be the one true path to salvation. In his latest book, Joseph Pearce sets out to work through all of church history in hopes of identifying where God was actually at work, as opposed to where human impulses and evil influences appeared as wolves in sheep's clothing.

Each chapter of *The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful* summarizes one of the centuries making up the 2,000-year history of the Church. Pearce takes a trinitarian formula, based on Jesus' identity as "the way, the truth, and the life" and identifies where the Church, in that century, had been "Good," serving as the way of salvation; where she went "Bad," distorting the truth of God's love; and "the Beautiful" thing she produced as a lasting testament to God's majesty and the wonder he is due.

"The Good" of each century of Catholic history is what the reader is most likely to expect. The saints, most

especially martyrs who witnessed to the faith with their lives and their service to the poor and vulnerable, kept the church on the right path. Scholars such as Irenaeus and Thomas Aquinas revealed the divine through theological works. Widespread practice of the sacraments meant that people were continually given access to the grace they needed for salvation.

And yet, from even the first century of the Church, Pearce acknowledges that there have been forces working against the Holy Spirit, seeking to confuse, divide, and even destroy the Bride of Christ, beginning with rampant heresies and persecution. From the fall of Rome to Martin Luther—continuing to the Enlightenment and then two world wars—throughout her history the Church has been impacted by political and cultural events. *The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful*, demonstrates that although she is tossed and thrown at every age, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt 16:18).

The divine in a particular age

When Joseph Pearce discusses what is beautiful about each century of Church history, he looks primarily at the creation of art as a participation in

the transcendental good of "beauty" without excluding secular art. What is beautiful, he says, reflects not only human culture but also brings insight into the divine as the Creator has revealed himself in that particular age. From Augustine's *City of God* to Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* Trilogy—with many artists, writers, composers, architects, and more in between—the subsections of "The Beautiful" that close out each chapter are delightful expositions of how the popular culture of the day has continually and surprisingly fostered an encounter with God.

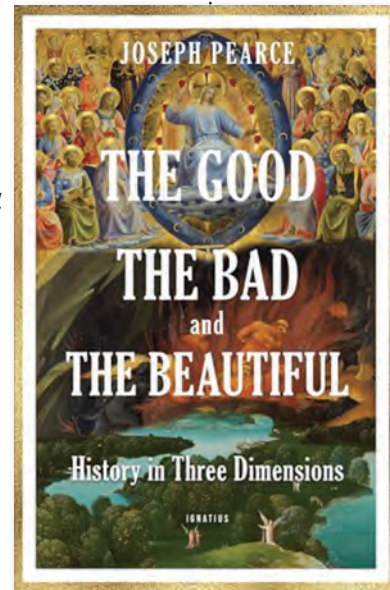
Pearce ends the book in the 20th century, however, without mentioning the realities that we now know and must face regarding clerical sex abuse and the cover-ups surrounding all kinds of misconduct. Given the cacophony of the other evils that took place in the last century, and that fact that the abuse

and misconduct issues primarily came to light in the 21st-century, this makes some sense, but at least mentioning the apparent evils being faced almost daily by the Church faithful might have made the book feel a bit more current and complete.

While *The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful* may be a bit dense for the casual reader, it is a real treasure trove for the history buff or a budding Catholic apologist. Each century is covered briefly, in only a few pages, hitting the highlights of the

time without getting bogged down in unnecessary details. In this book, Joseph Pearce has given the Church an incredible assist in seeing Catholicism's sometimes turbulent history within the light of God's loving plan.

Cecilia Cicone is an author and communicator who works in diocesan ministry in Northwest Indiana.



The 5th Annual
CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE
In cooperation with the diocesan Office of Evangelization

Featuring
Justin Fatica

Justin's powerful message will be a wake-up call to embrace new possibilities, break out of mediocrity, and live a life of authentic joy. Get ready - God wants to do something amazing in your life!

Saturday Feb. 24, 2024
at Springfield Catholic High School
Register for free now!

