

2023 Pastoral Appointments announced

Springfield, MO

Bishop Edward M. Rice announced the following clergy assignments effective Saturday, July 1, 2023, unless otherwise noted.

“Please keep these priests in your prayers as they adjust to their new assignments,” said Bishop Rice. “Please pray too, for their former parishioners and new parishioners during this time of transition.”

NEW PASTORAL CHANGES

Reverend Victor Anokwute will conclude his assignment as Parochial Administrator of Sacred Heart Parish, in Caruthersville, and Immaculate Conception Parish, in New Madrid. He will continue his assignment as Pastor of St. Teresa Parish, in Glennonville, and St. Ann Parish, in Malden.

Reverend Charles Dunn is appointed Pastor of St. Mary Parish in Seneca. He will continue his assignment as Pastor of St. Canera Parish in Neosho and Nativity of Our Lord Mission Church in Noel.

Reverend Rick Jones is appointed Parochial Administrator of St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Fredericktown. He will continue his assignment as Pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, in Cape Girardeau.

The Very Reverend Allan Saunders will conclude his assignment as Parochial Administrator of St. Denis Parish, in Benton, and St. Lawrence Parish, in New Hamburg. He will continue his assignment as Pastor of St. Mary of the Annunciation Cathedral, in Cape Girardeau, and historical Old St. Vincent Chapel of Ease, in Cape Girardeau.

The Very Reverend Joseph Weidenbenner will conclude his assignment as Pastor of St. Mary Parish, in Seneca. He will continue his assignment as Pastor of St. Mary Parish, in Joplin, and Chaplain at McAuley Catholic High School, in Joplin.

NAMED PASTOR

Reverend Tuan Van Nguyen, CRM, Parochial Administrator of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, in El Dorado Springs, and St. Peter the Apostle Mission Church, in Stockton, is now appointed Pastor of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, in El Dorado

Springs, and St. Peter the Apostle Mission Church, in Stockton.

Reverend Brian Straus, Parochial Administrator of St. Peter the Apostle Parish, in Joplin, is now appointed Pastor of St. Peter the Apostle Parish, in Joplin. He will conclude his role as Lead Chaplain of McAuley Catholic High School and as a diocesan Regional Vocation Promoter. He continues his role as Director/Chaplain of Catholic Campus Ministry at Missouri Southern State University, in Joplin.

Reverend Tomasz Wilk, OSPPE, Parochial Administrator of St. Augustine Parish, in Kelso, and St. Joseph Parish, in Scott City, is now appointed Pastor of St. Augustine Parish, in Kelso and St. Joseph Parish, in Scott City.

PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATORS

Reverend Daniel Belken is appointed Parochial Administrator of St. Denis Parish, in Benton, and St. Lawrence Parish, in New Hamburg. He will continue his role as diocesan Associate Director of the Office of Worship and the Office of Liturgy. He concludes his assignments as a diocesan Associate Vocation Promoter and Lead Chaplain of Notre Dame Regional High School, Cape Girardeau.

Reverend Suresh Samala is appointed Parochial Administrator of Immaculate Conception Parish, in New Madrid, and Sacred Heart Parish, in Caruthersville. He concludes his assignment as Parochial Administrator of St. Michael the Archangel Parish, in Fredericktown.

Reverend Pompeyo Tan, Jr., is appointed Parochial Administrator of St. Joseph Parish, in Springfield. He concludes his assignment as Parochial Vicar of Holy Trinity Parish, in Springfield. He remains Chaplain to the Filipino Community.

Reverend Timothy Tran, CRM, JCL, is appointed Parochial Administrator of St. Joseph the Worker Parish, in Ozark.



NGUYEN



STRAUS



WILK



ANOKWUTE



DUNN



JONES



SAUNDERS



WEIDENBENNER



BELKEN



SAMALA



TAN



TRAN

He concludes his assignment as Parochial Vicar of St. Agnes Cathedral, in Springfield. He continues his role as the diocesan Coordinator of the Tribunal.

PAROCHIAL VICARS

Reverend Jesse Hiett is appointed Parochial Vicar of St. Mary of the Annunciation Cathedral Parish, in Cape Girardeau, Old St. Vincent Chapel of Ease, in Cape Girardeau, and Lead Chaplain of Notre Dame Regional High School, in Cape Girardeau.

Reverend Audrey Troya Toloza is appointed Parochial Vicar of St. Mary Parish, in Seneca. He continues his assignment as Parochial Vicar of St. Canera Parish, in Neosho, and Nativity of Our Lord Mission Church, in Noel.

LEAVING THE DIOCESE

Reverend Karl Barmann, OSB, will conclude his assignment as Pastor at St. Joseph Parish in Springfield to return to his religious community, the Benedictine Fathers at Conception Abbey, in Conception, MO.

Reverend José Marino Novoa, CMF, will conclude his assignment as Parochial Vicar at St. Ann Parish, in Carthage, and Sacred Heart Parish, in Webb City, to return to his religious community, the Claretian Missionaries United States-Canada Province, in Chicago.

TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT

Due to health reasons, **Rev. Joji Vincent** will take on a three-year appointment in the Diocese of Las Vegas, Nevada. He concludes his assignment as Pastor of St. Joseph the Worker Parish, in Ozark.

OTHER

Reverend Andrew Williams is appointed the Sacramental Priest of Sacred Heart Parish, in Webb City, St. Ann Parish, in Carthage, faculty member and Lead Chaplain of McAuley Catholic High School, in Joplin, and as a diocesan Regional Vocation Promoter. He will remain Chaplain of Mercy Joplin. He concludes his assignment as Parochial Vicar of St. Mary Parish, in Joplin, and St. Mary Parish, in Seneca. ©TM



HIETT



TOLOZA



BARMANN



NOVOA



VINCENT



WILLIAMS





**COME, AND
YOU WILL SEE**
Bp. Edward M. Rice

Catholic graduates witness to gift of Catholic education

As we come to the end of May, we complete another graduation season. You may not be aware of the fact that as Bishop, I preside over the graduation ceremonies of our three Catholic high schools: McAuley, Joplin; Springfield Catholic, Springfield; and Notre Dame Regional, Cape Girardeau. Sometimes people will say it must be taxing to have to sit through those ceremonies. I always respond, "Not at all!" I enjoy the graduation ceremonies and I truly feel I am privileged to listen to the various addresses from our students.

As a sample, one student-speaker said, "On this road of life, in moments when we may feel alone, perhaps we may feel that we cannot possibly keep going, and even feel that life itself is a hardship. In those moments, remember that you are not alone. We must keep at the forefront our faith in God, and understand that in times of uncertainty and fearful trials, he is there to hear and understand us." Another student said, "Growing up in a Catholic school is an opportunity I will cherish for the rest of my life. ... Whether it be our talents, our friends, or our family, the one true source of goodness is the 'Awesome God' in our lives. On behalf of our graduating class, I want to offer a thank you to God for everything he has given us." Finally, another student said, "We must remember what this school has taught us; We must have faith in God and never worry about his plan. We have been taught that we are his children and will never be abandoned by him, no matter the mistakes or trials we face."

To listen to these striking words, coming from graduates of our Catholic high schools, was a real shot in the arm for me. As I listened to the various addresses, my heart was truly filled with gratitude. Catholic education is hard work. Catholic education is expensive.

