Jan Smith retires after 42 years

By Leslie Eidson & Paula Wright

In this season of gratitude, the Diocese of Springfield—Cape Girardeau is grateful for Janet L. Smith, who served for 42 years, three months, and three days in service to the Church of Southern Missouri. Jan Smith retired on Aug. 31, 2023, as diocesan Chief Financial Officer, a title she’s held since 1993. Smith was hired by Msgr. Thomas Reidy on May 28, 1981, as a bookkeeper. We share only a part of her long legacy here:

Brief bio
Janet L. Morhaus was born on Dec. 28, 1944, Feast of the Holy Innocents, in St. Louis, the oldest of four children. Member of St. Francis de Sales Parish in South City; moved to South County, Affton, in 1951, a member of Seven Holy Founders Parish. Smith attended Catholic Elementary School and Bishop DuBourg High School. Parents: John W Morhaus and Mary Ann Morhaus, nee Sprenke. She had one brother and two sisters: Brother, Robert, died in 2015; sister, Nancy, and husband, David, live in Michigan; sister, Marilyn, lives near Chicago.


“I have four beautiful granddaughters: Taryn, (husband Ryan), Alexa, Violet, and Lilly,” Smith said.

What makes you think it is time to retire?
Well, it’s time. It is the right thing to do for The Catholic Center and for the Church. Because of my age, ... not that there’s anything wrong with me (laughter). I will be 79 in December. So, it would not be smart to keep on and not have someone in this position. It’s time: No one else is going to work until 79 ... if in their right mind (laughter)!

When did you start at the diocese?
I started with the diocese 42 years ago, on May 28, 1981. At the time, the offices were housed downtown (Springfield) on the square, in the McDaniel building. There was a barbershop downstairs and DeSales Catholic Bookstore was still there. In 1981, the square was a dangerous place, there just wasn’t anything around there. I often had to work nights and weekends, so I was there by myself.

I took the bookkeeper position. Back then, there wasn’t a single computer. It was “pre-everything”! We had a big, huge old-fashioned bookkeeping machine with cards that would come in and out. Anyone using the machine had to press down very hard to get the type/print on the cards. In 1982, we started working on getting our first computer. We finally got word processors in the ministry office. When you think about it, it was hard work. There was some physicality to it.

What do they do before you?
Prior to me, there was a bookkeeper, but when I started, they had been gone for a while. It was Fr. [Tom] Reidy (Vicar General and Chancellor) and (the accounting firm of Baird, Kurtz, and Dobson) BKD had been doing some bookkeeping while he didn’t have anybody here. But bookkeeping was also simple, it wasn’t anything like it is now. There wasn’t anything like fund accounting, there weren’t investments. So, it was relatively simple to do it, it was manageable.

It was a lot of hard work. When we moved to computers and were able to computerize, it really helped a lot.

What year was that?
We probably got our first computer in 1984. That was when Bishop (Bernard) Law went to Boston and Bishop John Leibrecht was on board. I was still doing an awful lot of things by hand. At the time, everything was brand new. I always did the payroll by hand, we just gradually transitioned to computers. I had worked on them before, doing accounts payable and data entry, so I knew what I

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3...
What may we do to make Advent less ‘frantic’, more prayerful

With all my heart, that things will be different, that there will be a true reason for celebrating once again ... if Jesus is truly the Reason for the Season, then every day should be Christmas. It is always beneficial to look at how we celebrate our faith. As we enter into the season of Advent, could we maybe learn a lesson from this woman’s own experience? What could you do to make the weeks leading up to Christmas less frantic and more prayerful? How about extra Mass during the week? Find out when your parish is offering confession and make that a part of the season. Invite family members to go with you to confession. I have always recommended the practice of making a visit to the parish church or to one of our adoration chapels whenever one goes shopping during the Advent Season. By being more intentional, more focused on the sacraments, we can sanctify this season which can become so hectic.

CHRIST THE KING

I was recently given an Advent book based on the writings of Padre Pio, Advent and Christmas, Wisdom from Padre Pio (2005). The forward of the book gets to the very heart of the matter when he writes “What do you seek on earth if not God?” He then writes, “As the holy feast of Christmas approaches, I feel obliged in conscience not to let it pass without wishing you a Christmas full of those heavenly consolations which your heart desire.” Let every heart be prepared to receive Him anew.

We end our liturgical year with the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus, King of the Universe, celebrated this year on Nov. 26. I always look forward to going to Bunker to celebrate Mass and participate in their tradition of crowning the statue of Christ the King that overlooks the highway.

May the end of the liturgical year give us pause to reflect on all the blessings that have been given to us over this past year.

“O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine. All praise and all thanksgiving, be every moment Thine.”

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.

March 23, 1990 Mom and dad put the luggage in the trunk of the car, the children in the back seat, and were finally ready to leave for vacation. A neighbor called out: “How long will you be gone?” “Oh,” the father said, “For about $800.”

March 30, 1990 I am deeply grateful to all who extended their personal good wishes to me recently when I celebrated my 34th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. To the special pleasure of my Irish mother, my ordination was on St. Patrick’s Day. Many thanks for your phone calls and cards. The personal artwork of school children was a delight. The front of one very colorful, hand-made card from a second-grader simply read: “CONGRATULATIONS!” The inside was totally taken up with a huge drawing of the number “34” and the single word “WHEW!”

April 6, 1990 Fr. Ray Orf told the story about the first grader in St. Augustine School, Kelso, who was informed by Sister that their pastor had just been named a monsignor. After class the child came to Sister with a worried look on her face. She asked, “Why did the Bishop make Fr. Orf a monster?”

A GRATEFUL CHURCH

celebrates and recognizes the following ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES in December:

PRIESTS

Fr. Andrew Williams, Dec. 14, 5 yrs.
Fr. James Unterreiner, Dec. 18, 53 yrs.
Fr. Ernest Markert, Dec. 18, 53 yrs.
Fr. Jeffrey Jambon, LC, Dec. 22, 22 yrs.
Fr. Jose Kumbalumkal, CMI, Dec. 26, 33 yrs.
Fr. Antony Thekkkanath, VC, Dec. 26, 36 yrs.
The Very Rev. Leo Arockiasamy, HGK, Dec. 27, 16 yrs.
Fr. John F. Friedel, Dec. 27, 37 yrs.
Fr. Mathukutty Naduchirayil, VC, Dec. 27, 14 yrs.
Fr. Bibin Mathew, CMI, Dec. 29, 9 yrs.
Fr. Sobhan Thanippallil, VC, Dec. 30, 14 yrs.
wanted them to do for us. At that time, everyone and their brother were trying to get computers into their business.

