



A DIOCESE INDEBTED:

Jan Smith retires after 42 years



▲ **ATTENDING CLERGY**—Bishops, priests, and a deacon surrounded Jan Smith at her retirement liturgy celebrated on Sept. 22, in Holy Trinity Church, Springfield. Smith served the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau for 42 years. (Photo by Bruce Stidham/The Mirror)

By Leslie Eidson & Paula Wright

Springfield

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.

Smith's sons are Clay, Brad, and Nathan. Brad died in 2017. Clay and his wife, Debbie, live in Willard. Nathan and his wife, Jill, live in O'Fallon.

"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 offices. When you think about it, it was hard work. There was some physicality to it.

What did 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



▲ **APPRECIATION**—Jan Smith received a hand-crafted map of the diocese embellished with a crucifix, gratefully acknowledging her 42 years of dedicated service to the Church in Southern Missouri. (Photo by Bruce Stidham/The Mirror)



▲ **42 YEARS & FOUR BISHOPS**—Recently retired from the diocese after 42 years, Jan Smith worked on the diocesan staff under four bishops: Bernard Law, John J. Leibrecht, James V. Johnston, Jr., and Edward M. Rice. She is seen here being congratulated on a job well done by Bishop Emeritus John Leibrecht, with whom she worked the longest, logging 24 years. (Photo by Bruce Stidham/The Mirror)



▲ **THE CATHOLIC CENTER OPENS**—Jan Smith stood in her new office at The Catholic Center, Springfield, in 1989, by her state-of-the-art computer. The bishop's staff previously had held offices in the Landers Building and celebrated an Open House in the newly-renovated building just south of St. Agnes Cathedral, which was at one time the former Catholic high school. This move gathered together all ministry departments under one roof. (The Mirror archives)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3...



The next issue of **The Mirror** will be **December 8, 2023**. Sign up to receive the diocesan newspaper via Email in digital format: Contact Debbie Thompson at (417) 866-0841, or Email: dthompson@dioscg.org.





COME, AND YOU WILL SEE

Bp. Edward M. Rice

What may we do to make Advent less 'frantic,' more prayerful

Part of the rigors of publishing a Catholic newspaper twice a month is to look ahead and be aware of what feasts, holidays, and seasons are right around the corner. So as I write this column on Nov. 10, I have to be aware of Thanksgiving and the beginning of Advent.

It is always a nice practice to create a "litany of Thanksgiving," to acknowledge the many blessings of life. In my "litany of Thanksgiving," I am thankful for the gift of my life and the gift of my life of faith. I am thankful for the priests, deacons, and religious who work diligently throughout the diocese, each doing their part to build up the faith. I am thankful for the diocesan staff who day-in and day-out continue to give their all in supporting our efforts to grow in holiness, intentional discipleship and witnessing to the faith. I am thankful for the many individuals that I've come to know throughout the diocese in big and small parishes who constantly pray for me. It is humbling, as I realize just how many people lift me up in prayer. For all of these blessings and countless many more, I give thanks to almighty God. I hope that each one of you would take a moment to create your own "litany of Thanksgiving" and end it with a heartfelt "Thanks be to God!"

I received a letter postmarked Oct. 16 and I thought it would be a good segue into the Advent Season, which is right around the corner, beginning Dec. 3. The letter itself was written on October 7, the day of the tragedy in Israel. The letter is self-explanatory:

We have no idea what Christmas



will look like for us this year. Eight years ago, we stopped celebrating Christmas, or should we say "I", as I was the one that took care of everything—the baking, shopping, wrapping, decorating, card-sending, letter-writing, picture-taking. I was the one that took on all the stress for the family, and my favorite time of year, Thanksgiving to New Year's, was now the most dreaded time of year. All the joy, fun, and excitement was gone, not because of what I had to do but because of how I saw this country go back to the "same old, same old" the DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS! Forget about sharing the spirit of Christmas all year long. The fact that Jesus came into this world seemed to make no difference, other than the fact that everyone had an excuse for racking up the credit cards and getting time off work to travel wherever. Trying to come up with gift ideas for grown children and grandchildren that had way more than they needed already—I felt pushed to the breaking point and I said "NO MORE!!!" I stopped doing all of it. My family understood, but I felt guilty, thinking they would think I didn't love them, until my Angel assured me that my family, our family, was well aware of our love for them. So this Christmas, this fall, this holiday season, I'm hoping and praying

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

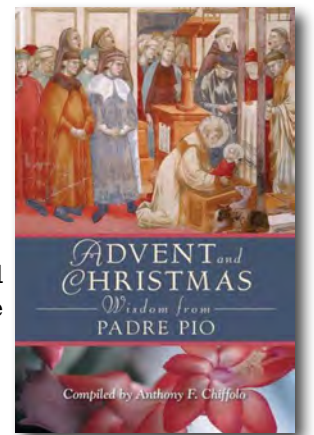
which your heart desires." Let every heart be prepared to receive Him anew!