Our Catholic schools do not receive financial support from the government, and so our parents pay twice: taxes for the public school system as well as Catholic school tuition.

Catholic education is essential in passing on the faith. Regardless of the obstacles, it is worth it. Why? Because as I said to the graduates, there is a battle being fought for the minds, the hearts, and souls of our youth. That battle is being fought in the culture and in the classroom. I thank the parents that support our Catholic schools, not just with dollars, but with their volunteerism and sacrifices. I thank our principals and administrators for all they do. I thank the teachers, they are on the front lines of the battle in the classroom.

At the heart of their efforts, our schools and PSR programs fulfill the priorities of our diocese: to grow in holiness, form intentional disciples, and witness to the faith. We inform the intellect, but we also form the mind and soul, and when we do that well, we teach our young people to reflect on the "matters of the heart," in living their lives as Catholic Christians. It is those "matters of the heart" that give the deepest satisfaction to the human person. While we expect that our academic programs provide our students the tools needed for a successful life in this world, it is the "matters of the heart," i.e., growth in holiness, their formation as intentional disciples, and their ability to witness to the faith that makes for true success in the eyes of God.

I am grateful for the work of our Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Deacon Rob Huff, along with his assistant, Debra Owensby, for their diligence in leading our Catholic schools. Over these past couple of years, I have asked Deacon Huff to initiate Theology of the Body in all

of our schools; to emphasize the complementarity between faith and reason; and look for ways to enhance our Catholic identity. I was once asked if it could ever be possible that our schools were "too Catholic," and that some Catholic parents would choose to not send their children because of it? My response was twofold. First, we can never be too Catholic. Catholic identity is more than just having a crucifix on the wall or a statue of the Blessed Mother in every classroom. We want the beauty of our teachings to be appreciated and the fullness of our faith to be embraced and lived. Second, if it is lacking, we need to work with our parents and help them to grow and appreciate the fullness of our faith and serve as support to them in living their Catholic identity. We do not lower our standards to reach our people but rather raise our people up to the standards of the Church. The work of Catholic formation is essential, just as mercy, love, and compassion.

As we grow in our love of the Eucharist, may we ever sing: "O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, all praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine." ©TM



2023 DIOCESAN DEVELOPMENT FUND

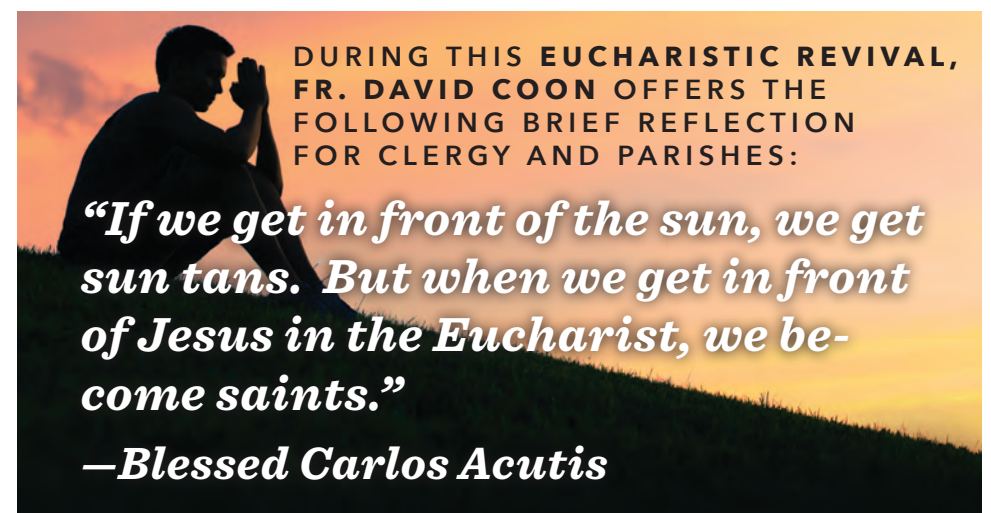
**One Bread. One Body.
One Church.**

**As of May 25, 2023,
69 parishes reported
2,982 pledges totaling
\$1,309,631 or 45% of
the 2023 DDF goal.**

2023
BISHOP'S
ANNUAL
APPEAL

for
Funding
Church
Ministries

Thank you!



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.



Deacon Alan Bandy

Deacon Bandy will celebrate the 15th anniversary of his ordination to the permanent diaconate on June 21. He serves outside of the diocese in St. Ann Catholic Church, Excelsior Springs.

**Happy Anniversary,
Deacon Bandy!**



Deacon Mathey Fletcher

Deacon Fletcher will celebrate the 15th anniversary of ordination to the permanent diaconate on June 21. He serves at St. Joseph Parish, Springfield.

**Happy Anniversary,
Deacon Fletcher!**



Deacon Walter Biri

Deacon Biri will celebrate the 15th anniversary of ordination to the permanent diaconate on June 28. He serves at Immaculate Conception, Jackson.

**Happy Anniversary,
Deacon Biri!**



High school graduates honored in Seneca



CLASS OF 2023—Bishop Edward M. Rice celebrated Mass in St. Mary Parish, Seneca on Mother's Day, May 14, where local high school graduates of the parish were recognized. *(The Mirror)*

Conception Seminary College announces Spring 2023 Dean's List

Conception, MO

The Office of the Registrar at Conception Seminary College, in Conception, MO, announced the students named to the Dean's List for the 2023 spring semester, including **Wyatt McFall**, a college seminarian for the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau.

To be included on the Dean's List, a student must be enrolled as a full-time student and earn a 3.70 GPA or higher on at least 12 semester credit hours. A list of students meeting those requirements

by diocesan affiliation can be found below.

McFall is a parishioner of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, Springfield.

Conception Seminary College is a four-year liberal arts college seminary preparing candidates for ministry in the Roman Catholic Church through human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation in the Benedictine tradition.

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MCFALL

A GRATEFUL CHURCH

celebrates and recognizes the following **ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES in June:**

PRIESTS:

- Rev. William Hennecke, Jr., June 01, **16 yrs.**
- Rev. William Hodgson, June 02, **44 yrs.**
- Rev. Colby Elbert, June 02, **6 yrs.**
- Rev. Fergus Monaghan, June 04, **51 yrs.**
- Rev. Paul McLoughlin, June 05, **52 yrs.**
- Rev. Michael Quang Do, CRM, June 05, **30 yrs.**
- Rev. Vincent Bertrand, June 06, **36 yrs.**
- Rev. Oliver Clavin, June 06, **53 yrs.**
- Msgr. Normand Varone, June 07, **48 yrs.**
- The Very Rev. Patrick Nwokoye, June 07, **21 yrs.**
- Rev. Michael Casteel, June 08, **39 yrs.**
- Rev. Brian Straus, June 08, **5 yrs.**
- Rev. Tuan Nguyen, CRM, June 11, **7 yrs.**
- Rev. Mark Binder, June 12, **52 yrs.**
- Rev. Thomas Kiefer, June 12, **42 yrs.**
- Rev. Joseph Kelly, June 12, **8 yrs.**
- Rev. Daniel Belken, June 12, **3 yrs.**
- Rev. Allen Kirchner, June 12, **3 yrs.**
- Rev. Peter Morciniec, June 13, **53 yrs.**
- Rev. Mitchell Wilk, June 13, **53 yrs.**
- The Very Rev. Joseph Weidenbenner, June 15, **16 yrs.**
- Rev. Victor Anokwute, June 19, **8 yrs.**
- Rev. Macarius Etim, SMP, June 19, **8 yrs.**
- The Very Rev. Scott Sunnenberg, June 24, **21 yrs.**
- Rev. Charles 'Chaz' Dunn, June 24, **7 yrs.**

DEACONS:

- Deacon Alan Bandy, June 21, **15 yrs.**
- Deacon Mathey Fletcher, June 21, **15 yrs.**
- Deacon Walter Biri, June 28, **15 yrs.**
- Deacon James Darter, June 28, **10 yrs.**
- Deacon David Farris, June 29, **10 yrs.**
- Deacon Rob Huff, June 29, **10 yrs.**
- Deacon Tom Schumer, June 29, **10 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.