Prior to joining the diocesan Chancery office, what did you do?
I started at Ralston Purina Company in the legal department in the tax division. Then we moved to Wichita (KS) and I worked for the NBC affiliate there and I did payroll and their accounts payable.

Did you become director of finance in 1993?
Yes, that was when Frank Muetzel retired and we split the job between Development and Properties, and Finance. We combined Properties and Development and Tom Walmsley was hired, and I was made Director of Finance. This was after the Canon Law changes in 1983, so there were more titles. It was revised for more accountability and transparency. It was actually defined in the revised Canon Law what the Chief Financial Officer’s responsibilities were, and what the Finance Council was supposed to do. It took a while for it to be translated into the local levels.

Tell us a little bit about the financial growth of the diocese?
When I started, there was one $100,000 CD, and that was the extent of our investments for the entire diocese. And today we are at...well, the trust funds in the diocese offering foundation assets; we have over $80 million in managed investments. It has been over 40 years, so it has been a long, long time. The diocese is very stable and doing well.

Besides the work you did yourself, what do you attribute this growth to?
To the people and the growth of the Church over the last 40 years. The diocese is a single corporation, and I think there is a level of trust with the parishes and schools knowing they will do well by having their money on deposit with the diocese. Also, for their foundations and their endowment funds managed here at The Catholic Center on their behalf.

What is the role of the diocesan Finance Council?
The Finance Council provides oversight of the actual investment managers, not the actual investments, but the managers themselves and their counsel to the Bishop. I am considered “staff” to them, and we have a close working relationship. There have been multiple people who have served on these councils over the years, and they have all been really, really good and engaged. They have been supportive of the Church and hold our investment managers accountable. They do a nice job with that. The investment committee is a committee of the finance council. There are additional people who are on the investment committee that are not on the finance council, but there is an overlap. I am grateful for the people that have served in those roles, we have always had a great working relationship, they are truthful, honest, and dedicated.

You have been instrumental in the diocese offering benefit package(s), including retirement, to its employees, with Christian Brothers?
When I came there were no benefits for the lay people. The Catholic Center had a small health insurance plan, but none of the other benefits in existence. So, all of that happened during my time.

What was the genesis of that for you?
Oh, pushing the envelope. You know, you have to take care of your lay people and you have to want people to work for you, you have to make sure that they can thrive. Staffing has probably stayed about the same, actually. When Bishop Law was here (1973-1984), we had expanded staff from what we have today. Currently, we are pretty lean, but we still do a lot of really good work: small but mighty.

What guidance would you give to keep the diocese going for the next 40 years?
The parishes and schools have to foster endowments. They provide the schools and parishes a stable income. Perhaps not enough to run the institution, but it adds value to the regular income. We need to do something to just have more education about estate planning. The planned gifts for the regular operational ministry of the parish or school.

It is interesting to discover how economically, and easily, one can make a $100,000 gift to a parish or school.
That is why if you are charitably inclined, you need to be working with your attorney to come up with a good way to do that. We do have quite a few people who have funded specific endowments through their planned gifts. We are grateful for them because they have funded especially the schools’ scholarships and they are impactful. At the same time, even if you don’t have the capacity for that level of giving, having an endowment available for people to contribute to, the principle is protected forever, it is the gift that keeps on giving. I think endowments really have supported the Church, the parishes, and the schools in the diocese in my time here. A big part of the job is tracking the investments.

Moving forward, what do you see as key things we need to keep in mind?

We are a product of our times. It is really hard [for the Church] to be what we could be because we are so influenced by our world today. And our world today is not easy. If you buy in and are skeptical and mad at everything—half the population is “for,” and half the population is “against” anything you want to talk about—and that applies to the Church, too. There isn’t a unity like there used to be. I am not sure how to get that back. It is a God thing. The Church has to go forward. We have to move into the 21st century. Looking backward and saying the past was so wonderful isn’t helpful, it is not the answer for me. I am...
**Eucharistic miracles** are God’s extraordinary interventions, meant to confirm faith in the real presence of the body and blood of the Lord in the Eucharist. We know the Catholic teaching on the real presence. With the words of consecration: “This is my body,” “This is my blood,” whereby the substance of bread becomes the body of Christ, and the substance of wine His blood. Of the bread and wine there remain only the appearances or species, which, with a philosophical term, are called accidents. In other words, only the dimensions, color, taste, smell, and even the nutritive capacity remain. But the substance, the true reality does not remain, for where the consecrated Host had dissolved in the water: “Immediately we noticed that the Host had not dissolved, and that a red spot covering a fifth of its surface appeared. We decided to inform the Bishop, who established a special theological scientific commission to analyze the event. We noticed that over time, the stain on the Host changed color from deep red to red brown (...). The sample was taken directly by the scientists on 26 January 2014 for the analysis. The Pomeranian Medical University’s Department of Histopathology in Szczecin announced that “tissue fragments containing fragmented parts of cross-striated muscle” were found in the histopathological image. This is similar to “human heart muscle with alterations that often appear during the agony. We have not tested the blood found on the Host, we only know that human DNA was found.”

The results of the analysis were presented to the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which recognized the supernatural nature of the event. It is striking that the examination results were similar to those of the Lanciano Eucharistic Miracle of 700 AD and other Miracles that occurred recently such as Sokolka in 2008; in Poland, the Lanciano Eucharistic Miracles of the World, an international exhibition designed and created by Blessed Carlo Acutis, the Servant of God. All rights reserved; used with permission. More information may be found at http://www.miracolieucaristici.org/en/liste/list.html.