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You're Invited to join us for

THE ANNUAL DIOCESAN
WEDDING ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATIONS

SUNDAY, FEB. 4, 2024, 1:00 P.M. ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL, CAPE GIRARDEAU
SATURDAY, FEB. 10, 2024, 1:00 P.M. ST. AGNES CATHEDRAL, SPRINGFIELD

Couples celebrating their 1st, 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th, 50th, or 50+ anniversary anytime during 2024, please pre-register for one of the two Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Celebrations and receive a Marriage Anniversary Certificate from Bishop Rice.

In addition, those celebrating their 25th or 50th anniversaries will receive an Episcopal Blessing and a special gift from Bishop Rice.

Join us for Mass with Bishop Edward M. Rice, followed by a reception with light Hors D'oeuvres, cake, and punch. These occasions enable all of us to celebrate and affirm the great gift of marriage within our communities.

Please make plans to attend!

For us to properly prepare, we ask that couples RSVP by January 19, 2024. Register by scanning the QR code, or go to the Family Life page at dioscg.org

SCAN QR CODE TO REGISTER




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DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD-CAPE GIRARDEAU



Really want to end abortion? Then heal sexual brokenness

By Gina Christian

As pro-life advocates lament Ohio's decision to enshrine abortion in its constitution, I'm reminded of a Catholic high school pro-life seminar I covered several months ago, and what it revealed about our incomplete approach to the issue.

The event brought hundreds of students in a dreary auditorium to hear ministry leaders earnestly describe their approaches to ending abortion—the only pro-life issue on the agenda.

Some panelists extolled prayer and sidewalk counseling at abortion clinics; others stressed providing impoverished, abortion-vulnerable women with material support: housing, medical care, job training, etc. Another speaker urged the students to vote pro-life.

The teens listened politely but without enthusiasm.

Then a Sister of Life took the microphone, walked into the audience and looked around at the students.

"I want to tell you what the real problem is when it comes to abortion," she said to them. "And that is, **I just don't think you know how much Jesus loves you.**"

Suddenly, the teens were paying attention; in less than 10 seconds, that sister had hauled the pro-life issue from the mire of politics, social justice, religious infighting, and sexual ideology, and placed it back where it belongs: at the feet of the Lord, in that small sacred space between Creator and creature.

Being pro-life wasn't a matter of simply marching in demonstrations, collecting donations, and hosting prayer vigils, the woman religious said. Rather, it flowed from understanding who we are in Christ, and what God's intention is for our enfleshed souls and for human sexuality.



SMARTPHONE ILLUSTRATION—A person uses a smartphone. Suggesting that humans are struggling with deep sexual confusion and woundedness, reporter Gina Christian encourages us to accompany our youth as they develop sexually and to reach out to those who are confused about their sexuality, rather than leaving both camps to "figure things out" via social media on Instagram or TikTok, for example. (OSV News photo/Shannon Stapleton, Reuters)

In an era of profound sexual brokenness, Catholics desperately need to give such courageous and comprehensive witness. Without that, we cannot hope to end the scourge of abortion and every other attack on human dignity that manifests itself through the misuse of our sexuality.

Sexual confusion

The pro-life battle for hearts doesn't start at the threshold of the abortion clinic, and it doesn't end at courtrooms or state legislatures. Planned Parenthood founder (and ardent eugenicist) Margaret Sanger recognized the limitations of the law in regulating human sexual behavior. In "The Pivot of Civilization," her 1922 manifesto for birth control, she railed against "idealists and reformers who think that by the ballot society may be led to an earthly paradise."

Everywhere, humans are struggling with deep sexual confusion and woundedness, and with deadly consequences. More than 64 million abortions have taken place in this country since the procedure was legalized in 1973. Globally, some 73 million abortions are performed each year. That's about 6 million higher than the planet's total annual deaths in 2022, and 5.1 million more than the current population of the nation of France.