February 24, 1989 The words of Ash Wednesday are direct: "Remember that you are dust and unto dust you will return." A little girl with abundant ashes on her forehead reported to her mother what the priest had said, "Remember, you are ashes, and so are these!"

March 3, 1989 Coming home from a meeting in San Antonio, I was seated on the airplane by a father and his daughter. She was, I would guess, about 3 or 4 years old. This, the father told me, was her first trip on a plane. In the seat by the window, the little girl was in awe. As we took off, she looked out the window to see the ground get farther and farther away. Later, we left the city and flew over a thickly wooded area. "Daddy," the girl said excitedly, as she still peered out the window, "look at all the broccoli!"

March 10, 1989 At a recent Confirmation, a teenager told his pastor before Mass that he had not yet decided on a confirmation name. Father told the young man to go to the rectory where, in the dining room, he would find a *Book of Saints*, in order to choose a name. Page through the book, he was told, and choose one. At the Confirmation Mass when this young man approached me for the anointing, I knew exactly what book he consulted at the rectory. I asked, "What name have you chosen for Confirmation?" he responded, "Genesis."



Fr. Michael Quang Do, CRM

Father Do will celebrate the 30th anniversary of his priesthood ordination on June 5. He serves as Vietnamese Chaplain, St. Agnes Cathedral.



Happy Anniversary, Father Do!

UPCOMING JUNE ORDINATIONS of two permanent Deacons for the Diocese



DIOCESAN PERMANENT DEACONS, SPOUSES, CANDIDATES & ASPIRANTS gathered in July 2022 at St. George Parish, Van Buren, MO, with Bishop Edward M. Rice. Pictured were (front) Marcella Fletcher, Kelly Reddin, Lisa Henderson, Cindy Soptick, LeAnn Wison, Bishop Rice, Paula Haverly, Janice Burger, Renee Peters, Lisa Mohn, Michelle Fritz, Deacon Dan Vaughn, Director of the Permanent Diaconate; (back row) Deacon Matt Fletcher, Steve Reddin, Kevin Henderson, Deacon James Soptick, Mike Wilson, Deacon Mark Kiblinger, Kevin Haverly, Bryan Burger, Tony Peters, Howard Mohn, and Deacon Mike Fritz. Not pictured: James and Denise Haston. (Photo by Beth Vaughn/The Mirror)

By Paula Wright Cape Girardeau, MO

The Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau will celebrate the ordinations of **Robert Anthony (“Tony”) Peters** and **Kevin Henderson** as permanent deacons on June 10, 2023. These two men are completing their five-year formation and will be ordained by Bishop Edward M. Rice in The Cathedral of St. Mary of the Annunciation, Cape Girardeau, at 10:30 a.m. Peters is a member at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Cape Girardeau. Henderson is a member of Sacred Heart Parish in Poplar Bluff.

What is a deacon? According to the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops:

“A deacon is an ordained minister of the Catholic Church. There are three groups, or ‘orders,’ of ordained ministers in the Church: bishops, presbyters, and deacons. Deacons are ordained as a sacramental sign to the Church and to the world of Christ, who came ‘to serve and not to be served.’ As ministers of Sacrament, deacons baptize, lead the faithful in prayer, witness marriages, and conduct wake and funeral services as ministers of Charity. Deacons are leaders in identifying the needs of others, then marshaling the Church’s resources to meet those needs. Deacons are also dedicated to eliminating the injustices or inequities that cause such needs. But no matter what specific functions a deacon performs, they flow from his sacramental identity. In other words, it is not only WHAT a deacon does, but WHO a deacon is, that is important.”

“Becoming a deacon is a calling. The men that we currently have in our program are good men, very spiritual and active in their parishes,” stated

Deacon Dan Vaughn, Director of Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. “To become a deacon, it takes five years to go through the formation program, it is imperative that the wife is on board and that the program does not distract from the raising of children.”

The formation program is long and vigorous, Deacons truly need a servant heart. After the first year, which is very spiritually focused, the program becomes much harder and there are many more demands, Deacon Vaughn said, who serves in Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Branson, and Our Lady of the Ozarks Parish, Forsyth. “It is truly going back to college and requires discipline. I was ordained a deacon in 2014, going through the program was a lot of hard work,” Deacon Vaughn said. “I found many of the courses more challenging than some of my MBA classes. The education covers so many topics—pastoral, theology,

Scripture, a lot of reading and writing—some classes were easier than others, but it was a lot of work and time management. It’s not for the weak and not a retirement club!”

The Second Vatican Council decreed that the diaconate, when it was restored as a permanent order in the hierarchy, could be opened to “mature married men,” later clarified to mean men over the age of 35. This is in keeping with the ancient tradition of the Church, in which married men were ordained into ministry. Also, in keeping with ancient practice is the expectation that while a married man may be ordained, as an ordained man, if his wife should die, the deacon is to live out his life in the celibate state and may not marry again.

The formation process follows various steps leading to Ordination to

the Order of Deacon. These are:

1. **Discernment**
2. **Aspirancy**
3. **Candidacy**
4. **Ordination**
5. **Post Ordination**

There are 21 active Permanent Deacons within the diocese and after the ordinations of Henderson and Peters, six men in formation.

Deacon Elects:

- Kevin Henderson (Lisa) Sacred Heart Parish, Poplar Bluff, class of 2023, Diocese of Belleville, IL, formation program
- Tony Peters (Renee), St. Vincent De Paul, Cape Girardeau, class of 2023, Diocese of Belleville, IL, formation program

Candidates in Formation:

- Bryan Burger (Janice), St. Augustine Parish, Kelso, class of 2025, Diocese of Memphis, TN, formation program

Aspirants for the Permanent Diaconate:

- James Haston (Denise), St. Lawrence Parish, Monett
- Kevin Haverly (Paula), S.S. Peter and Paul Parish, Pulaskifield
- Howard Mohn (Lisa), Holy Trinity Parish, Marshfield
- Steve Reddin (Kelly), Sacred Heart Parish, Webb City
- Mike Wilson (Le Ann), Sacred Heart Parish, Webb City

In addition, there are four (4) applicants pending to begin the next classes.

Any man that wishes to become a deacon should make an initial inquiry through the pastor of their parish. For additional information or questions, contact Deacon Dan Vaughn, dcndanvaughn@gmail.com. ©TM

The 10:30 a.m. ordinations of Peters and Henderson on June 10 will be Live-streamed from St. Mary Cathedral to the diocesan Facebook page.



