



'Invite One Back' initiative HELPS PARISHES REACH LAPSED CATHOLICS



'INVITE ONE BACK'—What would happen if clergy and parishioners personally reached out to Catholics who have stopped attending Mass to invite them to come back, telling them they are missed and wanted in the parish community? "The Eucharistic Revival's Invite One Back initiative challenges everyone to invite one person back to Mass," said Lynn Melendez, diocesan Director of Family Life, Evangelization, and Youth. "If everyone in the parish asked one person to go with them, think what a difference this would make for every parish. We all just need to make the effort to ask." (Getty)

By Lauretta Brown, OSV News

What would happen if clergy and parish leaders personally reached out to Catholics who have stopped attending Mass to invite them to come back, telling them they are missed and wanted in the parish community? This is the question and challenge the US bishops are posing as their National Eucharistic Revival initiative focuses on parish efforts this year.

"We all know the reality that 'Keep Holy the Lord's Day' is no longer a motive for a significant percentage of our Catholic population," said Bishop Edward Rice. "Little by little, the hobbies of life have crept into Lord's Day to such an extent that the parking lot of the local athletic center or golf course is more crowded on a Sunday morning than the parking lot of the local parish."

As part of the National Eucharistic Revival, a Website of resources has been created to assist in this year of Parish Renewal, including the 'Invite One Back Initiative. This is a parish-based effort to reach the lapsed members of the flock, to invite them back to the celebration of Holy Mass and revitalize their sacramental life.

"The Eucharistic Revival's Invite One Back initiative challenges everyone to invite one person back to Mass," said Lynn Melendez, diocesan Director of Family Life, Evangelization, and Youth. "If everyone in the parish asked one person to go with them, think what a difference this would make for every parish. We all just need to make the effort to ask."

The bishops launched resources in early March as part of the "Invite One

Back" initiative, equipping clergy and parish leaders to invite those who have stopped attending Sunday Mass to fill the pews once again.

"The Invite One Back Initiative compliments our diocesan priorities of holiness, discipleship, and witness," Bishop Rice said. "The beauty of this program is in its simplicity."

Whom are you called to invite?

Many people simply didn't return to the liturgy after the COVID-19 pandemic restricted in-person Mass attendance in 2020. One 2022 study from Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate showed a 7% decline in adult Catholics attending Sunday Mass compared with pre-COVID data.

The revival Website notes that in 2020, a "significant portion of Catholics lost connection with their local parish during the shutdowns, and just never came back. It's time to bring them home." The Website also points to Pew data from 2014, which found that 13% of all US adults are former Catholics.

"The goal of this initiative is to fill the pews again," the Website says. "To do that, we all need to invite back everyone who has left in a way that makes sure they feel seen and desired as an individual member of your parish family. Whom are you called to invite home?"

In his introductory letter to parish leaders, Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, MN, wrote, "Our efforts in evangelization and inviting Catholics back to Mass are about guiding people to intimate encounters with Jesus Christ and leading souls to salvation, allowing them to experience God's love, mercy, and

goodness."

Bishop Cozzens serves as chairman of the board of the National Eucharistic Congress, Inc.

"It is important to invite these people back because it is a great act of love! It is also one of the simplest and most effective ways to evangelize," he emphasized. "Love desires to be shared once it is received. The source and summit of the Christian life is participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice, where we encounter the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament."

The initiative stresses the unique power of invitation, saying that for those who have left parishes, "an invitation reminds them that they belong within our community and that their presence is missing."

Welcome & witness

"Through the Eucharistic Revival Invite One Back Website, each parish has access to a variety of resources to reach out and invite someone back," Melendez said. "Start with someone who trusts you, a family member, friend, or co-worker. You don't have to go talk to strangers unless you are called to do that."

The Website encourages clergy and parish leadership to "make a list of parishioners you haven't seen in a while or people who used to be members of your parish" to immediately begin praying for them and start discerning "how you can best reach each member of that group, and make a plan to contact each one of them in whatever way would be most meaningful."

"One of the challenges that came up during the recent Synod discussions was that the widowed and divorced often don't

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The next issue of **The Mirror** will be **June 21, 2024**. Sign up to receive the diocesan newspaper via Email in digital format: Contact Debbie Thompson at (417) 866-0841, or Email: dthompson@dioscg.org.



The Summit
Discovering the Catholic Family Mission

SPEAKERS

LEJEUNE

SHEA

SAT., SEPT. 28, 2024
SPRINGFIELD, HOLY TRINITY PARISH

SAT., OCT. 26, 2024
CAPE GIRARDEAU, ST. VINCENT DE PAUL PARISH

SAVE the DATE!

Marcel LeJeune is the President and Founder of Catholic Missionary Disciples. As a Catholic evangelist, international speaker, and award-winning author, LeJeune loves to share his greatest passion - helping others come to know the love of Jesus and how to share that love with others. He is married to Kristy and they have five children.