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." ©TM



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 Marquart, Dec. 18, 53 yrs.

Fr. Jeffrey Jambon, LC, Dec. 22, 22 yrs.

Fr. Jose Kumblumkal, CMI, Dec. 26, 33 yrs.

Fr. Antony Thekkanath, VC, Dec. 26, 36 yrs.

The Very Rev. Leo Arockiasamy, HGN, Dec. 27, 16 yrs.

Fr. John F. Friedel, Dec. 27, 37 yrs.

Fr. Mathukutty Naduchirayil, VC, Dec. 27, 14 yrs.

Fr. Bibin Mathew, CMF, Dec. 29, 9 yrs.

Fr. Seban Thanippallil, VC, Dec. 30, 14 yrs.



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?"

JAN SMITH // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

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 for the parishes are at \$29 million themselves, and that does not include all the 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



▲ **GOOD SPORT**—Jan Smith took much good-humored razzing as well as the accolades from Bishop Edward Rice during her retirement party held Sept. 22 at Holy Trinity Parish, Springfield. After 42 years as a member of the diocesan staff, Smith is officially "retired" from the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. However, she still can be seen and heard around The Catholic Center as her transition continues. (Photo by Bruce Stidham/The Mirror)

Career Highlights

- **Active in DFMC for 40-plus years** (Diocesan Fiscal Managers Conference).
- **1993:** Appointed by Bishop Leibrecht as Chief Financial Officer, Diocesan Director of Finance
- **1992-1998:** Served on Christian Brothers Retirement Plan Board of Trustees for two terms and served as a member of the Investment Committee.
- **1989:** Elected to DFMC Board of Directors.
- **1991:** Served as DFMC Vice-President and site planning chair for 1992 Washington DC conference.
- **1992:** Served as President and Conference Chair of Washington DC meeting.
- **2002-2012:** Elected to be Trustee on Christian Brothers Employee Benefit Trust (CBEBT) for the health insurance plan. Served as Vice-chair from 2007-2012. Member of Trust audit and investment committee.
- **2019-2021:** Appointed Chancellor of the Diocese by Bishop Rice.
- **2022:** Received inaugural DFMC St. Matthew Medal in recognition of service to the conference and the Church.
- Served on Springfield Catholic Schools Finance committee.
- Served on CCM Springfield Advisory Board as a non-voting member for at least 20 years.
- A "Corporation Member" of Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri since its founding.
- Continues to serve on the Immaculate Conception Parish Finance council after many years.



EUCCHARISTIC MIRACLES of the WORLD

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



EUCCHARISTIC MIRACLE of LEGNICA, Poland 2013

During the national three-year Eucharistic Revival, The Very Rev. Shoby M. Chettiyath, V.G., the diocesan Vicar General, will write a series of articles exploring the various Eucharistic Miracles of the World. A companion for readers in this series is, "The 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.miracolieucaaristici.org/en/liste/list.html>.

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 bread has become the body and wine has become the blood of the Lord.

In St. Hyacinth Church in Legnica, at Holy Mass, on Dec. 25, 2013, during the distribution of Communion, a Host accidentally fell on the ground. It was immediately placed in a container with water and closed in the tabernacle. St. Hyacinth's priest, Fr. Andrzej Ziombra, said that after two weeks, on January 4,

along with other priests, he went to see if 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



On December 25, 2013, the priest who distributed Communion accidentally dropped a Host from a ciborium. The priest picked It up and put It in a container with water and placed It in the tabernacle.

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 priests the miracle was evident.

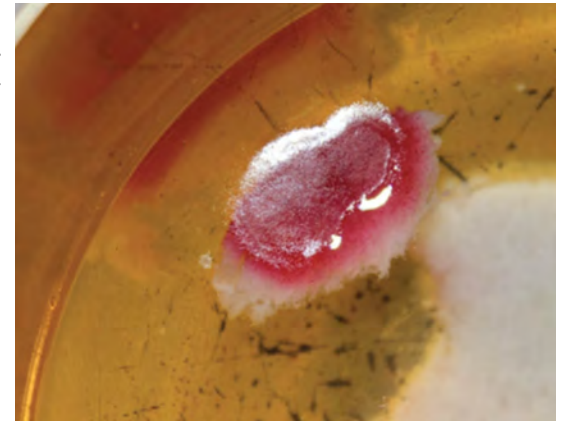
The commission checked if It was some fungus, mold, or another external agent (...). The Wrocław Forensic