Meanwhile, the pornographic industry in the US, which grew almost 12 percent from 2017-2022, rakes in over \$1.1 billion in annual revenue. Some 4.5 million people worldwide, many of them children, are exploited by sex traffickers. An estimated 736 million women (almost one in three) across the globe have experienced sexual violence, most commonly due to a spouse or intimate partner—and that total does not include those who have been subjected to sexual harassment. In the US, 1.6 million people ages 13 and up consider themselves as transgender; almost one in five are ages 13 to 17.

None of that data mirrors what God had in mind when he gifted us with human sexuality. As Catholics, our faith challenges us to know and to do better, for ourselves and for humankind.

Before we can say we are truly pro-life, we need to undertake, both individually and collectively, a thorough sexual examen, and ponder the ways we have (or haven't) stewarded our sexuality,

regardless of our state in life.

We need to teach more effectively about chastity, which derives from the **cardinal virtue of temperance** and which enables us to attain an inner unity of body and soul.

We need to accompany our youth as they develop sexually, and not forfeit that task to Instagram.


We need to reach out to the single and the divorced, and to those who are confused about their sexuality, rather than leaving them to figure things out via TikTok.

We need to minister to those who have been sexually abused and work to recognize potential abusers before they become offenders.

Mostly, as a society, we need to grow up, stop treating our gift of sexuality like a ramshackle playground and look at it from a holistic, "body, mind and spirit"—dare I say "trinitarian" perspective. We must demonstrate a little humility before our Maker, that we might stand tall in the fullness of our humanity, living out our dignity as sons and daughters of God—and ensuring that others can do the same. ©CNS

Gina Christian is a national reporter for OSV News. Follow her on X, formerly Twitter, at @GinaJesseReina.

JANUARY 22:
*Day of Prayer
for the Legal
Protection
of Unborn
Children*


Join Bishop Rice for

HOLY MASS & ROSARY

Mon., January 22, 2024 5:30 p.m. Mass, Rosary (and Hot Chocolate afterward) <i>St. Agnes Cathedral, Springfield</i>	Fri., January 26, 2024 5:15 p.m. Mass, Rosary (and Hot Chocolate afterward) <i>St. Mary Cathedral, Cape Girardeau</i>
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A great prayer for life is urgently needed, a prayer which will rise up throughout the world. Through special initiatives and in daily prayer, may an impassioned plea rise to God, the Creator and lover of life, from every Christian community, from every group and association, from every family, and from the heart of every believer.
—Pope St. John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*

Office of Respect Life for the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau
dioscg.org/respect-life

OBITUARY // Sr. Joyce Christy, RSM



St. Louis, MO

Sr. Joyce Ann Christy, RSM, a Sister of Mercy, died on Jan. 1, 2024, at Catherine's Residence, in St. Louis, MO. She was 73 years old, and she passed away surrounded by several of her

many loved ones, including family and dear friends.

Sister Christy was born on Aug. 26, 1950 in Kansas City, MO, and baptized Joyce Ann Marie. She was preceded in death by her beloved parents Luther Arden and Violet Marie Kurtz Christy.

In 1991, Sr. Christy entered the Sisters of Mercy Community in Frontenac, MO. She was received in 1994 and professed her temporary vows on Aug. 24, 1996. She made her Perpetual Profession of Vows on Oct. 28, 2000, at the Motherhouse in Frontenac.

Sister Christy received her B.S. in Secondary Education at Arkansas

Tech University in Russellville, AR, on Aug. 1, 1973. On May 5, 2004, she was licensed by the Missouri State Board of Health after completing her studies in the field of Physical Therapy at St. Louis Community College. Her ministry included Teaching in Elementary Education in Concord Hill, MO; St. Louis, MO and New Orleans, LA. Her services as a physical therapist were provided at Surry Place in Chesterfield, MO 2004-2005; Mercy Hospital in Independence, KS 2009-2010; While she resided at then-St. John's Convent of Mercy in Springfield, MO, she served at Life Care Center in Waynesville, MO 2011-2012; St. John's Mercy Villa in Springfield, MO 2012-2013; prepared transitional planning to relocate and serve in St. Louis, MO 2013-2014. At the time of her passing, Sr. Christy was serving in a PRN position at Life Care Center of America in St. Louis, MO.