Monsignor James Patrick Shea serves as president of the University of Mary. Deeply committed to the education and formation of young people, Monsignor Shea is a priest of the Diocese of Bismarck.



COME, AND YOU WILL SEE

Bp. Edward M. Rice

Let's institute a strong prayer campaign with First Saturday Masses

I recently received a letter dated May 27, 2024, from Archbishop Emeritus Robert J. Carlson of Saint Louis. In that letter, he highlights the fact that Missouri is one of the states of our nation that has strong pro-life laws protecting the infant in the womb by outlawing abortion. He goes on to say that he supports a strong media response to stop any efforts to overturn those laws but then suggested that along with this campaign, there must be a strong **prayer campaign**, invoking the

help of the intercession of our Blessed Mother.

He then recommended offering the Votive Mass of Our Lady on the first five Saturdays of July, August, September, October, and November, before Election Day, Nov. 5. He suggested the people in the diocese begin a "rosary campaign" for life, daily if possible. Of course, all our priests and deacons are encouraged to preach on the gift of life. I have certainly tried to raise awareness of the efforts of outside money and influence to make Missouri an abortion state and will continue to do so. But I do think that now is the time to initiate a spiritual campaign, invoking our Blessed Mother.



FIRST SATURDAY MASSES & ROSARY FOR LIFE

Please check with your local parish and participate in the **Votive Mass of Our Lady followed by a rosary for life, marriage, and family** on the first five Saturdays of **July 6, Aug. 3, Sept. 7, Oct. 5, and Nov. 2**, before Election Day, invoking our Blessed Mother in our efforts to not enshrine the right to an abortion in our Missouri Constitution and to uphold the dignity of life in all its stages.

Parishes with First Saturday Masses

- St. Canera, Neosho
- St. Mary, West Plains
- Holy Trinity, Marshfield
- St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Springfield
- St. William, Buffalo
- St. Peter the Apostle, Joplin
- Holy Trinity, Aurora

help of the intercession of our Blessed Mother. He then recommended offering the Votive Mass of Our Lady on the first five Saturdays of July, August, September, October, and November, before Election Day, Nov. 5. He suggested the people in the diocese begin a "rosary campaign" for life, daily if possible. Of course, all our priests and deacons are encouraged to preach on the gift of life. I have certainly tried to raise awareness of the efforts of outside money and influence to make Missouri an abortion state and will continue to do so. But I do think that now is the time to initiate a spiritual campaign, invoking our Blessed Mother.

I ask all pastors, if possible, to offer up a **First Saturday Mass on July 6, Aug. 3, Sept. 7, Oct. 5, and Nov. 2**. Since Nov. 2 is All Souls Day, the specific intention can still be for the pro-life cause while the prayers for All Souls must be celebrated. Many of our parishes already offer the Rosary before or after Mass, but I would ask that on these specific dates, the rosary be included. If your parish does not offer a First Saturday Mass, please find a parish nearby and attend.

I have asked Sr. Janine Tran, CMR, Director of our Respect Life Office to coordinate this effort. At press time, she has probably already reached out to gather the list of parishes that already have a Saturday morning Mass. This information will then be disseminated so that those who desire to participate in this Prayer Campaign can do so.

I have to say that with all of the business of the "decline to sign" and billboards and our lobbying through the Missouri

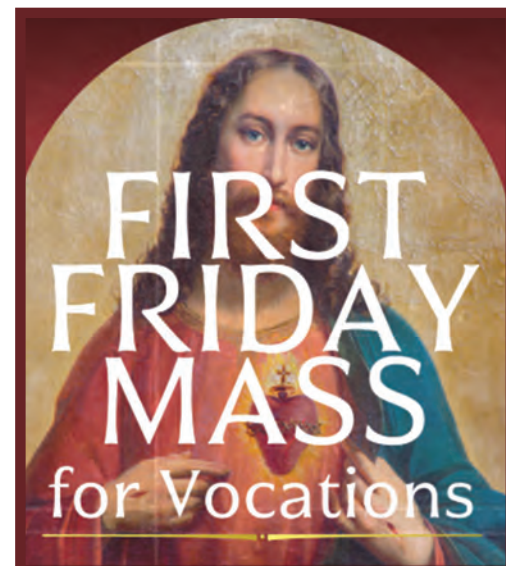
Catholic Conference, maybe the simple response of prayer was sort of forgotten. I am grateful for Archbishop Carlson's letter calling us to this prayer campaign through the intercession of Our Lady. The devotion of the five First Saturdays is part of the message of Fatima. The five Saturdays correspond to the offenses and blasphemies committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, blasphemies against her Immaculate Conception, her virginity, her divine motherhood, hatred toward the Immaculate Mother, and insults against her sacred images.