**The Very Rev. Shoby M. Chettiyath, V.G.**

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NOTRE DAME TO HOST OPEN HOUSE

Cape Girardeau, MO

N otre Dame Regional High School, Cape Girardeau, will host an Open House on Wed., Dec. 6: Doors open at 6 p.m.; Open House begins at 6:30 p.m. Open Houses are designed for parents and their children in sixth through eighth grade to take a first-hand look at a one-of-a-kind high school.

Open House guests will learn about the school’s mission and philosophy and see how it lives out that mission by spreading the philosophy and see how it lives about the school’s mission and talk with current students, parents, faculty, and administrators. Advanced registration is required at www.notredamehighschool.org/openhouse. @TM

For more information contact:
Meg Garner, Assistant Director of Advancement for Enrollment Management
(573) 335-6772 ext. 310 meggarnar@notredamecape.org

VIRTUS Excellence Builds Trust

Protecting God’s Children®

The VIRTUS Protecting God’s Children Safe Environment training for adults is available online.

Preregistration is necessary: If you are a new registrant please go to www.virtus.org and click on “first time registrant” on the left, and follow the prompts to register for Online training. Instructions for the registration process can also be found on the Child and Youth Protection Page of the diocesan Website.


Both in-person and online training sessions are for adults only.
Before engaging in activities involving minors and/or vulnerable adults, new volunteers or employees are required to complete the VIRTUS Protecting God’s Children training for adults, submit a current Background Disclosure and Authorization Form, and read, sign and submit the annual Code of Conduct, which are available on the VIRTUS Website and the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau Child and Youth Protection Webpage: www.dioscg.org/child-youth-protection/

For more information, please contact the Office of Child and Youth Protection,
childandyouthprotection@dioscg.org; or Bill Holtmeyer, billholtmeyer@dioscg.org; or Shelly Ferry, sferry@dioscg.org, (417) 866-0841.

NOOTRE DAME TO HOST OPEN HOUSE

Sintendent of Schools


The Mirror OnLine: www.dioscg.org

SUN., DEC. 10 7:00 PM
Annual Christmas Concert featuring the Concert Choir, Treble Choir & Men’s Choir at Old St. Vincent Church. We invite choir alumni to join us for the finale!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT Notre Dame Regional High School office@notredamecape.org

In all circumstances, give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.
—1 Thes 5:18

From The Mirror staff: Debbie, Leslie & Paula
The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin."

In 1854, Pope Pius IX’s solemn declaration, “Ineffabilis Deus,” clarified with finality the long-held belief of the Church that Mary was conceived free from original sin. Mary was granted this extraordinary privilege because of Her unique role in history as the Mother of God. That is, she received the gift of salvation in Christ from the very moment of her conception.

Even though Mary is unique in all humanity for being born without sin, she is held up by the Church as a model for all humanity in Her holiness and Her purity in her willingness to accept the Plan of God for her.

Every person is called to recognize and respond to God’s call to their own vocation in order to carry out God’s plan for their life and fulfill the mission prepared for them since before the beginning of time. Mary’s “Let it be done to me according to Thy Word,” in response of the Angel Gabriel’s greeting, is the response required of all Christians to God’s Plan.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is a time to celebrate the great joy of God’s gift to humanity in Mary, and to recognize with greater clarity, the truth that each and every human being has been created by God to fulfill a particular mission that he and only he can fulfill.

“The word of the Lord came to me thus: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.” (Jeremiah 1:5-6). “

December 8 is a Holy Day of Obligation. Please consult with the local parish for time(s) for the Celebration of the Eucharist.
New Mountaintop Homes to serve homeless/at-risk veterans

Mount Vernon, MO

Bishop Edward M. Rice recently joined members of O’Reilly Development Company, LLC, the Mt. Vernon Area Chamber of Commerce, and staffers of Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri (CCSOMO) in the Oct. 23 blessing and groundbreaking ceremony for Mountaintop Homes.

Aptly named, Mountaintop Homes, a new construction community in Mt. Vernon, MO, pays homage to the town and the 11.4 acres on which it sits north of Highway I-44 and adjacent to the Missouri Veterans Commission.

The goal of this 42-unit community developed in partnership between O’Reilly Development and Catholic Charities, is to provide a means to a better life through safe, affordable, and inclusive housing. Mixed-Income families and Homeless/at-risk Veterans alike will prosper in a diverse and inclusive environment fostered by CCSOMO with access to its extensive resources and community connections.

“We’re grateful for partnerships like this that are crucial in addressing a known national public policy issue locally,” said Ken Palermo, Chief Executive Officer of CCSOMO. “The housing model planned for this project focuses on affordable housing while offering supportive stability for residents and the Mt. Vernon community.”

OUR LADY’S INTERCESSION

A development the first of its kind in the City of Mt. Vernon, Bishop Edward Rice buried a Miraculous Medal in the earth at the community, calling upon Our Lady to bless the project and all those served in her intercessory care.

“We are thankful for the valuable resources and programs that Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri will bring to the Mountaintop Homes community, through their robust residential buildings will be designed in a two-level townhouse model with a modern aesthetic nestled among the office/community space/playground to provide a purposeful, community focused space. All units will be similar in design and

self-sufficiency. The Housing Resource Coordinator will provide clients access to housing stability case management, rental and financial assistance, and supportive services, including aid in attaining mainstream benefits, employment opportunities, and community resources to achieve stability in housing.

An on-site Housing Resource Coordinator will break down many of the barriers that research shows keep low-income families from accessing needed resources and services. Examples of barriers include transportation, childcare, access to mental health services, and lack of trust.

MOUNTAINTOP HOMES IS GREEN

The project will meet the requirements of the NAHB National Green Building Standard. The green practices include lot design, preparation, and land development, resource, energy, and water efficiency, indoor environmental quality; and operation, maintenance, and building and owner education.

For more information, visit OReillyDevelopment.com or ccsomo.org.

OUR LADY’S INTERCESSION

Bishop Edward Rice buried a Miraculous Medal in the earth of the future Mountaintop Homes community in Mount Vernon, MO, calling upon Our Lady to bless the project and all those served in her intercessory care. The 42-unit new construction will serve mixed-income families and homeless/at-risk veterans with access to the extensive resources and civic connections of Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri.