Medicine Institute immediately excluded the presence of bacteria or fungi as a cause for the Host turning red. A second histopathological analysis pointed out that some fragments seemed to belong to myocardial tissue. An additional opinion was sought using the same samples at the Institute of Forensic Medicine in Szczecin

without specifying from where the samples came. The Institute used a different analysis method. After 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, Tixtla in 2006 in Mexico, and Buenos Aires, in Argentina, in 1996. On April 17, 2016, following the instructions received by the Holy See, Monsignor Zbigniew Kiernikowski, the new Bishop of Legnica, announced during



Area of the Host that turned red with regard to the Eucharistic Miracle of LEGNICA, Poland 2013. (Parish of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, Poland)

Mass that the parish priest Fr. Andrzej Ziombra should "prepare a suitable place for the exhibition of the precious relic, so that the faithful can express their adoration properly." (http://www.miracolieucaaristici.org/en/liste/scheda_b.html?nat=polonia&wh=legnica&t=Legnica,%202013)

Faith, of course, should not be based on miracles alone. Though, there is no doubt that reports of these miracles have strengthened the faith of many in the instructions given by Christ and they have provided avenues for contemplation of the miracle that takes place at each Mass. May this miracle lead more people to learn of the Eucharist and their faith in Jesus' teachings be strengthened. ©TM

Read more at <http://www.miracolieucaaristici.org/en/liste/scheda.html?nat=italia&wh=ferrara&t=Ferrara,%20201171>

The Very Rev. Shoby M. Chettiyath, V.G., serves as Vicar General, Moderator of the Curia, and Vicar for Religious in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. He is Parochial Administrator of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, in Nixa, MO. For more information, go to <http://www.miracolieucaaristici.org/en/liste/list.html>.

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NOTRE DAME TO HOST OPEN HOUSE

Cape Girardeau, MO

Notre 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 gospel, one student at a time. The

event will begin with a program in King Hall followed by student-led tours of the school, where families will have the opportunity to meet 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
meggarner@notredamecape.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sikeston—St. Francis Xavier School will host the first **Annual Christmas Game Night**, Sat., Dec. 2 in the Parish Center gymnasium. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and games begin at 7 p.m. Cost: \$25 for 12 games (6 cards per game), additional card sheets (6 games) may be purchased for \$5 each. Please call the school office with any questions at (573) 471-0841 or if you would like to be a sponsor. Help support our Catholic school!

Springfield—Come and be present before our Lord during **Springfield's Area Perpetual Adoration**. Hosted at Holy Trinity Chapel, there is an urgent need of Adorers on Wednesdays, 7 p.m. and Saturday, 8 a.m. and 9 a.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. This group meets every Thursday, 6:30-8 p.m., in St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, located at 2200 W. Republic Rd. All are welcome to participate in a time of praise, inspired teaching, and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. 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.

NOTRE DAME CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

SAT., DEC. 2 7:00 PM

Mixed Chorus/Band Christmas Concert in King Hall

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



Protecting God's Children® For Adults

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.

www.dioscg.org/wp-content/uploads/How-to-Register-for-a-VIRTUS-withOnline-Option.pdf

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.

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

Happy
Thanksgiving



From *The Mirror* staff: Debbie, Leslie & Paula



The Mirror, USPS Publication 117-330, Copyright © 2023 by the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau is published every other week by Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, 601 S. Jefferson Ave., Springfield, MO 65806-3107.

Editor: Leslie Anne Eidson, leidson@dioscg.org
Business and Editorial Offices: 601 S. Jefferson Ave., Springfield, MO 65806-3107; Accounting and Circulation Offices: Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, 601 S. Jefferson Ave., Springfield, MO 65806-3107.
To subscribe, call (417) 866-0841 or Email dthompson@dioscg.org. Periodical postage is paid at Springfield, MO.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Mirror, 601 S. Jefferson Ave., Springfield, MO 65806-3107. Vol. LIX No. 16 November 24, 2023 Single copy price, \$0.50 Subscription: \$14 per year.
Digital subscriptions available as an option to USPS delivery with paid subscription. For more information, contact dthompson@dioscg.org.

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**SOLEMNITY of the
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

**DEC.
8**

December 8 is a Holy Day of Obligation. Please consult with the local parish for time(s) for the Celebration of the Eucharist.

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). ©CNA

Statue of Our Lady of Grace Virgin Mary in Thailand. (iStock)

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Join us for one of the Lake's longest running Christmas light displays!

176 Marian Drive, Laurie, MO 65037

**FREE ENTRY EVERY NIGHT FROM 5:00 - 10:00 PM
NOVEMBER 23, 2023 - JANUARY 7, 2024**

Hot cocoa and candy canes offered Fridays from 6:00-8:00 pm starting December 1.

"O HOLY NIGHT"

A Special Event

December 10 | 4 pm - 8 pm

Featuring a **Live Nativity** (with real animals including "Noah" the Camel, thanks to Sunrise Safari!), refreshments, carolers, St. Nicholas, and a bonfire!