She lived in Community and shared with the Senior Sisters of Mercy at Catherine's Residence from

2013 until the time of her death.

Funeral Services for Sr. Christy will be in Catherine's Residence Chapel on Wed., Jan. 10, beginning with storytelling and sharing of memories at 10 a.m. At 11 a.m., a Funeral Mass will be offered in thanksgiving for the life and ministry of Sr. Joyce Christy. This liturgy will be followed by a noon meal in the Sisters' Dining Room.

Sister Christy wished to be buried in her hometown of Fort Smith, AR, where she spent many years from childhood through her adult years. That Funeral Mass will be celebrated at Immaculate Conception Church in Fort Smith on Fri., Jan. 19, 2024. Following her burial in Calvary Catholic Cemetery there in Fort Smith, all in attendance are invited to a special lunch in the Parish Hall of Immaculate Conception Parish from noon-2 p.m.

Please remember to pray for the happy repose of Sr. Christy's soul and the comfort and consolation of Our Loving God for all of those who cherish her life among us. ©TM

Papal calendar for 2024: Not full, but puts spotlight on major events

By Carol Glatz

Vatican City

As the new year begins, Pope Francis will be the oldest reigning pope since the early 1900s and the third oldest in history.

Having celebrated his 87th birthday in mid-December, Pope Francis' initial calendar for 2024 had just the essentials.

A full slate of the usual papal liturgies and meetings are scheduled; bishops will continue making "ad limina" visits; Argentina will have its first female saint; the Synod of Bishops on synodality will conclude in October; and the jubilee year opens at the year's end.

While doctors convinced the pope to cancel his scheduled trip to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, in December, he has continued to speak confidently about at least three countries he has on his wish-list for papal trips in 2024.

The pope told the Mexican news outlet N+ that a trip to Belgium is already "certain" and that two others, to Polynesia and Argentina, are being looked into. He did add that any long-distance trips would have to be "rethought" because of his age. Unlike his predecessors, Pope Francis has not returned to his native country since his election, nearly 11 years ago.

Belgium, which is just a two-hour flight away, would most likely be a one- or two-day trip to mark the founding of the oldest Catholic university still in existence in the world, the Catholic University of Leuven, which celebrates its 600th anniversary in 2025.

The only other trip local bishops have confirmed is to the Italian city of Verona May 18, 2024, to take part in Italy's annual Festival of the Social Doctrine of the Church.

Papal liturgies

January ushered in several traditional papal liturgies starting with welcoming the new year with Mass on the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and World Peace Day, followed by Mass on the Epiphany Jan. 6 and then Mass on the feast Baptism of the Lord Jan. 7 with the baptism of several infants.

The rest of the month includes the usual annual encounters with the diplomatic corps accredited to the Vatican Jan. 8 and meetings with the staff of the office responsible for public security at the Vatican, as well as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Jan. 18-25, concluding with an evening prayer service at Rome's Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

The new year also means a new round of "ad limina" visits by groups of bishops around the world. Bishops had made the visits every five years, but the

interval has grown over time to be about every nine to 10 years. Bishops from the African continent will be finishing up their visits in 2024, and those next in line include bishops from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, the Baltic states, Ukraine, Greece, the Koreas, and Japan. Their last ad limina visits were in 2015.

The pope is scheduled to meet with his international Council of Cardinals in February. Those meetings are usually held quarterly and on-going topics of discussion include: the "feminine dimension of the Church," the synod on synodality, and safeguarding minors.

It is difficult to predict if or when there will be any consistories to create new cardinals in 2024. Pope Francis has made it an almost annual event, but when he handed out red hats in September 2023, he brought the number of cardinal electors up to 137, well above the limit of 120 and the highest number since Pope St. John Paul II raised it to 135 in 2003.

Barring any deaths, the number of cardinal electors should be 132 in January, then down to 125 by June, and 119 by December as some cardinals turn 80 and are no longer eligible to vote in a conclave. Those approaching the cutoff include US Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley of Boston, who celebrates his 80th birthday June 29.