(O’Reilly Development Company)
7 ways to say ‘thanks’ to God

By Bill Dodds

Most of us were toddlers when we learned to say “please” and “thank you.”

We were a little older when we fell into the habit of asking, begging, nagging, whining, “Please, please, please, please, please, please, please, please, please!!!”

Older still when we began to try bargaining. If you give me this … “If you let me do that …”

Then, “I’ll never ask for anything else again.” (Yeah, sure.) “I’ll do my homework right after …” (Insert laugh here.)

Perhaps not surprisingly, our relationship with God tended to follow the same track. Almost always ready, willing, and able to ask politely. More than a little slow with the thank-you note. If we even remembered to write it and mail it. Or email it. Or text it.

If we even remembered to say it with more than a passing “thank you” in the same tone and sincerity we may have used in years gone by when our mother would pointedly ask, “What do you say?”

So how do we—how can we—sincerely say “thanks” to our Heavenly Father? Well, thankfully our Creator has given us a lot of ways to do just that. Here are seven of them:


No doubt you know the word “eucharist” is from the Greek for “thanksgiving” or “gratitude.” But, of course, uppercase-“E” Eucharist refers to Mass and the Blessed Sacrament. When the Catechism of the Catholic Church asks “What is this sacrament called?” its first answer is “Eucharist, because it is an action of thanksgiving to God.”

Great! Go to Mass. A done deal.

Next.

Not so fast. It’s an action of thanksgiving, which certainly implies us doing something there besides stand, sit, kneel, walk up for Communion, stay for a closing hymn and head out the door. Without our actively taking part in the Mass—praying with others, offering our own private prayers, reverently receiving the Blessed Sacrament, joining in the singing—then we’re pretty much like that child blurtting a fast and nearly thoughtless “thank you” to appease Mom.

2. Do what Jesus told us to do.

Uh oh. What does that mean for us? Yes, he said take part in the breaking of the bread in memory of him (Lk 22:19), but he also mentioned something about “love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 13:34).

What better way to show gratitude for the gift of faith than to live the faith?

How do we live it? Love as Jesus loved.
And how do we do that? Find out by spending some time this year—each month, each week, each day—reading about how he did it. Spend time “praying” the Gospels.

Then, too, living the faith—living our gratitude to God—means living the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Sometimes that can be particularly challenging, but other times it’s pretty simple. Small choices throughout the day can develop over time into virtuous habits that make us more inclined and better prepared to tackle those challenging opportunities.

3. Don’t put a gift from God in your sock drawer.

What? Sometimes we receive a gift from a family member or friend and quietly tuck it away in a dresser drawer. It’s not something we need, want, know how to use or even like.

When we do that with a gift from God it runs counter to what Jesus taught in the Parable of the Talents (Mt 25:14-30). The lesson? Use what God gives you!

Maybe he gave you an ability to teach so that, one way or another, you need to be a “teacher.” (Beyond the classroom, there are lots of ways to help others learn.) Maybe you’re quite the baker. Or mechanic. Or listener. Or comic. Or motivator.

Sometimes a gift becomes a profession, but, not infrequently, it’s an avocation. (You’re the one who supplies those marvelous casseroles for funeral receptions.)

Pay attention to the talents God has given you, develop them, and use them to help others.

4. Say ‘thank you’ to others—and mean it.

Consider this: In describing the Last Judgment, Jesus said, “What you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me” (Mt 25:45). So part of what you can easily do for others throughout this new year, which is this gift from God, is thank them. “Thank you” to the store clerk. Your child’s teacher. The Sunday homilist. And on and on.

5. Write it down.

This makes a great New Year’s resolution. One that’s easy to keep track of. And hard to cheat on.

Even those who hold little stock in religion or spirituality have discovered keeping a daily journal or log of people, events and things for which they’re grateful helps them mentally and physically.

You—lucky you, thank God—have that added layer or, more accurately, that foundation of Catholicism. Jotting down a few things at the end of every day can be a prayer of thanksgiving. Why? Because you know the source of all goodness, blessings, grace and love.

6. Take care of yourself.

Not taking your health for granted is a key way of thanking God for the priceless gift that is good health.

Sometimes that’s relatively simple. Paying a bit more attention to including fruits and vegetables in your diet. Flossing. Cutting back on screen time to get more sack time.

But sometimes taking care of yourself can take a lot of effort, such as getting into a program that helps a person overcome an addiction.

Going to a mental health professional to learn how to better handle past or current issues that can be physically, mentally or emotionally crippling is also a good step.

Taking care of yourself also means going to confession. Sometimes that’s simple; sometimes that’s so very, very difficult. Turning to God in that way is a form of self-care that can be easily overlooked but it’s one that has, well, eternal consequences. What a great way to thank God for your immortal soul.

And, one more:

7. Avoid ingratitude.

Try to be thankful and not fall into the habit of feeling like “I deserve this.” Thank God that God doesn’t give us what we deserve! ©OSV News

Bill Dodds writes from Washington.

©OSV News
Then, of course, in just eight short months, there will be the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis.

“Every movement needs a moment,” the Website says. “This is ours.” A lot of time and money planning is going into this national event, and it’s exciting. We’re going, and I hope you go, too.

But it’s also one event. What about the in-between times? What about the times when our parishes are not bringing in a speaker, or facilitating small group discussions, or coordinating special devotions? What about the times when we will not be gathered together by the thousands, being affirmed in our faith and encountering the Lord together? It’s in these in-between times that the habits of daily life are formed, and where virtue is born.

4 Eucharistic tips

This time of year offers us a prime opportunity for getting serious about our own personal revival in the Eucharist. With the start of Advent in a few weeks, we will begin preparations to welcome the Prince of Peace into our homes. Here are a few things we could do to draw closer to him in the Eucharist:

1) Make time for some spiritual reading on the Eucharist. In particular, sit and pray with the treasure that is St. John Paul II’s encyclical on the Eucharist, “Ecclesia de Eucharistia,” available from OSV for purchase or on the Vatican’s Website for free. If you’ve never read it, or have read it 100 times, there’s always more to glean from it, if we make the time.