(Inclement Weather Date: December 17)




Diocesan Holiday Craft Sales & Events

Benton:

St. Denis 24th Annual Winter Wonderland Treasure Sale—Sat., Dec. 2, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., in the Parish Center, Hwy 61.

Woodworking, quilts, homemade crafts, Christmas crafts of all kinds, religious goods, homemade chicken noodle soup, chili, desserts, cinnamon rolls, breakfast items and more. Kettle corn will be available outside. Vendors are still needed, contact Mrs. Judy Scherer at (573) 225-6327.

Leopold:

St. John PCCW Country Christmas Home Tour—Sun., Dec. 17, 1-4 p.m.

Tour five beautifully decorated homes, stop by St. John Catholic Church to listen to organ music, followed by soup and cookies served next door in the cafeteria. Contact Geri Geringer at (573) 208-6445 with questions or to purchase tickets. Proceeds from this event are shared with St. John Youth Group.

Mountain Grove:

Sacred Heart Santa 5K Run & Walk—Sat., Dec. 02, 12:50 p.m.

Registration forms may be picked up at the YMCA in Mountain Grove, Willow Springs, Cabool, and Seymour. Complete and return with a \$20 registration fee, register by Fri., Nov. 17 to guarantee a t-shirt and race bag. Race bib and t-shirt available for pick up on Sat., Dec. 02, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Dress in holiday garb: there will be an Ugly Sweater, Most Festive dressed, and Most Festive Dog contest. Medals & prizes will be awarded based on age groups, overall fastest runners & walkers, and to the youngest and oldest participants.

Springfield:

Sacred Heart Craft, Vendor & Cookie Sale—Fri., Dec. 1, 5-9 p.m. and Sat., Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 1609 N. Summit Ave.

Held in conjunction with the Midtown Victorian Homes Tour, in which Sacred Heart is a stop. Many vendors, handmade jewelry, crafts and our famous cookies sold-by-the-pound. Food available for purchase both days.

REGISTRATION OPENS DEC. 4

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.



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.



REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS MONDAY OF THE WEEK OF THE CONFERENCE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DIOCESE OF
SPRINGFIELD-CAPE GIRARDEAU

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



MOUNTAINTOP HOMES SITE PLAN—In partnership with Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri offering affordable housing options for Veterans and their families. (O'Reilly Development Company)

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/clubhouse and community space/playground to provide a purposeful, community focused space. All units will be similar in design and



CATHOLIC CHARITIES—Onhand for the Oct. 23 blessing and groundbreaking of Mountaintop Homes in Mount Vernon were Suzanne Cronkhite, CCSOMO Chief Advancement Officer; Deacon Rob Huff, diocesan Chancellor and Superintendent of Catholic Schools; Ken Palermo, CCSOMO CEO; Susan Cox, CCSOMO Chief Compliance Officer; Jeremy Rowland, CCSOMO Chief Regional Officer, Eastern; Claudia Baer, CCSOMO Chief Human Resources Officer; Chris Ailes, CCSOMO Veteran Services; Mark Weidenbenner, CCSOMO Board Member; Cindi Kopel, CCSOMO Chief Program Officer; Steve Frye, CCSOMO Board President; and Bishop Edward M. Rice. (Photo by Grace Homeyer/CCSOMO for The Mirror)

capabilities, expertise, and focused approach," said Denise Heintz, co-founding partner of O'Reilly Development Company. "Together, we aim to deliver an exceptional residential experience where people matter most."

DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Mountaintop Homes utilizes both Mixed-Income and Income-Targeting strategies to provide a truly diverse and integrated community. It consists of 42 residential townhomes for rent with a mix of two- and three-bedroom units. Eight (8) units will be set aside for Veterans and their families who are at risk of homelessness. The set aside units include five (5) two bedroom/1 bath units and three (3) three bedroom/2.5 bath units. The community's funding

comprises both Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and State LIHTC support for thirty-four (34) designated affordable housing units.

The Mountaintop Homes development will construct three (3) residential buildings and one (1) office/community building totaling 42,808 gross square footage. The

amenities. Unit amenities include fully equipped kitchens, ceiling fans, large closets, washer/dryer equipment, and either wood or wood vinyl laminate flooring throughout. Residents will be responsible for electricity, and the property will cover water, sewer, gas, and trash.

MOUNTAINTOP HOMES IS PURPOSE DRIVEN

Housing that is impactful to the broader community and vulnerable individuals involves more than just physical structures. Quality housing provides a central place for a person to be connected within their community and fosters a sense of belonging. Mountaintop Homes will offer a variety of supportive services to residents at all income levels and has a robust and specific strategy to aid Veterans and families who are homeless or are at risk of homelessness. They will receive targeted assistance to develop the skills needed to fully engage in their lives and contribute to the greater community.

Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri will provide an on-site Housing Resource Coordinator who will work to identify needed resources for clients, as well as needed programming that will educate and encourage all the residents on a path out of poverty. Supportive services and case management will be provided to assist extremely low-income clients in developing a Housing Stability Plan and goals for

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. ©TM



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. (Photo by Grace Homeyer/CCSOMO for The Mirror)

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, ple-e-e-e-e-ease!”

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:

1. Go to Mass.

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 blurting 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

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.

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

Thanks for... the bad times

Thank God for the good times? You bet! But what about thanking him for the bad ones?

For health troubles. Family discord. Financial hardship. Pain. Loneliness. Grief.

There’s no way bad can be good, right? Except, if “God writes straight with crooked lines,” perhaps there’s something he can do, something he is doing, with and through what you’re suffering today.

Perhaps there’s a facet to the cross you’ve been carrying that needs to be recognized, considered more closely from a different angle and given thanks for.

This isn’t to say any of us love the hard and horrible times. Jesus didn’t. Just as we do, he wanted out of his. “He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, ‘My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will’” (Mt 26:39).

Yes, he knew what would come from

it—our redemption—but that didn’t take away the pain of his passion and death.

So what’s that other facet of your particular cross?

Your suffering can be a form of prayer, a uniting of yourself more closely to Christ crucified. It can be a gift of deep, beefy prayers for others. One you don’t want but one that is far from useless. One that even if you’re sick, elderly, disabled or frail proves you’re far from “useless,” no matter what others may think. No matter what you may sometimes feel.

There are lessons and truths, there are depths of spirituality that can only be learned by going through, by living with, hard times. There can be unmatched prayers. There can be many astounding graces.

But ...

All that being said, sometimes it can help—tongue-in-cheek—to acknowledge “God never gives us more than we can handle ... but sometimes he seems to overestimate.”

ADVENT

perfect time to
jump start your

EUCHARISTIC REVIVAL

By Gretchen R. Crowe

It's been almost a year and a half since Corpus Christi Sunday 2022—June 19—the launch date of the ongoing National Eucharistic Revival.

At the time of the revival's start, Bishop Andrew Cozzens of Crookston, MN, who is leading the efforts, said the following: "It's our mission to renew the Church by enkindling in God's people a living relationship with Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. We want everyone to encounter the love of Jesus Christ truly present in the Eucharist and to experience the life-changing effects of that love. We want to see a movement of Catholics across the United States that are healed, converted, formed, and unified by an encounter with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist and

sent out on mission for the life of the world."



I'm not sure there's a better mission than that. I'm also not sure there's a bigger one. Following the timeline of the revival, we are currently in its second year—what is called a time for "fostering Eucharistic devotion at the parish level, strengthening our liturgical life through the faithful celebration of the Mass, Eucharistic adoration, missions, resources, preaching, and organic movements of the Holy Spirit."

At my parish, we are having a 40 Hours Devotion at the start of Advent, where parishioners can come and spend time intimately with the Lord. I'd imagine most parishes around the country are doing something similar to foster devotion to Our Lord in the Eucharist.

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 and 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

ADVENT & EUCHARIST—Preparation of traditional advent wreath with candles from natural components, pine fir, and adorns. Advent 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. (iStock)

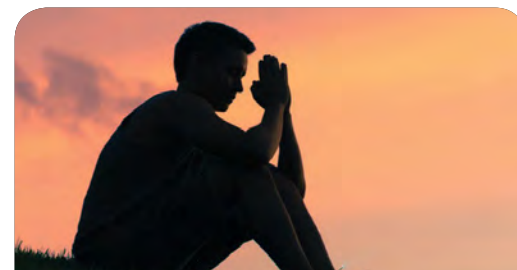
holy hour! Pick something and commit to it.

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 Deliverance & Exorcism and the Confraternity of Priest Adorers of the Eucharistic Face of Jesus.





By
Fr. Joshua
J. Whitfield

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" (Mk 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" (Mt 28:19-20). Here we see a few things. First, again, we see — considering Mark's "every creature" is Matthew's "all nations" — that it's a command for everyone. It's a command to baptize in the name of the Trinity — the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Such is the form of baptism still mandated today. And we see here that the command to baptize precedes the command to teach. This is a significant detail, especially as we'll come later to consider how the Church justifies infant baptism. But, more importantly, we learn from Matthew that baptism is how God remains with us, "until the end of the age." This, for Matthew, is how the prophecy of Emmanuel, with which he began his Gospel, is fulfilled (Mt 1:23): by baptizing believers and making them disciples.

But, of course, Jesus didn't invent baptism out of thin air. The origins of baptism can be traced even before Pentecost and even before Easter. When Jesus talked about baptism, when he commanded it, he was speaking from within a Jewish context, a context of prophetic hope. People in Jesus' day did have a sense of the ritual of baptism.