Beatifications & canonizations

For beatifications and canonizations, so far there is only one on the papal calendar for 2024.

Pope Francis recently authorized the canonization of Blessed María Antonia de San José for Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. An 18th-century Catholic laywoman who championed the Ignatian spiritual exercises in Argentina after the Jesuits were expelled, she will be the first female of Argentina to be canonized.

Pope Francis had wanted to go to Argentina to beatify "Mama Antula" in 2016 in Buenos Aires, where she is buried, but he could not fit the trip in because of other travel obligations. Announcing the date for her canonization, the Vatican did not specify where the ceremony would take place, so if the pope can travel back to his home country in 2024, this could be one of the highlights.

The 11th anniversary of Pope Francis' election is March 13, falling in the middle of Lent, which begins Feb. 14 and ends March 28. Holy Week will be busy with the usual slate of papal rites and ceremonies starting with Palm Sunday and its solemn ceremonial procession in St. Peter's Square March 24 and



POPE FRANCIS FEAST OF MARY NEW YEAR'S DAY—Pope Francis greeted a child as he accepted the offertory gifts during Mass for the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and World Peace Day on New Year's Day in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Jan. 1, 2024. As the new year begins, Pope Francis will be the oldest reigning pope since the early 1900s and the third oldest in history. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

culminating with the celebration of Easter March 31.

Among the nearly dozen "World Days" marked by the universal Church that come with a dedicated papal message, Pope Francis recently announced the first World Children's Day would be celebrated in Rome May 25-26.

The second assembly of the Synod of Bishops on synodality will be held at the Vatican in October, formally concluding a worldwide process that began in October 2021. While no actual dates have been announced, there was a motion at the end of the first assembly to make it three weeks instead of four.

Holy Year 2025

Then just as 2024 draws to a close, the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica will be opened Dec. 24 for the start of the Holy Year 2025. The other major basilicas of Rome also have Holy Doors, bricked up most of the time, which will be opened for the jubilee year.

The jubilee, usually held every 25 years, features special celebrations and pilgrimages, strong calls for conversion and repentance, and the offer of special opportunities to experience God's grace through the sacraments, especially confession. ©CNS

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FIVE EVENTS IN 2024 to help us be BETTER CATHOLICS

By Gretchen R. Crowe

As we flip the calendar to 2024, I must admit the thought of the coming 12 months fills me with a certain amount of dread. Entering into another election year, with all of the related political drama, can feel anxiety-inducing, to say the least.

Thankfully, as people of faith, we know that our hope is found not in political parties or their candidates but in Jesus Christ and his Church. So, instead of dreading the first Tuesday in November and the inevitably contentious lead-up, here are five events Catholics can anticipate with joy this calendar year.

The National Eucharistic Congress and related events

In the unlikely off-chance that you haven't heard, the first National Eucharistic Congress in the United States in almost 50 years will be held in Indianapolis in July. The event will include nationally-recognized speakers, opportunities for worship and Eucharistic adoration, and plenty of time to deepen one's understanding and love of the Eucharist.

The organizing committee has taken several steps to make the event more affordable for families in recent months, including adding the option of purchasing day passes. Leading up to the national event will be four pilgrimages, starting from different points in the country. And parishes will continue planning and holding events as part of the National Eucharistic Revival's parish year—events that Catholics should make every effort to participate in.

Synod on Synodality, Part 2

In October, the second part of the two-part Synod on Synodality will take place in Rome. After round one this past October, we have more of a sense of what to expect this year. We also have a synthesis document that we can continue to digest. And we have more ideas of how we might incorporate synodality in our parish communities and in our lives in general. It's always a good time to listen to and learn from one another, especially within the context of faith, but doing so in 2024 is particularly timely in the life of the Church.