PETERS



HENDERSON

10TH

ANNIVERSARY



CONGRATS!

Deacon James Darter

Deacon Darter will celebrate the 10th anniversary of his ordination to the permanent diaconate on June 28. He serves at Sacred Heart Parish, Caruthersville.



Happy Anniversary, Deacon Darter!

Deacon David Farris

Deacon Farris will celebrate the 10th anniversary of ordination to the permanent diaconate on June 29. He serves at Sacred Heart Parish, Poplar Bluff.



Happy Anniversary, Deacon Farris!

Deacon Rob Huff

Deacon Huff will celebrate the 10th anniversary of ordination to the permanent diaconate on June 29. He serves as diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools, diocesan Chancellor, and St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Cape Girardeau.



Happy Anniversary, Deacon Huff!

Deacon Tom Schumer

Deacon Schumer will celebrate the 10th anniversary of ordination to the permanent diaconate on June 29. He serves as Director of CCM, SEMO University, Cape Girardeau, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Cape Girardeau.



Happy Anniversary, Deacon Schumer!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jackson—St. Ann’s Sodality of Immaculate Conception Parish will hold its **Annual Rummage Sale**, Fri., June 9, 7 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sat., June 10, 7 a.m.-3 p.m., in the Parish Center (school cafeteria).

Oran—Deanery 6 Council of Catholic Women will have its **quarterly meeting** Tue., June 20, at Guardian Angel Church. Rosary is at 5:30 pm in church followed by Mass at 6 pm with Fr. Joseph Kelly as Celebrant. We will have our Installation of Officers after Mass followed by our meeting in the school gym across the parking lot. Speaker will be Sr. Evalyne Ekesa, LSOSF, with the Little Sisters of St. Francis. Every lady from our Deanery parishes is welcome to attend. For more information, please contact Ruth Ann Hester at (573) 270-4844.

Springfield—One man’s trash is another man’s treasure: come find your treasure at the **SEAS garage sale**, Fri., June 9, 7 a.m.-4 p.m., and Sat., June 10, 7 a.m.-1 p.m., at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish. Donations may be dropped off at the SEAS Parish Hall, Mon., June 5-Thu., June 8, noon-7 p.m. We are unable to accept clothing, computer monitors, or mattresses.

Springfield—**St. Agnes Cathedral Annual Parish Garage Sale** will be held Thu., June 8, 7 a.m.-4 p.m.; Fri., June 9, 7 a.m.-4 p.m.; and Sat., June 10, 7-11 a.m., in the St. Agnes school gym, located next to The Pallotti Center at The Catholic Center. Furniture, shoes, books, toys, kitchen items, linens, tools, seasonal décor, collectibles, and much more. Come find your next treasure!

Springfield—Springfield Area Perpetual Adoration, hosted at Holy Trinity Chapel, has an urgent need for adorers each Wed., 2 a.m. & 3 a.m.; Sat., 1 a.m.; and Sun., 1 a.m., 2 a.m., and 11 p.m. Join the substitute. For more information or to sign up, please contact Marilyn Gibson at (417) 224-4043.

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

New Director of Development named for the Springfield Catholic School

Springfield, MO

Springfield Catholic Schools is pleased to announce **Becky Conroy** as its new Director of Development for the Springfield Catholic School System.

Conroy is an alumna having graduated from both Immaculate Conception Catholic School and Springfield Catholic High School. She graduated from SCHS in 2002 and continued her Catholic education at Rockhurst University in Kansas City, MO, where she obtained a Bachelor and Masters in Business Administration.

Conroy will oversee the fundraising efforts, marketing, and general development for the Springfield Catholic School System. Her professional experience has bridged the for- and not-for-profit worlds, and



CONROY

taken her to Kansas City and Chicago before returning home to Springfield.

“I’m incredibly excited to return to my ‘Irish’ roots and be a part of ensuring that the opportunities that Springfield Catholic Schools provide continue to thrive, not only today, but for future generations,” Conroy said.

She is not the only member of her family to have been a part of Springfield Catholic Schools. Conroy is the youngest of three, all of whom graduated from Springfield Catholic High School. Her mom, Mary, retired from the Immaculate Conception School office and her dad, Russ, is a former School Board President.

In her spare time, Conroy loves to travel, spend time with friends (many of which are fellow SCS alumni), and her family which includes her dog, Winnie. You can also catch her at many live events, including sports, concerts, and theater. Conroy will begin her duties as Director of Development on June 1, 2023. ©TM

Springfield Catholic High School Senior Earns National Speech & Debate Award

Springfield, MO

Hannah Demster, a senior at Springfield Catholic High School, has earned the National Speech & Debate Association All American award. This coveted award recognizes academic rigor, competitive speech & debate success, and personal excellence.

There are more than 141,000 student members of the National Speech & Debate Association, Hannah was one of the 1% that earned this award. This recognition places Hannah among the top one percent of all student

members across the country.

The award recognizes students who have completed at least five semesters of high school; earned the Superior Distinction degree in our Honor Society (a total of 750 or more merit points); achieved a rigorous GPA and or test score requirements; and demonstrated outstanding character and leadership.

Congratulations, Hannah! ©TM



DEMSTER



VOICE FOR LIFE AWARDS PRESENTED TO ORAN STUDENTS

Cape Girardeau

Voice for Life awards were presented Tue., May 2, to Guardian Angel Catholic School students, from Oran. Held in historic St. Vincent Chapel of Ease, Bishop Edward Rice presented the awards to the children.

Earlier this year, students in grades K-12th in diocesan schools, PSR programs, and homeschools were asked to use their creativity to promote the theme of “St. Joachim & St. Anne, Saints for the Dignity of Life,” for the 2023 Voice for Life contest. Youth in K-4th grade could color a provided picture of the two Saints, while grades 3-12 could make posters based on the above-mentioned theme.

VOICE FOR LIFE WINNERS FROM ORAN—Pictured with Bishop Edward M. Rice receiving their Voice for Life awards were Teagan King (Kindergarten), and Elaina Hahn (4th grade). The students were recognized for their winning colored pictures of St. Joachim & St. Anne. Not pictured is Owen Morrison (2nd grade). (Submitted photo)

The entries were first judged at the school, PSR, and homeschool level with one winner per grade per category. Those entries were sent to the Voice for Life committee and judged anonymously. Each category had 1st and 2nd place winners as well as several honorable mention winners.

Guardian Angel Catholic School had three students recognized that evening. Elaina Hahn won First place in 4th grade for her colored picture of St. Joachim & St. Anne. Owen Morrison, 2nd grade, and Teagan King, Kindergarten, each won Honorable Mention for their colored pictures.

Pro-life Week was celebrated April 23-30 in schools. ©TM



10 easy ways to grow in your faith this summer

By Father Connor Danstrom

Summer is normally the time we take a break from things. School is over, the weather is nice, and most people take at least some time off work. Even the liturgical calendar seems to reflect this yearly sabbath, moving out of the spiritually “busy” seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter into the mundanely named “Ordinary Time.”