Consider, for instance, John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus. As all the



Fresco showing Jesus' baptism. (Shutterstock)

Gospels relate, he too baptized people. Mark tells us John was baptizing people in the wilderness "for the forgiveness of sins." His was a baptism, John himself said, of water and repentance. It was a baptism that was preparatory, in some sense, preceding another different baptism which is "with the holy Spirit" (Mk 1:4-8). John's baptism makes sense in light of earlier Jewish practices, in light of ritual purifications done in preparation for acts of worship or encountering God. To understand what John was doing, we need to return to passages like this one from Ezekiel: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you to cleanse you from all your impurities, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you" (Ez 36:25-26). Ezekiel here is speaking prophetically about the salvation of Israel, about the ethical conversion demanded of those preparing to encounter the saving God of Israel. Ezekiel's exhortation is like Isaiah's command to Israel and Judah: "Wash yourselves clean!" (Is 1:16). John is doing something like that — certainly dramatic but in no way foreign to Jewish religious imagination or experience. To anyone who'd listen, John was preparing them to meet God, preparing the way of the Lord, just like the prophets of old (Mk 1:3; Is 40:3).

And, of course, Christians picked up on the images of *sprinkling* and *washing*, reading them in some sense as metaphorical descriptions of baptism — *bapto* in Greek, meaning "to dip" or "to

immerse." 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 *anōthen*, which can mean either "again" or "from above." Nicodemus thinks Jesus is talking about being physically reborn — *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 26:39; 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.

NEXT EDITION:
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.

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Spiritual Mentors ready to provide spiritual direction



Cape Girardeau, MO

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: ericjulie91@gmail.com

Debbie Schumer: debraschumer@gmail.com

Deacon Tom Schumer: thomas.schumer@semocatholic.org. ©TM

◀ **CATHOLIC SPIRITUAL MENTORSHIP**—Deacon Tom Schumer is pictured with his wife, Debbie Schumer, Julie Schuchardt, and her husband, Eric. Deacon Tom Schumer, Debbie and Julie are commissioned to serve persons in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau as spiritual mentors. All three are members of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Cape Girardeau. Deacon Schumer serves as Director of the St. John Henry Newman Center on the campus of Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau. (*The Mirror*)

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Advent Retreat Offered at Marianist Center

Dec. 8-10, 2023 | Eureka, MO

An advent retreat, "Coming Home to Christ: The Journey Together," will be offered from Dec. 8-10 at the Marianist Retreat and Conference Center in Eureka, MO. The retreat, led by Fr. Tom Santen, Lucia Signorelli, and Steve Givens, will focus on our personal relationship with Christ, the still-point in an ever-turning world that often leaves us feeling confused, disconnected, lonely, and lost.

Through Scripture-opening teaching, experiences of various kinds of contemplative prayer, quiet reflection, and small group sharing, the retreat will encourage those present to consider what it means to embrace Jesus as their center and true home. The weekend will include time and space for both silence and fellowship.

For more info or to register, visit the center's Website, <https://marianistretreat.com/events/advent-retreat-2023/>, or call Jennifer Duncan at (636) 938-5390.

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.arenbergpruett.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 Víctor 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

"Christianity and Freemasonry are essentially irreconcilable, so that enrollment in one means separation from the other."

Freemasonry refers to the beliefs and practices of a number of fraternal organizations worldwide that are oath-bound secret societies tracing their ancient origins to the local guilds of stonemasons. Today many of the organizations are known for their charitable activity, and worldwide membership in various Masonic lodges is estimated between 2 million and 6 million people.

Freemasonry appears to relativize the religious faith of its members with respect to a "broader truth, which instead is shown in the community of good will, that is, in the Masonic fraternity," according to a 1985 article in the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*.

"For a Catholic Christian, it is not possible to live his relationship with God in a twofold mode, that is, dividing it into a supra-confessional humanitarian form and an interior Christian form," said the article, which is also published in the doctrinal dicastery's archives.

"Only Jesus Christ is, in fact, the Teacher of Truth, and only in him can Christians find the light and the strength to live according to God's plan, working for the true good of their brethren," it said. ©CNS



DETAIL MASONIC APRON FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON STATUE, NYC—A detail of the Masonic apron depicted on a statue of George Washington in the Masonic hall in New York City. On Nov. 15 the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith released a reminder that Catholics enrolled in Freemasonry are "in a state of grave sin and may not receive Holy Communion." (OSV News)

SAINT FRANCIS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM hosts LIVE NATIVITY DEC. 15