With the threat of abortion in our state, along with the many protests on our nation's campuses, drug abuse, pornography, the rise of atheism and religious indifference, we need this devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary more than ever. The devotion includes confession, but it does not have to be on that First Saturday; the worthy reception of Holy Communion, and praying the rosary, with the purpose of making reparation to her Immaculate Heart. In a letter to Cardinal Caffarra, who had been commissioned by Pope St. John Paul II to establish the Pontifical Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family, Sr. Lucia of Fatima wrote, "The final battle between the Lord and the kingdom of Satan will be about marriage and the family. Don't be afraid, because whoever works for the sanctity of marriage and the family will always be fought against and opposed in every way, because this is the decisive issue. Nevertheless, Our Lady has already crushed his head."

I hope that as many parishes as possible will be able to implement these five First Saturday Masses along with the rosary. And I will look at my own

calendar to see where I can participate as well.

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



Join Bishop Rice on the First Friday of each month to pray for an increase in Vocations to the Priesthood and religious life in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Fri., July 5
10:00 a.m. | O'Reilly Catholic Student Center
Springfield |
| Fri., Aug. 2
9:30 a.m. | St. Peter the Apostle Parish
Joplin |
| Fri., Aug. 2
12:00 p.m. | Mercy Hospital
Joplin |
| Fri., Sept. 6 | TBA |

2024 DIOCESAN DEVELOPMENT FUND
United in the Sacred Heart
One Church, East to West

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR CONTRIBUTION?

DIOSCG.COM



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.

April 26, 1991 With some of the directions in which the film industry is going, one commentator was heard to say, "Thinking about some of today's movies, one can understand why the proposal of adding odor to the sound was dropped."

May 3, 1991 St. Vincent de Paul parishioners in Cape Girardeau plan to add classrooms and meeting space to

their parish facilities and I recently blessed the construction site. Bulldozers had already excavated the earth in preparation for the building's new foundation. Before the blessing, a pre-school girl asked me, "Bishop, are you going to bless our new swimming pool?"

May 17, 1991 In a bank vault (I was told recently by a parishioner), a \$100 bill, a \$50 bill, and a \$1 bill were

having a conversation. They had become tattered through many years of use and were being taken out of circulation. "I've had a wonderful life," the \$100 bill said. "I, too, have had a good life: I've been to Paris, to five-star hotels, and palatial homes on remote islands," said the \$50 bill. "Where have you been?" the \$100 and \$50 bills asked the \$1 bill. "To church, to church, to church..." came the reply.

NOTRE DAME CHICK-FIL-A LEADERSHIP ACADEMY CAPS OFF ITS INAUGURAL YEAR

by Jordan Eastridge

Cape Girardeau

In October, 27 sophomores kicked off the inaugural year of the Chick-fil-A Leadership Academy program at Notre Dame. The Chick-fil-A Leadership Academy is a national high school leadership program focused on impact through action.

Our students completed three service projects, including a unique impact project where students worked to put the leadership principles they learned in the classroom into practice into the community. Students also participated in monthly leader labs where they learned timeless leadership principles through engaging curriculum.

The group's first service project was titled *Million Book Giveaway*. Chick-fil-A provided 1,500 books for area grade schools. Notre Dame students delivered the books and read to students at Jefferson Elementary, St. Francis Xavier, Guardian Angel, St. Denis, St. Joseph and St. Mary.

The second project was *Do Good December*, where students made door decorations for the Christmas season. Students delivered the decorations and visited with residents of the Life Care Center of Cape Girardeau.

Brian House, Cape Girardeau Chick-



fil-A manager and owner, talks to students during a leader lab.

For their impact project, students were tasked with taking the leadership skills learned during leader labs and creating a project that helped their community. Together, students decided to collect items for families in need.

The impact project kicked off in February with Hallways for a Cause during Notre Dame's Homecoming Week. For Homecoming, each class decorated their hallway based on the week's theme. Each hallway had a collection box, and viewers were encouraged to make a donation towards their favorite decorated hallway. Through Hallways for a Cause, the Chick-fil-A Leadership Academy raised \$3,848.06 for the Annalee Acts of Kindness organization, which went to purchase diapers, blankets and sleepers for families in need.

For the final push for the Impact Project, students



▲ **CHECK PRESENTATION**—Notre Dame Chick-fil-A Leadership Academy presents the Annalee Acts of Kindness organization with a donation. (The Mirror)

chose to focus on collecting items for LifeHouse to support their grand opening in Cape Girardeau. Students wrote letters to businesses, schools and parishes asking to display a collection box at their location to collect the needed items. Students then hosted a

drive at Notre Dame. In total, Notre Dame's Chick-fil-A Leader Academy collected over 4,000 tooth care, hair care, hygiene and body care items for LifeHouse. Students also applied for a grant through the Chick-fil-A Leader Academy for their Impact Project, and received \$250 to be donated to LifeHouse.