But don’t let the name fool you. What Christians are ordinarily about is far from mundane. As we approach Pentecost, this time is the fulfillment of the mysteries we have celebrated all year—the incarnation of Jesus, his death and resurrection, and finally his ascension into heaven, and soon, the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, May 28 this year. It is in this time of the Church, the “last times” when we wait in joyful hope for the Lord’s coming in glory, that we receive ever more fully the gift that has been won for us in Christ. Even the liturgical color, green, speaks of the growth we are meant to undergo during this time. We are meant to be like trees planted beside the river, growing and bearing fruit.

So what are some ways we can concretely grow in our faith this summer? Here are 10 simple ways that you can open yourself to the growth God desires for you.

1) Make time for silent prayer every day

Any relationship needs time to grow. If we do not spend time with the ones we love, we may not grow apart, but we can hardly grow closer. Only in the mutual sharing of our hearts on a regular basis do we come to know and love someone more deeply. This is especially true of God, who is constantly communicating his love to us, if only we would stop to listen and receive him. The Catechism of the Catholic Church puts it this way: “God tirelessly calls each person to that mysterious encounter known as prayer”



(No. 2567). It also says, “According to Scripture, it is the heart that prays. If our heart is far from God, the words of prayer are in vain. The heart is the dwelling-place where I am, where I live ... the heart is the place ‘to which I withdraw’” (CCC, No. 2562-2563).

Make time every day this summer, even if it is only 10 or 15 minutes, to enter into the dwelling place of your heart with God. Relate to him what you are experiencing each day; tell him what moves you, what excites you or scares you. St. Paul says we should “pray without ceasing” (1 Thes 5:17), but in order to pray at all times, we have to pray at certain times. This summer, make time for daily prayer.

2) Go to Mass

It should probably go without saying, but let’s say it anyway: Go to Mass. According to the Second Vatican Council, the Eucharist is the “source and summit of the Christian life.” This means that everything we do as Christians flows from and leads back to this central mystery. It is the place of most intimate communion between Christ and his Church. It is where we become what we are, the Body of Christ. As members of his body, we cannot hope to grow in strength and vigor if we are not nourished at least weekly at the Eucharistic feast. If you are already in the habit of going to Sunday Mass, try going during the week once or twice, as well.



3) Actually participate in Mass

Nothing is more disheartening as a priest than starting the Mass with an enthusiastic “The Lord be with you!” and being met with a mumbling, half-dead “and with your spirit.” Participation at Mass is about more than what we say or do, but what we say and do truly matters. We are corporeal beings, and what we do with our bodies means something. The gestures, words, and songs of the



Mass have significance beyond what we may be able to grasp in the moment, but their effect on us is nevertheless real. We are not meant to passively sit and listen to other people pray and talk but to worship God with our bodies, minds, and souls. By actually singing and saying the responses at Mass, we are making a gift of ourselves to God. If we are too passive at Mass, or we don’t even bother opening the hymnal to sing, we are telling our souls that we are here not to give our hearts and minds in worship, but to “get something out of it,” or, worse yet, to “check the box.” This summer, make an effort to participate more fully in the Mass.

4) Go to confession once a month

One of the most poignant scenes in the Old Testament is when God is searching for Adam and Eve in the garden after the Fall, but they hide themselves among the trees (cf. Gn 3:8-9). God calls out to them, as he calls to all of us in our sinfulness. He does not want us to close ourselves off from him in shame but to open our faults to him so he can forgive, restore, and heal us. These places of brokenness can become places of intimacy and trust because we know ourselves to be loved unconditionally. Just as Peter knew the Lord loved him in spite of his threefold denial (cf. Jn 21:15-19), so we can encounter the love of Jesus every time we receive absolution for our sins in confession.

Especially if you are in the habit of going to confession only “when you need to,” or only once or twice a year during Advent and Lent, this summer, make a habit of going once a month. This encounter with the mercy of Jesus in the sacrament, if it is received with a sincere and contrite heart, will undoubtedly bear fruit.

5) Celebrate a saint’s feast day

As Catholics, we have so many great saints to imitate and admire. But more

importantly, we have friends in heaven who want to help us and pray for us. The liturgical calendar is full of feasts celebrating these great saints, but unless we go to daily Mass, we may never know they exist. This summer, make an effort to celebrate a saint’s feast day with special devotion and festivity. Go to Mass on that day and pray for the saint’s help in your life of discipleship. Do something special to honor them and celebrate that they are part of the Church triumphant rejoicing in heaven.



A close friend of mine would do this every year on the feast of St. Lawrence, whose feast day is Aug. 10. St. Lawrence was a deacon and martyr who died by being burned to death on an iron grill. My friend would honor him every year, appropriately, by hosting a barbecue with his friends.

6) Read one of the four Gospels

St. Jerome famously said, “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.” Aside from the Eucharist and our daily life of prayer, there is no more certain way to grow in knowledge and love of Jesus than to read the word of God. Jesus is himself the Word made flesh, so every word of the Bible speaks of him in some way. But the Gospels in a particular way allow us to encounter the person of Christ in an intense and vivid way.

I remember the first time I read the Gospel of Luke from start to finish when I was in high school. My father and I would read a chapter or two every Sunday together and talk about it. I had heard all of the stories before at Mass, but something about reading the events of Jesus’ life in order, and reading the words of Jesus in the context of his entire life and ministry, allowed the Lord to come alive to me in a new way. Perhaps this summer you can read the Gospel of Matthew, which is the Gospel we will read throughout the rest of this liturgical year. Take your time and read



it prayerfully. Even better, read it with a friend and talk about what strikes you, what confuses you, and what calls you to greater love.

7) Read a book with a group of friends

There is an old adage, “If you want something done, give it to a busy person.” For some reason, when we have less to do, we tend to do less. This is no more evident to me than with reading. Most of us have dozens of books on our reading list, but whenever we have the time to actually sit and read them, what do we do? Often we fritter away the time on mindless entertainment or non-urgent tasks that take less mental energy. Yet, when we muster the willpower to actually sit and read a good book, one that really nourishes our mind and our soul, we have no doubt that it was time well spent. So how do we get ourselves to do the more nourishing thing even when it doesn’t seem immediately attractive to us? This is where friends can help each other.

There are so many great Catholic books, both fiction and non-fiction. If you are not normally much of a reader, I recommend starting with a good Catholic novel. Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, Flannery O’Connor, Georges Bernanos, J.R.R. Tolkien all have written classic works of fiction that will have you grappling with spiritual realities and will spark great conversations with a group of friends over dinner. C.S. Lewis and Willa Cather are also two of my favorite authors who are not Catholic but whose stories have wonderfully Catholic overtones. This summer, expand your soul with good literature enjoyed with friends.

8) Pray the rosary

Every year, a survey is done of the men who were ordained priests throughout the United States. Some of the



questions have to do with what spiritual practices and parish activities they were engaged in before joining seminary. While many say they participated in things like youth groups, Catholic summer camps, World Youth Days and the like, there are two things that almost every man reports having participated in regularly before seminary: Eucharistic adoration and praying the rosary. It makes logical sense, doesn’t it? Who could lead us more safely to our true vocation than Jesus and Mary, and what better ways to foster our relationship with them than by spending time in the Lord’s Eucharistic presence and by meditating on his life through the mysteries of the rosary.