Reopening of Notre Dame Cathedral in December

Five years ago this coming April, the world stopped in its tracks as flames devoured

portions of the historic and beloved Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. It was an event that brought nations together in sorrow. On Dec. 8, 2024, the world once again will come together—but this time in joy for the cathedral's scheduled reopening. "Never has anyone alive seen Notre Dame as we shall see it," Fr. Olivier Ribadeau Dumas, rector-archpriest of the cathedral, told OSV News in a recent interview. It's enough to make you want to book a flight to the City of Light to celebrate.

10 years since sainthood

On April 27, the church will mark 10 years since the canonization of Sts. John Paul II and John XXIII. This milestone offers us the chance to pause and reflect on these two monumental figures of the 20th century. "They lived through the tragic events of that century, but they were not overwhelmed by them," Pope Francis said at the canonization Mass. "For them, God

was more powerful; faith was more powerful—faith in Jesus Christ the Redeemer of man and the Lord of history; the mercy of God, shown by those five wounds,

and more powerful too was the closeness of Mary our Mother." This year is the perfect time to grow in devotion to these two saints who made such an impact on the church.

A new jubilee year

Finally, the start of the 2025 ordinary jubilee year, a time of great grace for the church, will begin on Dec. 24, 2024, with the opening of the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica. Pope Francis has asked that Catholics worldwide prepare for the jubilee year by studying the documents of the Second Vatican Council, especially its four constitutions. The pope has also asked that Catholics enter into a year of preparatory prayer in 2024. To that end, forthcoming from the Dicastery for Evangelization will be an "in-depth series" called "Notes on Prayer" that will promote "the centrality of prayer, personal and communal," according to Archbishop Rino Fisichella, pro-prefect for the dicastery.

We might be facing a contentious election season this year, but we can never forget how much we have to look forward to. May your 2024 be filled with joy. ©OSV

News

Gretchen R. Crowe is the editor-in-chief of OSV News.



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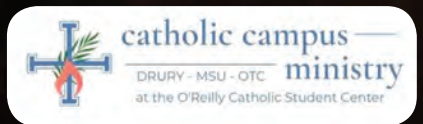
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Diocesan Missionary Co-Operation Plan Report 2023 as of Nov. 21, 2023

The annual report of the Missionary Cooperation Plan (MCP) throughout the diocese by Society for the Propagation of the Faith (SOPF) deaneries. The amount raised by each parish within each deanery of the diocese is listed along with the total sent to each missionary group that we supported this year in our diocese. This report was correct as of Nov. 21, 2023. Thank you for your generosity in supporting the missionary work of the Church. ©TM