"To say I am proud of this first group of Chick-fil-A Leader Academy students is an understatement," said Laura Halter, director of student life at Notre Dame and Chick-fil-A Leadership Academy advisor. "We went into the program not knowing what to expect and the students embraced the opportunity to serve, and went above and beyond. From the very beginning, they were all in with whatever we asked them to do. What impressed me the most is how their leadership and confidence grew throughout the year. I have to thank Mrs. Garner and Mrs. Gremaud for their help and support of the Chick-fil-A program at Notre Dame. Mrs. Kate House, our Chick-fil-A Leadership Academy representative, was outstanding in her support and generosity throughout our program, and is the perfect model of what a servant leader does for their community."

Notre Dame is excited to announce its acceptance as a Chick-fil-A Leadership Academy school for the 2024-2025 school year. ©TM



▲ **LEADER LAB**—Brian House, Cape Girardeau Chick-fil-A manager and owner, talks to students during a leader lab. (The Mirror)

2023-2024 Chick-fil-A Leader Academy Students:

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| TJ Bolen | Parker Hulshof | Harper Rafferty |
| Sonnie Childress | Nate Imhoff | Annabelle Rhodes |
| Mary Tyler Cox | Jake Jansen | Elena Ripperda |
| Lily Coy | Cierra Landewee | Lucy Ripperda |
| Charleigh DeShaney | Chase Lawson | Samantha Schoolman |
| Emmie Gamel | Tanner Le | Maya Thebeau |
| Cole Graham | Parker Lemmons | Anna Turner |
| Ella Hahn | Grayson Maurer | Elle West |
| Kambri Huckstep | Minh Pham | Haley Wissinger |



Perpetual Adoration

Eucharistic Adoration is all about placing ourselves before our Lord, who is truly and sacramentally present to us in the Eucharist exposed on the altar in the monstrance. Eucharistic Adoration is about listening to His heart from your heart, about His love and joy for you, His plans and inspirations, His forgiveness and ministry, and His ways of helping you grow in your spiritual life, and service of others. Jesus present in the Monstrance (from the Latin word—monstrare, which means to show, which is the root for—demonstrate) enables us to fix our gaze on him for the reparation for sins; the intercession for healing of the world, among other needs or sources of gratitude.

Perpetual Adoration

(24 hours a day, seven days a week)

is held in two places in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. Please come and spend time in either of these locations:

Perpetual Adoration at Saint Francis Medical Center, Cape Girardeau Call Donna (573) 450-1451

Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration at Holy Trinity Church, Springfield Call Marilyn (417) 224-4043

Annual CYP report on Charter implementation & observations issued by US Bishops

By Gina Christian, OSV News

The US Catholic bishops' latest annual report on child and youth protection (CYP) shows abuse allegations are down, while safe environment protocols have taken root in the Church—but guarding against complacency about abuse prevention is critical, as is providing ongoing support for survivors.

On May 28, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection released the "2023 Annual Report—Findings and Recommendations on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People."

The 2023 report is the 21st since the charter was established by the US Catholic bishops in 2002 as a number of clerical abuse scandals emerged. Commonly called the Dallas Charter, the document lays out a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy, and includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability, and prevention of abuse.

Data for the report came from audits conducted by StoneBridge Business Partners, a Rochester, NY-based consulting firm that provides forensic and compliance services to a range of organizations. In addition, the report includes a 2023 survey by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) on allegations and costs related to the abuse of minors.

Resolutions of allegations

For the July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023, period, CARA's report found a more than 51% drop in historical allegations from those reported in the same period last year, from 2,704 in 2022 to 1,308 in 2023. The decrease was partly due to the resolution of allegations received as a result of lawsuits, said the report.

Another milestone was the full participation of all 196 dioceses and eparchies in the Charter audit, a 100% response rate that was unprecedented. Of those, 28 were visited on-site by StoneBridge, with another 17 audited remotely by the firm and 131 other dioceses and eparchies submitting data for the report.

At the same time, "the number of new allegations from minors remained similar to the prior year, at 17," wrote Suzanne Healy, chairwoman of the USCCB's National Review Board, a lay-led group that advises the bishops on preventing sexual abuse of minors,

in a Feb. 21 letter to USCCB president Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio that was included in the report.

Healy—a licensed marriage and family therapist who served as the victim assistance coordinator for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles from 2007 to 2016—also cautioned against "charter fatigue or complacency" in addressing sexual abuse in the Church.

"Even as we move forward with progress, we must acknowledge that without ongoing diligence and commitment, there is the possibility that failures can happen and we must be ready to act if they do. ... We must remain vigilant," wrote Healy. "One new allegation is one too many."