The rosary is one of the most tried and true devotions of the Catholic Church. There is a reason many religious orders wear a rosary as part of their habit and carry it wherever they go. There is a reason Pope St. John Paul II and other great saints prayed this prayer daily. Although it is made up of vocal prayers—the Hail Mary, Our Father, and Glory Be—it is actually a mental prayer, meant to draw us into contemplation of the mysteries of the life of Christ. Making a daily practice of this prayer helps keep our minds and hearts fixed on the story that truly defines us, which is the history of God’s saving love for us. Especially if you are discerning your vocation or in a time of transition in your life, the regular recitation of the rosary will help you remain in Jesus, who is our true home.

9) Make a ‘desert day’

The Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (or CFR’s as they are commonly known) have a discipline I greatly admire known as “hermitage.” Once a month, every friar is required to spend a day in prayer and solitude. This time away from their active, apostolic life gives them a chance to reflect in prayer with the Lord on the many things they have done, seen, and suffered that month, and it lets them



receive very consciously from God the life and love that gives their mission its fruitfulness.

Jesus said: “Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:4-5). Especially for those of us who live in the world, and particularly if you spend most of your day in temporal concerns (business, politics, entertainment, consumer goods), it is all the more necessary to make time and space to, like Jesus, go off to deserted places to pray.

Making a “desert day” doesn’t have to be an overly radical thing. If you can do an overnight at a retreat center or monastery, that’s great. If all you can do is spend Sunday afternoon somewhere peaceful with no phone and your spouse watching the kids, that’s great, too. The important thing is to spend the time remaining in Jesus. “Without me you can do nothing,” he says. The frenzied activity of our lives amounts to nothing if we are not rooted in the one relationship that gives our lives eternal significance. This summer, make a desert day.

10) Make a pilgrimage

When I was in seminary I had the great privilege of visiting the Holy Land with my classmates. It was a deeply moving experience to touch the places the Lord Jesus himself had visited and touched. To be in the very place he died and where he rose from the dead was sublime and surreal. But what moved me also was not just the connection I felt with the Lord, his mother, the apostles and the others who accompanied him in his earthly life, but also the connection I felt with the other pilgrims who had visited these holy sites over the past 2,000 years, including great saints like



St. Francis and St. Ignatius Loyola.

We don’t have to travel to the Middle East to feel this connection to the wider Church in time and space. There are places right in your own backyard where pilgrims go to honor saints, grow in faith and give thanks to God for the blessings they have received. Where I live, in Chicago, we have numerous shrines within driving distance—the National Shrine of St. Francis Xavier Cabrini, the National Shrine of Maximilian Kolbe, and the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. This summer, make a trip to attend Mass at a place of pilgrimage.

A summer of grace

A priest I trust once said to me, “There is no neutral time in the spiritual life, where I’m not getting better but I’m not getting worse. No, Jesus always wants deeper communion with you, and he is always working hard to bring it about.” In other words, we can count on two things: God’s desire for our spiritual growth, and the gift of his grace to help us grow. This year, let summer be a season of growth for you, and use these simple practices as a way to receive the grace that will bring it about. ©TM

Father Connor Danstrom is the director of the John Paul II Newman Center at the University of Illinois.

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Two honored for character & Christian values

CHRISTIAN LIVING AWARD—The principal and staff of St. Francis Xavier Catholic School awarded two students for their outstanding character and Christian values each day throughout the year in the classroom by presenting them with The Christian Living Award. Pictured are Principal Barbara Tomaszewski; Clara Cox; Giuliana Oetting, and Pastor, Fr. Colby Elbert. *(The Mirror)*

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By
Fr. Joshua
J. Whitfield

WHAT WE BELIEVE, PART 19:

The Catholic Church, People of God

In exploring the Church — this sacrament of salvation, this communion in Christ enlivened by the Holy Spirit — many symbols and images are used as descriptors. And as a sacramental mystery, that only makes sense.

As *Lumen Gentium* put it, “the inner nature of the Church is now made known to us in different images taken either from tending sheep or cultivating the land, from building or even from family life and betrothals” (LG 6). The catechism even offers a small catalog of names and symbols traditionally applied to the Church — sheepfold, flock, cultivated field, building of God, temple, Jerusalem, mother, body of Christ — but there are, of course, even more than that (see CCC, Nos. 751-757). Describing a mystery not fully describable — like any real, organic thing — it makes sense sometimes to use poetry or metaphor to get at it. Try describing your child or your spouse or even yourself accurately and completely; you can’t do it. That’s because organic, mysterious things are like that; they demand a different mode of description. And the Church is no different.

Of course, the most famous image applied to the Church, an image strongly emphasized in the documents of Vatican II, is “people of God.” However, it’s an image of the Church as debated as it is famous. As the historian John O’Malley wrote, there is indeed a “strong horizontal line” implicit in the image; it’s an image reminding us of the fundamental equality of all baptized believers. Lay people are not subjects of the clergy; both clergy and lay people are one and equal in Christ (“What Happened at Vatican II,” 174). Yet, that doesn’t mean the Church is anything like a modern democracy with, as Karl Rahner warned, a ballot in everybody’s hand (“The Spirit in the Church,” 62).

Such is where there has been much confusion about calling the Church the “people of God” — by politicizing the image. Which is not at all what



People pray at St. Joseph Shrine in Detroit in 2020. (CNS photo/Dan Meloy, Detroit Catholic)

the Second Vatican Council intended. Rather, in calling the Church the “people of God,” the Second Vatican Council was simply speaking biblically and theologically.

Drawing on the Church fathers, *Lumen Gentium*, early on, describes the Church as “a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (LG 4). Immediately, we learn that we’re talking about something theological — in the deepest meaning of the term, of God — rather than a social or political construct. In the Church we are indeed made holy, but not “merely as individuals” but instead “together as one people” (LG 9). The point, counter to our many modern individualisms, is that by saying the Church is a people, we’re saying first that we’re drawn together into salvation as one — in communion. As always, remember John 17, that the disciples of Jesus are to be one; calling the Church the people of God is but another aspect of that reality. The people of God is, fundamentally, simply the *ecclesia*, the called body,

called into being by God. It is simply the people described in the Scripture. It is the people called first in Abraham and then in the patriarchs and prophets; it is

the people called by Christ, called to be holy, free in truth — the disciples, their disciples, and us.

Such is the explicitly biblical character of the people of God often lost to those who mistake the image for something political, ethnic or demographic. Cardinal Ratzinger, in his writings, repeatedly made this point: that when “understood in terms of ordinary political usage” the image “becomes a slogan, its meaning is inevitably diminished; indeed, it is trivialized” (“The Ecclesiology of the Constitution on the Church, Vatican II, ‘Lumen Gentium,’” 88; “Eucharist, Communion, Solidarity,” 74). Inevitably, such misunderstanding makes the Church vulnerable to various political whims and machinations.

Remembering the Church is the people of God does not do away with or in any way denigrate its hierarchy. It puts neither the faith nor the morals of the Church to a vote. Rather, it reminds the Church to which story it belongs — not to the story of nations or political

movements or trends, but to the story of God. It reminds the Church that all believers are fully part of this story, not just clergy and the consecrated. From beginning to end, the image is biblical. It is thus identical to that other image of the Church—the Body of Christ. The people of God is that particular people whose story is told in the Bible, the people gathered by the word of God in Christ, born into Christ in baptism and nourished with his Body and Blood in the Eucharist.