2) Speaking of making time, any personal Eucharistic revival has to start with our own commitment of time spent in the presence of the Eucharist. Maybe we’re being called to attend daily Mass for Advent, or perhaps make a weekly holy hour. Or maybe you do both of those things, and the Lord is asking you to up the ante and make a daily holy hour! Pick something and commit to it.

3) Try really paying attention to the words of the Eucharistic prayer during Mass. I’ll be the first to admit, it can be easy or tempting to lose focus during this part of the liturgy. But try to really focus. Read along if it helps. Ask Jesus to quiet your mind and center your heart on him.

4) Once we learn more about Christ, spend more time with him, and seek to better understand his saving love for us in the Mass, the natural next step is to resolve to bring Christ to others. Perhaps there’s an opportunity to bring your kids to adoration—or your parents, a friend, or a sibling. Maybe, once you’ve read and enjoyed a book on the Eucharist, you could share it with others. Most importantly, we bring our Eucharistic Lord to the world through our love of and sacrifice for others.

We’re just about halfway through with the revival, which wraps up on Pentecost 2025. Let’s embrace the opportunity for renewal this Advent. ©OSV News

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

DURING THIS EUCHARISTIC REVIVAL, FR. DAVID COON OFFERS THE FOLLOWING BRIEF REFLECTION FOR CLERGY AND PARISHES:

“One drop of the Precious Blood of Jesus is enough to save the world. And one crumb of the Body of Jesus is enough to save the world. He gives His whole Self to me. I can not but give my whole self to Him.”

—FR. MIKE SCHMITZ

Father Coon is Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Dexter. He serves the Diocese as Priest Minister for Spiritual Delivernace & Exorcism and the Confraternity of Priest Adorers of the Eucharistic Face of Jesus.
WHAT WE BELIEVE, PART 32:
What is Different about Jesus’ Baptism?

From Peter’s sermon in Acts of the Apostles, we learned that baptism has always mattered. It has been commanded by Jesus himself since the beginning. The command that believers should receive baptism goes back not to Pentecost but at least to Easter. We see this at the end of the Gospels of Mark and Matthew: after Jesus’s resurrection, in his instruction to the disciples. “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned” (Mt 16:16). It’s a command given to all, to “every creature.” But notice here that although Jesus says whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, he doesn’t say whoever is not baptized will not be saved. Only those who do not believe will be condemned. This is an important point. The natural and normal logic of belief is that if one believes, then one will be baptized.

Jesus’s command in Matthew’s Gospel is slightly different. “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” This, for Matthew, is how the command to baptize precedes the resurrection. Such is the form of baptism still practiced by Christians around the world today: a baptism with which I must be immersed. At the very least, Christian baptism was similar to John’s baptism and these other prophetic washings in its mechanics. But yet it was different. John the Baptist himself said as much (cf. Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8). But how?

In John’s Gospel, we get a brief indication of Jesus’s practice of baptism, but it’s somewhat mysterious. First, we hear that after his midnight conversation with Nicodemus, “Jesus and his disciples went into the region of Judea, where he spent some time with them baptizing” (Jn 3:22). However, a few verses later, John wants to make clear that it was “only his disciples,” not Jesus, actually doing the baptizing (cf. Jn 4:2).

But still, how is the baptism of Jesus different from that of John? To answer this question, we should turn to that famous chapter in John’s Gospel — John 3 — detailing Jesus’ midnight conversation with Nicodemus. In that conversation, Jesus tells Nicodemus that to see and to enter the kingdom of God, one must be born again or from above. Nicodemus thinks Jesus is talking about a physical rebirth — again — but that’s not what he’s saying. Jesus means anōthen in a more spiritual sense. The rebirth Jesus is talking about is “of water and Spirit.” That’s how a person may “enter the kingdom of God” (Jn 3:3-5). The baptism of Jesus, therefore, is about a rebirth from above, allowing the one reborn to see and enter the kingdom.

But it’s not just about seeing and entering the kingdom of God. In Mark, we see Jesus identify baptism with his death. When James and John foolishly ask to sit beside Jesus in glory, he asks them, “Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” (Mk 10:38). It’s a figure of speech we don’t use much anymore. The cup here calls to mind the cup of his suffering and death, an image Jesus himself used (cf. Mt 26:29; Mk 14:36; Lk 22:42; Jn 18:11). It’s the same in Luke and John. “There is a baptism with which I must be baptized, and how great is my anguish until it is accomplished!” Jesus says in Luke (12:50). Notice the words “it is accomplished.” In John, Jesus repeats these same words from the cross (cf. Jn 19:30). The earliest Christian readers of the Gospels would’ve picked up on that; they would’ve made that connection. For our purpose, though, it simply uncovers yet another layer to the meaning of Christian baptism: that it’s also somehow a participation in the death of Jesus.

So the baptism of Jesus is different from John’s baptism. It’s a rebirth in water and Spirit, which is also seeing and entering the kingdom of God, which is also mysteriously somehow identified with the death of Jesus. And also Jesus commands it: all believers are to receive baptism. It doesn’t appear to be optional. But there is a lot more to learn. For that, however, we’ll need to turn to Paul.

What We Believe, Part 33
Baptism and Our Life in Christ

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.

“What We Believe, Part 32: What is Different about Jesus’ Baptism?” by Fr. Whitfield is from simplycatholic.com, copyright © Our Sunday Visitor; all rights reserved, no other use of this material is authorized.
Spiritual Mentors ready to provide spiritual direction

Saint Vincent de Paul parishioners Debbie Schumer, and Julie Schuchardt, recently completed the two-year Catholic Spiritual Mentorship program. Upon completion of the program, sanctioned by Archbishop Joseph Naumann and the Holy Family School of Faith of the Archdiocese of Kansas City, KS, Debbie and Julie are now commissioned to serve persons in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau as Spiritual Mentors. Schumer is the wife of Deacon Tom Schumer, who is another resource for spiritual direction.

The two-year course of study combines eight distance-learning courses with four one-week intensive sessions offered in-residence at Savior Pastoral Center in Kansas City, KS. The course aims to form mentors who are called to serve as guides and companions with others on their journey to holiness. Designed for Catholics that have a desire to develop a deep prayer and sacramental life, the program helps participants to increase their knowledge of the Catholic faith and to grow in the virtues while equipping them to help others to do the same.