She wrote that 70% of the nation's dioceses and eparchies "conduct their own parish audits on the implementation of safe environment programs and policies," with the data showing "a correlation between parish audits and charter compliance."



USCCB 2023 ANNUAL REPORT CHARTER-

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection's 2023 annual report on the "Findings and Recommendations on the Implementation of the 'Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People'" released May 28, 2024. (OSV News photo/courtesy USCCB)

"Without monitoring implementation at the parish level, the risk of abuse increases," Healy warned. She noted the National Review Board supported the use of high reliability organization principles—used to maximize safety in complex



For centuries, children and young people have been victimized by sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and have experienced a horrible series of traumatic events. We must continue to be vigilant, as child molesters will continue to look for new and other creative methods to gain access to children and young people for the purpose of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is up to us, as safe adults, to prevent abuse and exploitation, and respond appropriately if we suspect it has already occurred.

— Robert Hugh Farley, MS

organizations where error stands to inflict great harm—to examine the 17 new claims for "any holes or practices that need to be shored up to prevent future abuse."

One such deficit was highlighted by a recent discovery in the Diocese of Greensburg, PA, that several safe environment clearance documents were missing from the file of a parish staffer who had previous criminal charges flagged in an FBI fingerprint check.

The gap came to light when the employee was arrested May 8 for unrelated alleged sexual assaults against a minor, which were said to have occurred off site from the two parishes at which he had worked. The pastor who oversaw both parishes had attested that he had personally reviewed the clearances and had found them in order. Bishop Larry J. Kulick of Greensburg took swift action, removing the pastor, placing the parish staff involved on leave, and ordering an immediate audit of all safe environment clearances throughout the diocese.

Audit observations

StoneBridge wrote in its assessment that "chancery offices (that) maintain regular face-to-face contact with parishes have better results in implementing training and background check procedures than those (that) do not," and recommended that diocesan officials periodically visit parishes and schools to review safe environment documentation.

Four dioceses and eparchies audited by StoneBridge were found to be noncompliant with various articles of the charter, but subsequently took steps

after the audit to address the issues and attain compliance: St. Mary Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in USA and Canada, the Chaldean Diocese of St. Thomas the Apostle USA, and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee initially failed to meet review board requirements. St. Mary Queen of Peace along with the Ukrainian Eparchy of St. Nicholas in Chicago also lacked safe environment training for minors during the 2023 audit period.

StoneBridge also found several issues at more than 25% of the dioceses and eparchies audited:

- A struggle to maintain functioning review boards, which serve as consultative bodies for their bishops, due to lack of meetings, members, bylaw compliance, policy reviews, and understanding of member roles.
- A lack of language in child protection policies regarding either child sexual abuse content or "individuals who habitually lack the use of reason."
- Ineffective monitoring by dioceses and eparchies to ensure compliance with their existing safe environment programs, with a lack of updated documentation and visitation to parishes and schools.
- Outdated or missing letters of promulgation from bishops on their safe environment programs.

Among the problems StoneBridge identified in less than 25% of the dioceses and eparchies:

- Some clergy, employees, and volunteers were not trained or background checked, but nonetheless had contact with minors.

- Offers by the bishop or his representative to meet with victims and their families were not specified in the policies or were not made on a timely basis.
- Abuse reporting procedures were not consistently displayed at parishes and schools, or were not available in all languages in which liturgies were offered, thereby limiting the ability of non-English speakers to file complaints.
- Documented policies regarding accused clergy were lacking with regard to a presumption of innocence, retention of civil and canonical counsel, steps to restore a cleric's good name in the case of an unsubstantiated allegation, or clergy transfers.
- Lack of a formal policy on communicating with the public regarding clerical sexual abuse of minors.

The CARA survey included in the 2023 report showed that between July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023, reporting dioceses and eparchies paid more than \$260.5 million in allegation-related costs—99% higher than that paid during the previous fiscal year. Of the 2023 total, 73% represented victim settlements, with 19% dedicated to attorney fees.

Over the past 10 years, the Catholic dioceses and eparchies in the US alone have paid more than \$2 billion in costs regarding abuse allegations.

Lifelong cost to survivors

But the cost to abuse survivors is far greater, said both Archbishop Broglio and Healy in the report.

“Theirs is a lifelong journey and the mission of the Church is a lifelong commitment to accompany them on this healing journey ... to minister, even to those who believe they have lost God along the way and left the Church,” wrote Healy, noting that during the audit period, 183 new survivors and their families received pastoral care and 1,662 survivors and their families receive ongoing pastoral care.

“I am deeply sorry for their suffering,” wrote Archbishop Broglio in his preface to the 2023 report. “These numbers are not just numbers. The statistics are the many stories and accounts of the betrayal of trust and the lifelong journey towards recovery.”