Such is what we mean by calling the Church *Populo Dei*. It is not to be confused with politics or ideologies, not without ruining one’s understanding of the Church entirely. Rather, it’s to remind the Church of its biblical origin and its nature as sacrament, that it is Christ’s body, the gathering into one people

of faith in the Spirit disparate peoples into one royal priesthood (LG 9). Not a cultural or political construct, but something more akin to a miracle, the people of God belong in essence to that mission for glory Jesus prayed for the night he was betrayed. It is, therefore, more primeval, more sacred than any politics — this Catholic Church of Jesus Christ.

NEXT EDITION:
WHAT WE BELIEVE, PART 20

The Church One and Visible

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

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\$25,000 grant awarded from the American Cancer Society

Cape Girardeau, MO

To alleviate the financial burden of cancer treatment, the American Cancer Society (ACS) recently awarded a \$25,000 transportation grant to Saint Francis Foundation. The grant will underwrite gas cards and car-service rides for eligible patients that face transportation barriers to attend cancer-related appointments.

“One of the greatest barriers to accessing cancer treatment in our region is lack of transportation and the financial burden that creates,” said Liz Glastetter, MBA, BSN, RN, Director of Cancer Services for Saint Francis Healthcare System. “We are pleased to collaborate with the American Cancer Society to remove transportation barriers so our patients can focus on their health, healing and, ultimately, remission.”

Lack of transportation to treatment prevents many people living with cancer from getting high quality care, which worsens cancer outcomes.

In a study presented at the 2022 American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Quality Care Symposium, American Cancer Society researchers found that 2.8 percent of cancer survivors reported delays in care due to transportation barriers. Cancer survivors that delayed care due to lack of transportation were more likely to use the emergency room and had the highest risk of all-cause and cancer-specific mortality.

“Not having access to high-quality cancer treatment due

to where you live contributes to the disparities we see in cancer outcomes. It is important to provide the funding and programming needed to keep a lack of transportation from impacting survival,” said Arif Kamal, MD, MBA, MHS, FACP, FAAHPM, FASCO, Chief Patient Officer for the American Cancer Society. “The



local health systems we partner with across the country use this funding to deliver assistance directly to the patients who need it most.”

According to the American Cancer Society’s Cancer Treatment and Survivorship Facts & Figures 2022-2024, cancer survivors experience greater financial hardship than the general population for many reasons including the inability to work. They also have higher out of pocket medical costs compared to people without a history of cancer. The economic burden of cancer is more profound in younger survivors or those that were diagnosed in childhood, underinsured or uninsured, and have lower incomes.

The Saint Francis Cancer Institute is the region’s only Comprehensive Community Cancer Program accredited by the Commission on Cancer. The Cancer Institute offers comprehensive oncology services for the treatment of many types of cancer, and its skilled oncologists and surgeons are recognized experts in cancer care.

For more information, visit sfmc.net/cancer. ©TM

Franciscan University's Class of 2023 is largest ever

Steubenville, OH

For the third year in a row, Franciscan University sent forth its largest class, this time with 818 graduates, a 30 percent increase since 2021, including **Jesse Thompson**, in discernment for the **Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau**. Thompson graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy and theology.

Commencement weekend kicked off on May 12 with Abp. Paul S. Coakley of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, OK, presiding over the Baccalaureate Mass. Recalling Oklahoma missionary priest Blessed Stanley Francis Rother, martyred in 1981 in Guatemala, he exhorted graduates to embrace their own heroic mission.

“You, too, are being sent into a world that is desperately in need of the light of Christ and the good news of Jesus Christ, to be salt and to be leaven, to make a difference and an impact,” he said.

Elected USCCB Conference Secretary in 2022, Archbishop Coakley received an honorary doctorate in Christian ethics for “his pastoral leadership” and “defense of the dignity of the human person.”

On May 13, commencement speaker Lila Rose, renowned pro-life activist, speaker, and founder and president of Live Action, also focused on mission when she delivered her address at both the Science and Arts Ceremonies. Rose had one message for graduates: “Be dangerously good.”

To do that, she told them, each graduate needs to be a visionary who acts with courage out of love. A visionary “sees all that is possible in the Kingdom of God and uses their everyday, ordinary lives to build it.” This takes courage because “there will be moments when you feel tempted to fit in, to be quiet, to be safe,” she said. “Hold on to the vision God has given you. Fight for it and take risks for it. You weren’t made to be safe.” Most importantly, she concluded, “a courageous vision must be infused with love, with a radical generosity for others, and a focus on building community.”

“Go out into the world with vision, daring, and generosity, Franciscan Class of 2023,” she concluded. “Together, let’s build the kingdom and share the treasure of our faith. Be dangerously good!”

In his closing remarks, Father Dave Pivonka, TOR ’89, president of Franciscan University, gave graduates a spiritual roadmap for their mission, drawing on the Gospel in which Jesus called Peter to walk on water.

First, he said, you need to follow Jesus into the boat, even if you’re not sure where he’s leading you. Then, when the storms of life come, and you’re tempted to escape, he said, “Stay in the boat!” It’s the safest place to be, because in the boat of the Church, “You learn to love one another, to care one for one another, and to forgive one another.”

Finally, when the Lord does call, and only when he calls, “Get out of the boat! The Lord invites us to make a step in faith. To trust that he’ll be faithful. It may be dangerous, but if you don’t get out of the boat, you don’t know the thrill of walking on water.”

“God bless you, graduating Class of 2023,” he concluded. “Go, walk on water!”

The Class of 2023’s top 10 majors are theology, business, psychology, philosophy, nursing, education, communication arts, biology, catechetics and evangelization, and English.

For more about Franciscan University of Steubenville and its mission to educate, evangelize, and send forth Spirit-filled disciples of Jesus Christ, visit Franciscan.edu or connect with Franciscan on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or LinkedIn. ©TM



GRADUATION—Seminarman Jesse Thompson graduated from Franciscan University of Steubenville on May 13, 2023. A parishioner of St. Cecilia Parish, Kennett, MO, Thompson received a Bachelor’s in philosophy and theology. (Photo by Destiny Bartholomew)



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DCCW LEADERSHIP BOARD—Pictured with Fr. Joseph Kelly, DCCW Spiritual Advisor, and Bishop Edward M. Rice, Episcopal Chair were the new officers installed for the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women: Elva Weber, President; Polly Mungle, President-Elect; Ruth Ann Hester, Secretary; and Pam Connor, Treasurer. *(The Mirror)*



OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL—The 2023 winner of the Our Lady of Good Award from the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (DCCW) was Doris Eftink from Guardian Angel Parish, Oran, pictured here with Becca Kern, DCCW Spirituality Commission Chair. *(The Mirror)*

64th annual Catholic Women's Spring Assembly draws 173

Springfield, MO

The weekend of April 21-23 was the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women's 64th annual Spring Assembly held at the Doubletree Inn by Hilton in Springfield. The event was launched with keynote speaker Fr. J Friedel of Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Branson, and Our Lady of the Ozarks, in Forsyth. Mass was celebrated by Bishop Edward M. Rice in St. Joseph Parish, Springfield.