More information on the Catholic Spiritual Mentorship program may be found Online at: https://schooloffaith.com/spiritual-mentorship

To get in touch with the Spiritual Mentors, feel free to Email:
Julie Schuchardt: ericjulie94@gmail.com
Debbie Schumer: debraschumer@gmail.com
Deacon Tom Schumer: thomas.schumer@semocatholic.org.

OBITUARY // Sister Jo Ann Fellin, OSB

Atchison, KS

Sister Jo Ann Fellin, OSB, 89, a Benedictine sister of Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, KS, died on Sun., Nov. 19, 2023, at the monastery. The vigil service will be Friday, Nov. 24, at 7 p.m. in the monastery chapel, and the Mass of Resurrection will be celebrated on Sat., Nov. 25, at 10:30 a.m.

Sister Fellin was born in Marshfield, Mo., the youngest of three children. After finishing high school in Springfield, MO, she attended Mount St. Scholastica College in Atchison, KS. In 1956, she entered the Mount Benedictines and then earned her MA and PhD from the University of Illinois, Urbana, IL. Sister Fellin taught mathematics at Mount St. Scholastica (later Benedictine) College for 40 years. In her religious community, she served on the community council, senate, formation team, and numerous committees. In honor of her Aunt Mary, she established the Fellin Lecture series to bring noteworthy women speakers to Benedictine College. In addition, she received many awards, including the Benedictine College Distinguished Educator award and both the Kappa Mu Epsilon Distinguished Member and Distinguished Service awards. She also produced an extensive body of presentations and articles on various aspects of mathematics.

Sister Fellin was preceded in death by her parents, Peo Fellin and Anna Millie (Sperandio). She is survived by her brother, Phillip, and sister, Rose Marie, nieces and nephews, and her monastic family.

Arensberg-Pruett Funeral Home (www.arensbergpruett.com) is in charge of arrangements. Memorials may be sent to Mount St. Scholastica or made Online at the Mount S. Scholastica Website (www.mountosb.org). ©TM
Catholics must not join Masonic groups, membership remains serious sin

By Carol Glatz  Vatican City (CNS)

Catholics are still forbidden from joining Masonic organizations and, with an increasing number of Catholics joining Masonic lodges in the Philippines, the Vatican has urged the nation’s bishops to find a way to make clear the church’s continued opposition to Freemasonry.

“Membership in Freemasonry is very significant in the Philippines,” said a note from Cardinal Victor Fernández, prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, and approved by Pope Francis.

“It involves not only those who are formally enrolled in Masonic Lodges but, more generally, a large number of sympathizers and associates who are personally convinced that there is no opposition between membership in the Catholic Church and in Masonic Lodges.”

The dicastery’s note, dated Nov. 13 and made public Nov. 15, was a response to a request from Bishop Julito Cortes of Dumaguete, Philippines, “regarding the best pastoral approach to membership in Freemasonry by the Catholic faithful.”

The bishop had voiced his concern about “the continuous rise in the number of the faithful enrolled in Freemasonry” in his diocese and asked the dicastery “for suggestions regarding how to respond to this reality” from a pastoral point of view, including its “doctrinal implications.”

The dicastery wrote “that active membership in Freemasonry by a member of the faithful is forbidden because of the irreconcilability between Catholic doctrine and Freemasonry” -- a position that was reiterated by the doctrinal congregation in its “Declaration on Masonic Associations” in 1983 and the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines in 2003.

Therefore, it said, “those who are formally and knowingly enrolled in Masonic Lodges” -- including clerics -- “and have embraced Masonic principles fall under the provisions in the above-mentioned declaration.”

The 1983 declaration states that Catholics enrolled in Masonic associations “are in a state of grave sin and may not receive Holy Communion.”

The dicastery said it notified the Philippines’ bishops’ conference that “it would be necessary to put in place a coordinated strategy among the individual bishops” to address the issue appropriately.

The strategy should include both a doctrinal and a pastoral approach, it said, proposing the bishops “conduct catechesis accessible to the people and in all parishes regarding the reasons for the irreconcilability between the Catholic faith and Freemasonry.”

“The Philippine bishops are invited to consider whether they should make a public pronouncement on the matter,” it added.

The Catholic Church has long denounced Freemasonry; in particular, Pope Leo XIII, in the late 19th-century, insisted “there is no opposition between membership in Freemasonry and, with an increasing number of Catholics joining Masonic lodges in the Philippines, the Vatican has urged the nation’s bishops to find a way to make clear the church’s continued opposition to Freemasonry.

Saint Francis Healthcare System will recreate the scene of Jesus’ birth with its fifth annual outdoor Live Nativity. Come and experience the true reason for the season on Fri., Dec. 15, from 5-7 pm. Invite your neighbors, friends, and family to follow the Star of Bethlehem to the Saint Francis Cancer Institute (Entrance 6) and witness this truly special event.

“This is such a special event. We are honored to follow in Saint Francis of Assisi’s footsteps by providing this free visual reminder for our community,” said Stacy Huff, Executive Director of Saint Francis Foundation. “Jesus is the core of everything we do at Saint Francis. He’s what drives us and the reason we celebrate Christmas.”

Volunteers will take on the roles of Mary, Joseph, wise men, shepherds, and angels. The event will feature live animals, including cows, camels, four-horn sheep, and a donkey. Parking is available near the Cancer Institute.

In case of inclement weather, event status updates can be seen at www.sfmnc.net or the Saint Francis Healthcare System Facebook page. To learn more about the event, visit sfmnc.net or call (573) 331-5177. ©STFA
By Jaymie Stuart Wolfe

As we slide toward the end of another liturgical year and the Solemnity of Christ the King (Nov. 26), war in the Holy Land is sadly dominating the headlines once again. So are reports of not just threatened but actual attacks against Jews around the world. To borrow from General Douglas MacArthur, it’s proof that old demons never die, and they don’t just fade away either.

But how should Catholics understand and interpret what is going on in our world?