The archbishop also wrote that he was “grateful” to victim survivors “for holding all of us accountable,” stressing as well the importance of countering abuse amid a landscape “in flux,” given both technological and therapeutic developments.

“I pray that together, we continue working toward the goal of ending the scourge of child sexual abuse, not only in the Church but in society,” wrote Archbishop Broglio. ©OSV News

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

 NOTES: The full text of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection "2023 Annual Report—Findings and Recommendations on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" is available at <https://www.usccb.org/resources/2023%20Annual%20Report.pdf>

ABUSE ALLEGATIONS DOWN, BUT SAFE ENVIRONMENT 'FATIGUE' A RISK, WARNS ANNUAL REPORT

Washington

The US Catholic bishops' latest annual report on child and youth protection shows abuse allegations are down, while safe environment protocols have taken root in the Church—but guarding against complacency about abuse prevention is critical, as is providing ongoing support for survivors. On May 28, the bishops released their “2023 Annual Report—Findings and Recommendations on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.”

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Another milestone was the full participation of all 196 dioceses and eparchies in the Charter audit, a 100% response rate that was unprecedented. But the report found that over the past 10 years, the Catholic dioceses and eparchies in the US alone have paid more than \$2 billion in costs regarding abuse allegations.

Suzanne Healy, chairwoman of the USCCB's National Review Board, emphasized in the report that as the Church moves forward, it cannot risk “fatigue or complacency. We must remain vigilant.” ©OSV News

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cape Girardeau—The Catholic Social Ministry Food Pantry will hold a **Yard Sale**, Thu, July 25, 7 a.m.-6 p.m.; Fri., July 26, 7 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sat., July 27, 7 a.m.-12 noon, at St. Mary School gymnasium located at 614 William St. All proceeds to benefit the Catholic Food Pantry.


Cape Girardeau—The Friends of Saint Francis will hold its annual **Golf Tournament**, Fri., Aug 16, 6:30 a.m.-5 p.m., at the world class Dalhousie Golf Club. To register a team or sponsor the event, please visit www.foundation.sfmcc.net/golf or contact Nathan Gautier, Development Officer-Special Events, at (573) 331-3187. Registration ends Mon., July 1.

Conway—Please join us for **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy** at 3 p.m.,

on the Second Saturday at Sacred Heart Parish, located at 310 S. Spruce St. All are welcome.

Springfield—REGISTER NOW as St. Agnes Cathedral Parish, Immaculate Conception Parish, and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish are partnering to offer **Vacation Bible School** on the campus of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (SEAS), Tue.-Fri., June 18-22, 6-8:30 p.m. VBS is for kids that are going into K-6th grade. Those entering 7th grade and on up can volunteer! Pre-School (ages 3 and up) is available for parent volunteers. Registration forms may be found on the SEAS Website: <https://www.seaschurch.org/vacation-bible-school>, in the Gathering Area, OR call the Parish PSR Office: (417) 887-6472, ext. 610.

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



HOLY HOUR with PILGRIMS

CAPE GIRARDEAU
 St. Mary Cathedral will have a Holy Hour, at 7 p.m., Tue., July 16, to pray with pilgrims from the Community of Jesus Crucified who are on their way to the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, IN. Join us as Fr. Michael Champagne, CJC, will give a talk on the Eucharist. Vocation stories will be shared by community members after Benediction. All are invited to attend!

ATTENTION: ADULT CATHOLIC MEN
 You are invited to the Southeast Missouri...



CATHOLIC MAN NIGHT
Men Meeting Jesus

Monday, July 15 | 6:30-9:00 pm
 Immaculate Conception, Jackson, MO

An evening of Adoration, Confession, & a Manly Meal with discussion to follow.

To help plan for food, please **RSVP to SEMOCatholicManNight@gmail.com** 'SEMO Catholic Man Night' on Facebook or text 573-275-5214



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Congratulations

NOTRE DAME REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, Class of '24!



ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2023-24 School Year

ACADEMIC HONORS

- **88% of the 2024 class** received academic scholarships in excess of \$10 million
- **13 students** achieved a score in the Top 5% on the ACT
- Summa Cum Laude (minimum 4.0 gpa average) - **24 students**
- Magna Cum Laude (minimum 3.75 gpa average) - **19 students**
- Cum Laude (minimum 3.5 gpa average) - **14 students**
- National Merit Commended Scholar and Perfect Score on the ACT: **Luke Richey**
- College Board National Rural & Small Town Recognition Program Scholars: **Charlton Davis, Michael Edwards, Madison Keck, Eric Retz, Luke Richey, Blake Schreckenber, Ryan Smith, Charlie West**

CLASS of 2024 VALEDICTORIAN: Luke Richey

Luke Richey has been named Notre Dame Regional High School's Valedictorian for the class of 2024. Richey is the son of Wade & Rachel Richey of Cape Girardeau, MO.