Deanery 1: Society of Lady of Most Holy Trinity	Springfield, Holy Trinity	2,868.25	Oran, Guardian Angel	1,488.00	
Carthage, St. Ann	1,736.50		Scott City, St. Joseph	971.00	
Greenfield, St. Patrick	172.00	Total	10,247.90		
Joplin, St. Mary	3,400.00	Deanery 4b: Society of Our Mother of Peace			
Joplin, St. Peter	3,127.55	Nixa, St. Francis of Assisi	1,272.00	Deanery 7a: Society of St. Paul	
Lamar, St. Mary	540.00	Springfield, Immaculate Conception	5,725.25	Caruthersville, Sacred Heart	1,334.00
Neosho, St. Canera	1,089.52	Springfield, Sacred Heart	00.00	Charleston, St. Henry	884.00
Noel, Nativity of Our Lord	723.76	Springfield, St. Agnes Cathedral	2,391.00	Kennett, St. Cecilia	737.00
Seneca, St. Mary	569.00	Springfield, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	6,225.00	New Madrid, Immaculate Conception	806.00
Webb City, Sacred Heart	6,355.12	Springfield, St. Joseph	2,279.85	Portageville, St. Eustachius	1,540.00
Total	17,713.45	Total	17,893.10	Sikeston, St. Francis Xavier	3,531.00
Deanery 2: Mary Mother of God		Deanery 5: La Salette		Total	8,832.00
Aurora, Holy Trinity	1,061.00	Ava, St. Leo	584.00	Deanery 7b & 6b: Heralds of the Good News	
Billings, St. Joseph	1,600.40	Bunker, Christ the King	195.00	Dexter, Sacred Heart	1,261.00
Cassville, St. Edward	568.00	Cabool, St. Michael	00.00	Doniphan, St. Benedict	57.00
Monett, St. Lawrence	3,413.82	Eminence, St. Sylvester	106.00	Fredericktown, St. Michael	1,691.00
Mount Vernon, St. Susanne	757.00	Gainesville, St. William	1,489.00	Glennonville, St. Teresa	1,118.25
Pierce City, St. Mary	1,119.00	Houston, St. Mark	298.00	Ironton, Ste. Marie du Lac	1,278.00
Pulaskifield, SS. Peter & Paul	550.00	Licking, St. John the Baptist	628.00	Lesterville, Our Lady of Sorrows	60.00
Sarcoxie, St. Agnes	2,010.00	Mansfield, Immaculate Heart of Mary	420.00	Malden, St. Ann	458.00
Shell Knob, Holy Family	886.00	Montauk, St. Jude Chapel	00.00	Piedmont, St. Catherine	979.00
Verona, Sacred Heart	626.17	Mountain Grove, Sacred Heart	840.00	Poplar Bluff, Sacred Heart	20.00
Total	12,591.39	Mountain View, St. John Vianney	825.00	Van Buren, St. George	302.00
Deanery 3: Apostles of Jesus (STAR Academy)		Roby, St. Vincent	861.00	Williamsville, Our Lady of Sorrows	178.00
Bolivar, Sacred Heart	2,491.50	Salem, Sacred Heart	919.00	Total	7,402.25
Buffalo, St. William	625.00	Thayer, Sacred Heart	411.00	Special: Vincentians	
Conway, Sacred Heart	443.00	West Plains, St. Mary	2,136.00	Carthage, St. Ann	398.00
El Dorado Springs, St. Elizabeth	280.00	White Church, St. Joseph	250.00	Total	398.00
Humansville, St. Catherine	80.00	Willow Springs, Sacred Heart	987.00	Special: Star Academy	
Lebanon, St. Francis de Sales	750.00	Total	10,949.00	Kimberling City, Our Lady of the Cove	45.00
Marshfield, Holy Trinity	1,456.89	Deanery 6a: Vincentians		Total	45.00
Stockton, St. Peter	707.00	Advance, St. Joseph	718.00	Total MCP	\$115,869.45
Total	6,833.39	Benton, St. Denis	629.25	Total St. Peter	-\$1,158.69
Deanery 4a: Indian Mission Society		Cape Girardeau, St. Mary Cathedral	4,390.97	Total Office Expense	-\$4,634.78
Branson, Our Lady of the Lake	3,204.00	Cape Girardeau, St. Vincent	6,447.00	Total MCP Sent	\$110,075.98
Forsyth, Our Lady of the Ozarks	507.00	Chaffee, St. Ambrose	1,050.00		
Kimberling City, Our Lady of the Cove	2,361.65	Glennon, St. Anthony	1,205.00		
Ozark, St. Joseph the Worker	1,307.00	Jackson, Immaculate Conception	3,736.00		
		Kelso, St. Augustine	1,033.75		
		Leopold, St. John	915.00		
		New Hamburg, St. Lawrence	380.00		

Note: Each missionary group received the total collected from the region less five percent which was sent to the Society of St. Peter (1%) for the education of missionary priests and to cover the expenses for the MCP program (4%).

Thank you for your generosity in supporting the missionary work of the Church!



The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Rev. Glenn Eftink, *Director* | eftinkf@gmail.com | 573-722-3504 | St. Joseph Church, PO Box 640, Advance, MO 63730-0640

Beginning Feb. 1, 2024, Deacon Mark Kiblinger will be taking over as diocesan Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith (SOPF). He may be reached via USPS to: "Society for the Propagation of the Faith" | Deacon Mark Kiblinger | Mission Coop and World Mission Sunday collections | 1930 Oak Hills Dr., Cape Girardeau, MO 63701