The persecution of Jews is one of humanity’s oldest surviving “hate crimes,” though I hesitate to use that term. Long before Christians were crucified, stoned, beheaded, or thrown to wild beasts, the Jewish people were an object of scorn and discrimination. Oppression and deportation began as early as 605 BC, under the Second Babylonian (or Chaldean) Empire. Less than two hundred years before Christ, Jesus is still a Jew and always will be. The Incarnation of Christ in Mary’s womb means that Jewish humanity is seated at the right hand of the Father.

As Catholics, we owe a significant debt of gratitude to the Jewish people. Everything we believe is rooted in what God entrusted to and revealed through them. As Jesus himself reminds us in the Gospel of John, “Salvation is from the Jews” (Jn 4:22b). And if we need a more specific list, St. Paul is more than happy to provide one. Saddened by his own people’s rejection of Christ, he states, “They are the Israelites; theirs the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; theirs the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen” (Rom 9:4–5).

Anti-Semitism has continued to rise around the world for the past decade, but what has unfolded since the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on Israeli civilians demands our attention and response. This month, most of us likely didn’t observe the 85th anniversary of Kristallnacht, the Nov. 9, 1938, “night of broken glass” orchestrated by Nazi leaders against Jews in German-controlled territories. That night, 30,000 Jewish men were arrested and sent to concentration camps. It was the first mass arrest of Jews. Kristallnacht signaled a change. Anti-Semitism that had been expressed socially and by words exploded in acts of terrorism and violence.

October 7 may be our generation’s Kristallnacht. Our most important response is more personal than public. There is no room in Catholic hearts for hatred toward Jews. If we view God’s chosen people as enemies, if anti-Semitism is something we have been taught, we must repent of it. Of course, that doesn’t mean we should be silent about ongoing injustices in the Holy Land, or war crimes that may be committed by Israel or any other country. Nor should we harbor hatred toward Muslims or anyone else. Our calling is love.

The world can be ugly, yet hope remains. Jesus Christ, King of the Jews, is also the supreme ruler of heaven and earth. He is still on the throne. His kingdom is justice and peace, and his reign eternal. And it can begin here and now in every human heart. ©OSV News

Jesus is still a Jew and always will be.

POPE BENEDICT XVI PRAYED AT WESTERN WALL IN JERUSALEM—Pope Benedict XVI prays at the Western Wall, Judaism’s holiest prayer site, in the Old City of Jerusalem May 12, 2009. The pope left a written prayer in a crevice of the wall. It appealed to God to bring “your peace upon this Holy Land, upon the Middle East, upon the entire human family.” (OSV News photo/CNS,Catholic Press Photo)
to the presbyterate. I was the first woman to speak at the Priest Institute about internal [financial] controls, and he sent me a note congratulating me.

**Is that where the nickname ‘Frau Schmidt’ came from?**
Oh yes, (laughter). Bishop Law lovingly started that, and few other priests would also call me that. It was a compliment!

**You were a wife and mother when you started?**
Yes, I had a three-year-old and two teenagers when I started. It was a lot, there was no staff support at the time and a lot to do and manage.

**What heartbreak have you suffered?**
Over 40 years, you lose a lot of folks in your family and a lot of folks here. When I think back over the 40 years, so many people I have worked with, and the clergy have gone on to heaven.

I have lost my dad, my mom, my brother, and my son, all gone. It’s okay, it is part of life, it just happened to be that I was under one roof the whole time and I am still here. And that is why it has been a blessing to have such a community here. We went for years without anybody changing, and then suddenly, everybody changed with many recent retirements!

The only one that has more seniority than me is probably Msgr. (Tom) Reidy. He began here in 1967 at St. Agnes, and was made Vice Chancellor in 1972, named Chancellor in 1974, Vicar General in 1981, and retired in 2019, so 45 years on staff for the diocese. (Laughter) He never would have made it without me. I always said I was his other brother, and my son, all gone. It’s okay, it is part of life, it just happened to be that I was under one roof the whole time and I am still here. And that is why it has been a blessing to have such a community here. We went for years without anybody changing, and then suddenly, everybody changed with many recent retirements!

**What inspired you the most about each bishop?**
They have all been great, each one different from the other...their personalities and their style. I think their styles served them well. Each one, all four, was open, welcoming, caring, and engaged with the people. Bishop Leibrecht, Bishop Johnston, and Bishop Rice have all had to be one with their car. They really had to appreciate the magnitude of the diocese because of the time and miles they put in their cars, they had to be able to embrace that. I don’t think that I ever heard one of them complain about that. They may have been tired, but they were all happy to be wherever they were, and just to be present for the people. I always felt that I had their trust. They always had my back. Each one was so different and so good. There is no comparison, all really good men, and each really in love with the Lord.

**You are a trailblazer, sometimes the only one in the room.**
I have been that most of my time here. I have a note in my file from Bishop Law because when I first came here, I sent some internal control documents...
I have known Jan for 33 years since I first started my career. I learned a lot from her and have always admired her and looked up to her. I attribute her influence to helping me improve at my job. She was a delight to work with and I will miss her dearly. I wish her all the best and happiness in retirement. She has been a pillar to the Church.”

– Julie Allen, Catholic Mutual Group

“Jan was the first customer I called on when I started 30 years ago. She was, and is, tough, and demanding but so kind and fair. She served on two boards and trustees for Christian Brothers. She is so highly regarded and respected by so many. She won numerous awards from our office and the DFMC. It was amazing how much she got done with such a small staff. And how committed she was to the bishops and the diocese, as testified by the number of years she stayed and served. Her heart is enormous. It’s hard to put into words, and I could go on and on about her, she is just so great. Jan is just one of those rare people you are fortunate to come across in life.”

– John Airola, Managing Director, Christian Brothers Employee Benefit Trust

“I first met Jan in 1983 while working on the retirement and health plan with her. I was so impressed with her, in fact, Christian Brothers was so impressed with her they asked her to serve as a board member. After her term was up there, the Employee Benefits group asked her to join their board. She was instrumental in securing national-level vendors and speakers for the DFMC (Diocesan Fiscal Management Conference). She was just an extremely great advocate for Christian Brothers services, the Church, and her employees and making sure they got the best.” – Jim Ceplocha, AFSC, Executive Director, Christian Brothers Defined Contribution Plans

What is something about you that your long-time coworkers would know about you?