Cape Girardeau, MO

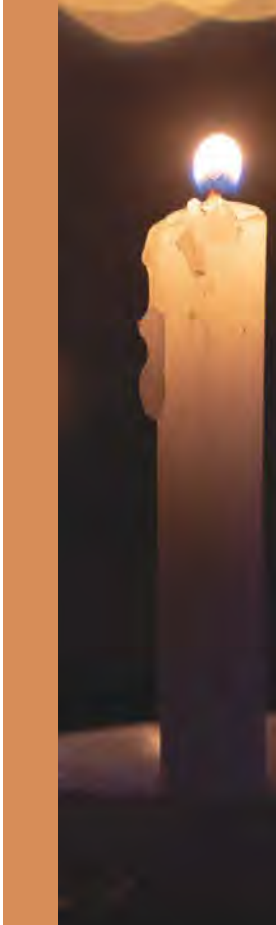
Saint Francis Healthcare System will recreate the scene of Jesus' birth with its fifth annual outdoor Live Nativity. Come and experience the true reason for the season on Fri., Dec. 15, from 5-7 pm. Invite your neighbors, friends, and family to follow the Star of Bethlehem to the Saint Francis Cancer 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.sfmhc.net or the Saint Francis Healthcare System Facebook page. To learn more about the event, visit sfmc.net or call (573) 331-5177. ©TM



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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, the Seleucids banned sacrifice, sabbaths, feasts, and circumcision and made owning a copy of their sacred writings an offense punishable by death. Things got even worse when Rome destroyed both the Temple and the city of

Jerusalem in AD 70. And that was followed by Hadrian's second-century attempts to outlaw all Jewish religious practice.

What resulted from each of these periods was the uprooting of Jews from Judea and the establishment of significant Jewish communities throughout the ancient world. Separated from others by language, culture, creed, and the demands of Mosaic law, Jews were subject to all kinds of myths and suspicions. Perhaps worst was the misguided notion that "the Jews" should be held responsible for the death of Christ. Even though the Blessed Virgin Mary and almost all the first Christians were Jewish, this has been used as the underlying rationale for cruelty against Jews across the centuries of church history.

Even Christians who know better often forget that at his crucifixion, Jesus was identified by his executioners as the "King of the Jews" (Jn 19:19-22). The Son of God was often identified as the Son of David, that is, the fulfillment of Jewish kingship. Those who consider the ramifications of that realize that it's not enough to say that Jesus was Jewish. Jesus is still a Jew and

Catholics and Jews and Jesus, the King

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)

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

Jesus is still a Jew and always will be.

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).

Antisemitism 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. Antisemitism 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 antisemitism 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

Jaymie Stuart Wolfe is a sinner, Catholic convert, freelance writer and editor, musician, speaker, pet-aholic, wife and mom of eight grown children, loving life in New Orleans.

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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.

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Please make plans to attend!

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JAN SMITH // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3...

a different person than I was 40 years ago, and I am supposed to be. I have matured and grown. I don't want to go back to what I was many years ago.

Let's talk about your faith.

It's huge. It has been my whole life. I attended Catholic school in south St. Louis, a German Catholic, with a deep prayer life, but I am not overly pious.

What are some of the memorable moments you recall?

Well, all the installations (of bishops) for sure! I had three while I was here. Bishop Leibrecht (1984), Bishop Johnston (2008), and Bishop Rice (2016). They were big undertakings, and exciting. It was a lot of fun on the day, but a lot of work.

During my time I saw three popes and three bishops, although I was most impacted by the bishops. Getting to know somebody new has always been a blessing. All the bishops I have worked for have been great folks. Bishop Law never carried cash and always asked for it (laughter). He would call senators and representatives and tell them what he thought; he was always very political. He was on television every day at 7:25 a.m. for five minutes for a morning talk. It was very expensive.

We don't have a presence like we did. But no one else does either. Media has changed, but it would be good to have [increased] visibility.



▲ **FAMILY TIME**—After 42 years serving the Church of Southern Missouri, Jan Smith's family looks forward to spending more time with the recently-retired CFO of the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. Pictured are: (front) Violet Smith, Debbie Mikkelson Smith, Lilly Smith, Jan Smith, Nathan Smith, Jill Smith; (back) Tyler Howard, Alexa Smith, Clay Smith, Bishop Rice, Taryn McKinney, and Ryan McKinney. (Photo by Bruce Stidham/The Mirror)

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

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

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE...



▲ **AN INDEBTED DIOCESE**—The staff at The Catholic Center and Bishop Edward M. Rice congratulated Janet ("Jan") Smith upon her being named the first recipient of the Diocesan Fiscal Management Conference's St. Matthew Medal in September of 2022: "Honoring Zeal in Catholic Evangelism, Leadership in the Profession, and Giving Back to Others." That about sums it up: Smith recently retired from the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau after 42 years of service. She was hired in 1981 as a bookkeeper and closed out her tenure as Chief Financial Officer (CFO). (Photo by Grace Tamburro/The Mirror)

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The Mirror

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JAN SMITH // CONTINUED...

self. And he was glad for me in that, he really was.

There was a special comradery there ...