For two days, 173 women from across the Diocese enjoyed inspiration, faith, fellowship and fun, including a banquet and entertainment by the musically-talented Fr. Joseph Kelly, who also serves the DCCW as its Spiritual Advisor. Many festively got in sync with the band, including Bishop Rice.

"I was told it was the largest gathering of our women in recent history," Bishop Rice said, "but I also have it on good authority that some came just for the entertainment! And those who attended, know what I'm talking about! Wait until next year: I'm practicing already!"

Under the theme of "We are the Body of Christ," the women undertook a service project, collecting items for Whole Kids Outreach, in Ellington, MO. Other highlights included the installation of officers, grab bags, a purse silent auction, and the awarding of the Our Lady of Good Counsel distinction, which this year went to Doris Eftink, of Guardian Angel Parish, Oran.

All women are invited to the DCCW annual assembly, so make plans now to attend. The 65th Catholic Women's Spring Assembly, sponsored by the DCCW, will be held at the Drury Inn and Convention Center in Cape Girardeau April 19-20, 2024. The 2024 theme is "HERE I AM LORD," answering the question in Isaiah 6:8, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" ©TM



HANDMADE ITEMS—Two of the raffled items during the 64th annual Catholic Women's Spring Assembly held April 21-23, in Springfield, included a handmade afghan by Nancy Slezak of Springfield and a framed diamond art photo of the Jesus' Divine Mercy, which was created and donated by Gayle Ruffino of Doniphan. *(The Mirror)*



FATHER KELLY BAND—Deacon Dan Vaughn, Fr. Joseph Kelly, Fr. Charles Peirano, and Bishop Edward M. Rice were members of the Father Kelly Band that performed as the post-dinner entertainment during the April 21-23 Catholic Women's Spring Assembly held in Springfield. *(Photo by Sarah Pittman/The Mirror)*



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

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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.



REMEMBER AND HONOR

Memorial Day

God of power and mercy,
you destroy war and put down earthly pride.
Banish violence from our midst and wipe away
our tears,
that we may all deserve to be called your sons
and daughters.
Keep in your mercy those men and women
who have died in the cause of freedom
and bring them safely
into your kingdom of justice and peace.
We ask this though Jesus Christ our Lord.
R/. Amen

Prayer Source: USCCB

OBITUARY | *Mary Bertha Horning, SSpSAP*

Sister Mary Bertha Horning, SSpSAP, died on May 8, 2023, at Mount Grace Convent in St. Louis, MO at the age of 98. The day was also the 77th Anniversary of her Religious Profession as a **Holy Spirit Adoration Sister**.

Sister Horning was baptized Helen Rosemary Horning, and was born on Jan. 19, 1925, in Springfield, MO, to Homer Horning and Mary Bertha Newton. Her parents, however, died before she was a year old, so her maternal aunt and uncle adopted her as one of their own: she became one of seven children in that loving family. She used to call her adoptive parents “mother and daddy.” Her aunt, however, made her retain the last name of her biological parents. She told a Sister that she was so blessed for having had two sets of loving parents and was looking forward to meeting them.

Horning was just a teenager when the thought first dawned on her to become a nun. She once shared that in looking up at the monstrance while she was praying during the 40-hour adoration, she thought, “What in the world is more important than the Incarnation and the Eucharist?” Her mother had plans for her to go to a Benedictine College, but when she spoke to her spiritual director, the priest told her, “God calls—that’s the time to go.”

On August 13, 1943, at the age of 18, Horning entered Mount Grace Convent in St. Louis, a convent of the Sister-Servants of the Holy Spirit of Perpetual

Adoration (a congregation dedicated to perpetual adoration and praying for the sanctification of priests). Three years later, on May 8, 1946, she made her First Profession of Vows in Philadelphia and took her religious name, Sr. Mary Bertha, in honor of her biological mother. Horning made her final commitment on May 21, 1951, also in Philadelphia. On May 8, 2021, Sr. Horning celebrated her Diamond Jubilee in St. Louis. She had also been assigned to our convents in Philadelphia, Corpus Christi, and Austin, TX (now closed). Along with learning a little German, Sr. Horning learned to play the organ in the Motherhouse in Steyl, Netherlands. She once told a Sister that she played the organ only out of obedience and that she never liked it. She spent most of her years as an organist and a librarian, and she also helped in the correspondence room.

In 2017, while still in the convent in Corpus Christi, Sr. Horning had to undergo two hip replacements after having fallen twice. In 2019, she was assigned back to St. Louis where she became confined to her room because walking became



REST IN PEACE—Springfield native Sr. Mary Bertha Horning, SSpSAP, is pictured on her Diamond Jubilee, May 8, 2021, along with the Episcopal Blessing bestowed upon her by St. Louis native and Springfield-Cape Girardeau Bishop Edward M. Rice for her 75th anniversary. Sister Horning died May 8, 2023. *(The Mirror)*

difficult for her. Nevertheless, Sr. Horning continued to live her life of unceasing prayer and sacrificial love, faithfully and serenely for the salvation of souls and for the needs of the world. She also welcomed anyone who visited her with a smile and a listening ear, including

Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau Bishop Edward Rice, a St. Louis native. Her favorite prayer was the rosary; she always had her beads in her hands. She likewise kept in her room a small statue and relic of Saint John Henry Neuman, her favorite saint.

Sister Horning died on the anniversary of her religious profession, May 8, concluding 77 years of loving dedication to the Eucharist and the Lord’s service, having kept in her heart the Lord’s promise: “Whoever eats My Flesh and drinks My Blood... I will raise on the last day.” May she rest in peace. ©TM



140 MOTHERS HONORED AT LUNCHEON

Scott City, MO

The Parish Council of Catholic Women (PCCW) of St. Joseph Parish, Scott City, honored mothers and their families with a special lunch served after the 10 a.m. Sunday Mass on Mother’s Day, May 14. The honorees lunch included chicken and dumplings, ham, green beans, salads, and hot rolls along with a cake and hot fudge Sundae bar. One hundred forty mothers and their families enjoyed the 2nd Annual gathering. Each mother was presented a rose and Fr. Tomasz Wilk offered a prayer and a special thank you to Our Blessed Mother, as well as to all mothers living and deceased. The event was chaired by Donna Anderson, Therese Glueck, and Betty Spalding.

◀ **SERVERS**—Luncheon servers during the second annual Mother’s Day luncheon at St. Joseph Parish, Scott City, included Gavin Spalding, St. Joseph Catholic School principal Betty Spalding, and St. Joseph Pastor Fr. Tomasz Will, OSPPE. *(The Mirror)*

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▲ **ICE CREAM SUNDAY BAR**—Treasurer of the St. Joseph Parish PCCW (Parish Council of Catholic Women) Therese Glueck took her role seriously as she enjoyed serving dessert at the ice cream and cake bar at the second annual Mother’s Day luncheon held May 14. *(The Mirror)*

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KQOH 91.9 FM Springfield

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Fr. Brian Straus

Fr. Straus will celebrate the 5th anniversary of his priesthood ordination on June 8. He serves at Parochial Vicar at St. Peter the Apostle Parish, Joplin; Lead Chaplain at McAuley Catholic High School, Director & Chaplain CCM Joplin.



Happy Anniversary, Father Straus!



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