I am really a nice person.

Is that ‘the surprise’?!

Yes! (Laughter)

You are.

Thanks!

If you could convey something to the faithful of the diocese about working on the Bishop’s staff, what would that be?

That it is really a blessing. That it is working as part of a community and adding value to the administrators, the pastors, and the principals so they can better do their jobs. That has always been my focus: to do whatever I can to do take care of some of the administrative issues. If they were out there alone and would have to find their own employee benefits, their own property and casualty, or their own investments, all that time they spent doing that would be taking away from their pastoral responsibilities. I have always thought that the staff of the bishop adds value in that way, and that has always been my goal: to make it possible for them to fulfill their own vocations as best as they can. And I think we have.

It is about having a servant’s heart which you so have. I hope so.

In a culture that seems less concerned with commitment and loyalty, what kept you in your position for so many years?

I thought this was where God wanted me to be. I always felt like if I was not the person for the job, it would be very evident. I have served at the grassroots level on several national boards. I still serve on several local boards, advisory.

Doing this is my DNA.

I am going to remain available (to the diocese) as long as I can. It is important that when people need answers, they can get those.

What hobbies do you have?

What do you like to do?

Hobbies (laughter)? Well, this (laughter)? No really, I have no idea what I am going to do. I did like to travel, but I am not sure I like to travel anymore. I am not going to make any commitments.

Maybe get a pet?

What? No, … nothing breathes in my house except for me (laughter)?!

Do you have folks clamoring after you in retirement?

Well, no, but I serve on enough boards. I am on the Springfield Catholic Schools Board, the Catholic Campus Ministry Board, and active at the parish level (Immaculate Conception, Springfield; on its finance council). I don’t ever vote or interfere, but I believe I have added value to both.

I always liked being at home. Like any retiree, I have lots of things to do. I need to clean out my closets and take care of the pictures that have stacked up. All my grandchildren are grown, I don’t have little ones anymore. They are 32, 26, 16, and 15.

You know, I was married for 34 years, and raised three men on top of that. Living in a house with four men is a lot. I don’t have any regrets about any of it … I have a long-term care policy (laughter)?! ©TM

ST. MARK CHURCH, HOUSTON, celebrates REDEDICATION LITURGY

Bishop Edward M. Rice joined St. Mark Catholic Church parishioners and former pastors on Nov. 1 for a rededication Mass and celebration. Over 100 people joined in the liturgy with 80 at the celebration dinner marking the completion of the recent construction and refurbishment of the worship space.

“I offer congratulations to the building committee and the parish at large for their financial support of the renovation project,” said Bishop Rice. “A lot of planning, attention to detail, commitment, and financial sacrifice when into this sacred space … We remember the words of Psalm 127, ‘Unless the Lord built the house, in vain do we labor.’”

“This was the work of God,” Bishop Rice said.

“I offer special congratulations to you, Fr. Rayappa [Chinnabathini, pastor], for leading the parish in this direction. It’s amazing to see what can be accomplished when everyone comes together,” Bishop Rice said.

“Pope St. Paul VI reminds us, ‘The Church exists in order to evangelize.’ Move forward, commissioned by the words of Pope Francis in the Joy of the Gospel: ‘Go forth… Be that evangelizing community.’” Bishop Rice said. “Move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outreach!” ©TM

BISHOP RICE ANNOUNCES STAFF CHANGES AT THE CATHOLIC CENTER

Hired in June 2020 as diocesan Director of Development and Properties, Doug Kissinger is now diocesan Director of the Office of Finance. He and his wife, Patty, have seven children and are long-time members of St. Joseph the Worker Parish, in Ozark. Kissinger is also State Deputy of the Missouri Knights of Columbus. His educational background is in accounting and law.

Effective Sept. 5, Taryn Vogan-Bohre joined The Catholic Center staff as diocesan Director of Properties and Development. She and her husband, Ron, and their young family, are members of St. Agnes Cathedral Parish, Springfield. Vogan-Bohre is an architect most recently employed with BRP Architects in Springfield. ©TM
DEAR FAITHFUL OF SPRINGFIELD-CAPE GIRARDEAU,

This coming December 27, 2023 will mark the 350th anniversary of the revelation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. As pastors and associate pastors, I encourage you to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a long-standing devotion rooted in John 19: 33-34: “But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out.” I am sure you have that powerful verse from the Preface of the Sacred Heart memorized, “For raised up high on the Cross, He gave Himself up for us with a wonderful love and poured out blood and water from His pierced side, the well-spring of the Church’s Sacraments...”

The Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau is blessed with 12 parishes named in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. During the 350th anniversary, which begins on the date of the first apparition, December 27, and will conclude next year on December 27, 2024, I encourage all Catholics to grow in their devotion and love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus. On the diocesan Website you will find a collection of time-honored prayers and resources to encourage and enhance your devotion: https://dioscg.org/sacred-heart-pilgrimage.

Additionally, I am encouraging the faithful to make a “pilgrimage” to each of the 12 parishes. The staff of the Office of Communications has created a kit for the 12 parishes which includes a stamp, prayers to pray during your visit and Sacred Heart devotionals. A “passport” can be easily downloaded from the Website for this purpose or it may be clipped from The Mirror, here; with each visit, pilgrims can stamp the “passport” of the particular parish they are visiting. Once the 12-parish pilgrimage is completed, they simply mail the passport to the Office of the Bishop and I will send them a gift, along with a certificate of completion.

I am grateful for the cooperation and hospitality of our 12 Sacred Heart parishes. I am also grateful for the support of all the clergy in promoting devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Let us remember that one of the 12 promises of the Sacred Heart, is of particular importance for priests in the confessional: “I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.” (10) “Jesus, meek and humble of hearts, make my heart like unto Thine.”

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend Edward M. Rice
Bishop of Springfield-Cape Girardeau

The Web of Faith: Meister Of Faith Formation
601 S. Jefferson Avenue
Springfield, MO 65806

1. Cut out around the dotted line
2. Fold in half
3. Fold panels

Right panel folds in
Left panel folds in
Finished and ready to start your pilgrimage!