We liked each other. And I never let him get away with anything (laughter)! He was so picky. I always said he made me cry ... just one time. But never again.

It was back in the old Chancery building downtown; I had only been there a couple of years and one of our priests died suddenly under abnormal circumstances. Bishop Law and Fr. Reidy had me go down and take care of some unpleasant things. Of course, now I am the person responsible for taking care of Msgr. Reidy's things when he dies.

After that, all the priests that died without anybody, I took care of all their stuff. It became an "out of the ordinary," part of the job. Thank God for Ann Buckley and Nancy McNamara (fellow retired finance staffers at the diocese). The items would come to us in big packets to go through. Many of our priests didn't have any relatives, or anybody to care for them so, I became really good at taking care of end-of-life issues. That became part of the job.

I have never literally never had a day that I didn't come to work, and it wasn't brand new. I never knew what I was going to get.

Word on the Street

"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 Ceplecha, AFSC, Executive Director, Christian Brothers Defined Contribution Plans

What is something about you that your long-time coworkers would be surprised to 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

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

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 do to 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

evident. I have served at the grassroots level on several national boards. I still serve on several local boards, advisorial.

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

Houston, MO

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 outcast!" ©TM

BISHOP RICE ANNOUNCES STAFF CHANGES AT THE CATHOLIC CENTER

Springfield

Hired in June 2020 as diocesan Director of Development and Properties, **Doug Kissingner**

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. Kissingner is also State Deputy of the Missouri Knights of Columbus. His educational background is in accounting and law.



Effective Sept. 5, **Taryn Vogan-Bohrer** 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-Bohrer 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



MAKING YOUR PASSPORT


- Cut out** around the dotted line
- Fold** in half
- Fold** panels

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

www.DioSCG.org/sacred-heart-pilgrimage

PASSPORT

to the Diocese of
Springfield-Cape Girardeau



SACRED HEART PILGRIMAGE

Family Name: _____
Parish: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Phone: _____


Visas


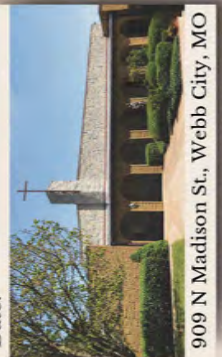

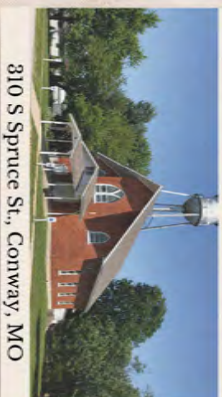


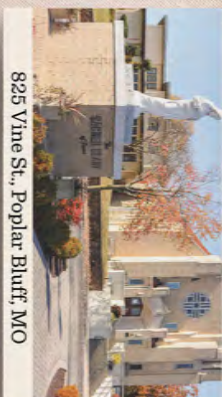


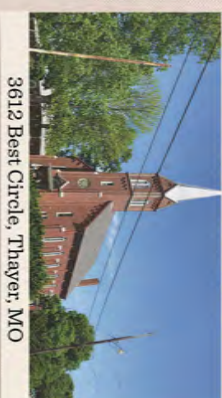


INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for taking the Sacred Heart Pilgrimage Challenge.

- Visit each of the 12 Sacred Heart parishes in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau between December 2023 - December 2024.
- Locate the Sacred Heart station at each parish and stamp the box on you passport associated with that parish.
- When your passport is filled with all 12 Sacred Heart stamps, mail it to:
Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau
Attn: Office of Faith Formation
601 S. Jefferson Avenue
Springfield, MO 65806
- Receive a special gift from the diocese, a certificate of completion, and a letter from Bishop Rice.

Learn more about the Sacred Heart Pilgrimage at:
www.DioSCG.org/sacred-heart-pilgrimage



<p>VERONA</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>212 N 2nd St., Verona, MO</p>	<p>WEBB CITY</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>909 N Madison St., Webb City, MO</p>	<p>WILLOW SPRINGS</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>1050 W Business Highway 60-63, Willow Springs, MO</p>
<p>CONWAY</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>310 S Spruce St., Conway, MO</p>	<p>CARUTHERSVILLE</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>605 Ward Ave., Caruthersville, MO</p>	<p>BOLIVER</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>1405 W. Fairplay St., Boliver, MO</p>
<p>POPLAR BLUFF</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>825 Vine St., Poplar Bluff, MO</p>	<p>MOUNTAIN GROVE</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>302 E State St., Mountain Grove, MO</p>	<p>DEXTER</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>115 E Market St., Dexter, MO</p>
<p>THAYER</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>3612 Best Circle, Thayer, MO</p>	<p>SPRINGFIELD</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>1609 N Summit Ave, Springfield, MO</p>	<p>SALEM</p> <p>Date: _____</p>  <p>602 W Butler St., Salem, MO</p>