At Notre Dame, Richey has served as president of the National Honor Society, secretary of the National Spanish Honor Society, president of FBLA, as well as sophomore and junior class presidents. He was also captain of the scholar bowl team and as a member of both soccer and tennis teams. He has been named to the All-District Scholar Bowl team twice and the All-District and All-Conference Soccer teams once.

Richey is a 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program Finalist, a National Rural and Small Town Recognition Program Scholar, a Missouri Scholars 100 Recipient, a US Presidential Scholars Program Nominee, and a US Senate Youth Program State Finalist. He has received two gold medals on the National Spanish Exam, a bronze medal on the National French Exam, and medaled in five Math Field Day events. He has also received the Missouri STEM Signing Day Scholarship and the University of Missouri's Perfect Score and Stamps Scholarships.

Richey has also served as District 15 president and vice president for FBLA, and he is a two-time state champion in FBLA competitive events. Richey has attended the Missouri Scholars Academy, Missouri Boys State, and the University of Missouri's Constitutional Democracy Academy. He also participated in the 2024 Franciscan Volunteer Program.

Richey has not finalized his plans for after graduation, and is currently deciding between attending the University of Chicago, the University of Missouri, Bowdoin College, and Washington University in St. Louis. He plans to pursue a major in the field of engineering.

"I would like to thank my family, teachers, coaches, and friends for always supporting me and helping me become who I am today," Richey said.



RICHEY

CLASS OF 2022 SALUTATORIAN: Blanca Albuixech-Robinson

Blanca Albuixech-Robinson has been named Notre Dame Regional High School's Salutatorian for the class of 2024. She is the daughter of Lourdes Albuixech and Colin Robinson, and is a member of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, in Herrin, IL.

Since her freshman year, Albuixech-Robinson has been a varsity swimmer for Notre Dame. She participates in the Friends of the Library Club, and is on the makeup crew for both the fall play and spring musical. She is the vice president, secretary, and treasurer for the National French Honor Society. Albuixech-Robinson says she spends the majority of her time working at Wal-Mart to save for college.

Albuixech-Robinson studied abroad in France during her junior year. "Although I did miss out on certain events and have had to finish some credits this year, I do not regret it at all," Albuixech-Robinson said. "I believe the experience gave me a wider perspective of the world and even solidified my interest in physics thanks to my teacher, Mr. Mulley. During my time there, I was able to learn a third language and make connections with people I would not have otherwise. I believe that if anyone has the chance to study abroad, they should."

After graduation, Albuixech-Robinson plans to attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to major in Aerospace Engineering while obtaining a double minor in French and Astrophysics.

"I would like to thank mi mamá especially for always pushing me to work harder and to not give up even when it seems to be the easiest option," said Albuixech-Robinson.



ALBUIXECH-ROBINSON

Once again, the graduating seniors of Notre Dame have outdone themselves in their academic accomplishments. In the realm of sports our student athletes have won district tournaments, qualified for state tournaments, and have broken school records. Is that what we are all about?

Seniors have participated in the Franciscan volunteer program, participated in summer mission trips, have been leaders for the Kairos, and helped the homeless and fed the hungry. But behind all of these accomplishments is something much more

profound: Jesus Christ is the reason for the existence of this school. His message of love should permeate every classroom from physics to algebra to Spanish.

Notre Dame is more than just preparing students for college and career because Catholic education aims for a deeper incorporation of each individual into the heart of the Church. When Catholic Education is at its best, it offers a more noble, higher understanding of who we are, reminding each one of us of our ultimate goal—union with God. We were created to worship God in this world and to live

with Him in the next and reaching that goal is what Catholic education is called to help accomplish. Catholic education gives our young people a vision, a vision of how to go through this world and how to reach the world to come. Catholic Education offers a vision of how our world can be, meeting the needs of others, serving Christ in the poor, while achieving union with Christ.

Graduating seniors, you're not finished. Take Notre Dame with you; take Our Lady with you and make us proud. **—Bishop Edward Rice**

Congratulations

SPRINGFIELD CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Class of '24!

ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2023-24 School Year

ACADEMIC HONORS

- The 94 members of the Class of 2024 were offered more than \$15.4 million in scholarships!
- 44 Seniors are recognized as Summa Cum Laude (4.00+)
- 12 Seniors are recognized as Magna Cum Laude (3.75-3.99)
- 20 Seniors are recognized as Cum Laude (3.50 -3.74)
- 50 Seniors are members of the National Honor Society.
- 18 Seniors received a 31 or better on the ACT qualifying for Missouri's "Bright Flight" Scholarship.
- 2 National Merit Scholarship Winners

TOP TEN STUDENTS

- Jackson Ahrens
- Sophia Brink
- Haley Brown
- Kate Hull
- Mayrol Juarez-Chiovatero
- Madeline Meyer
- Alyssa Nanneman
- John Otto
- Lauren Singleton
- Britney Ung



Springfield, MO

I received a text from the parents of a 2023 graduate, a message from their son, away at college. It said, "Thank you guys, seriously, for sending me to [Springfield] Catholic. I know I complained a lot about high school, but it really is paying off. This year has been really easy for me and I am transitioning into a second year role. Compared to my friends who are struggling with writing 101 and biology that I learned my junior year, you guys would be very surprised at what people are struggling with here." Not only that, but their son added that he also joined a Bible study group. I would like to consider this to be a

success story, and not a rare one I hope. A success story that speaks to the purpose of Catholic education: more than preparing students for college and career. Catholic education aims for a deeper relationship with Christ, being incorporated into the Church, and the even higher goal of preparing our young people to reach their eternal destiny with God in heaven.

We are made for the worship of God in this world, and to live with Him in the next. And that is what Catholic education is called to help facilitate. All that is done here, in academics, sports, drama, and other extracurricular activities has the same

goal of helping them to flourish and be the best version of who they are, along with the ultimate goal of proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

I hope and pray that maybe next year, a lot of our parents will get similar texts from their son or daughter, saying how well prepared they were for college and that oh, by the way, I'm part of the Newman Center, I'm in a Bible study, I'm going on a retreat, I love to go to Sunday Mass at the campus. Congratulations to our graduates: your education is not finished, nor is your faith.

-Bishop Edward Rice

Congratulations

MCAULEY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Class of '24!



Joplin, MO

TOP HONORS—McAuley Catholic High School Valedictorian Jenna Lupicki, Bishop Edward Rice, and Juliet Anreder, Salutatorian posed for a photo after commencement on May 12. *(The Mirror)*

MCAULEY CLASS OF 2024—Graduating McAuley Catholic High School seniors posed with Bishop Edward M. Rice, Deacon Rob Huff, diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools, and area pastors The Very Rev. Joseph Weidenbenner, Fr. Andrew Williams, and Fr. Brian Straus, in St. Mary Catholic Church, Joplin. *(The Mirror)*

GRADUATING CLASS for the 2023-24 School Year

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Juliet Olivia Anreder | • Jenna Kathryn Lupicki |
| • Rocco Henry Bazzano-Joseph | • Elizabeth Grace Martinez |
| • Lillian Maeve Beyer | • Kendall Ashton Ramsey |
| • Hannah Jolene Connell | • Ethan Joseph Staab |
| • Sydney Diane Englert | • Nicholas Edward Vincent Svec |
| • Avery Mae Gardner | • Dylan Thomas Taffner |
| • Chase Riegel Gardner | • Bradley Oliver Wagner |
| • Abigail Grace Gooch | • Kloee Anne Williamson |
| • Jake Robert Higginbotham | |

These are some of the words that our seniors shared in letters that they wrote to next year's incoming freshman. After reading these and the other comments, I was stunned in a most beautiful way.

*Turn to God and he will always be with you. *Cast all your fears, worries, and doubts onto Him and let Him steer. Just do your part and put in the work.

*God's love is unwavering.

Now, I'm not going to canonize the graduating class. I'm sure they've had their moments when they were less than saintly. I'm sure the parents and teachers would agree! But as we come here to acknowledge their academic achievement and celebrate graduation,

highlighting these statements reflecting on their faith, along with their academic accomplishment, bespeaks the best of what McAuley has to offer.

What would Mother Catherine McAuley have to say about all this? From her own writings, "Lord Jesus, implant your love in my heart. It is all I desire in this world or in the next!" My dear graduates, go forth from McAuley with the love of God in your heart, take that love of God with you, and in whatever you do, that will be enough. Let the words of Mother Catherine ring loud and strong in your hearts as you go forth from McAuley High School: "Lord Jesus, implant your love in my heart. It is all I desire in this world or in the next!" That would be a life well-lived.

-Bishop Edward Rice

WALKING WITH THE HOMELESS, BRINGING 'CHRIST TO THE CITY'

By Paula Wright Philadelphia, PA

Every weekday, a group of Catholic young adults begin walking through downtown Philadelphia to minister to the homeless. As part of the mission team for Christ in the City, **Aubrey Pichler**, a native of Springfield and former parishioner of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, has been one of these missionaries for about a year.

CHRIST IN THE CITY

Christ in the City is a Catholic non-profit, the mission of which is twofold: to form young adult Catholic missionaries and to walk with the homeless through a one- or two-year ministry.

With mission locations in downtown Denver and Philadelphia, Christ in the City fulfills its apostolate in homeless ministry through a well-rounded formation program. According to its Website, the sole purpose of Christ in the City is "to bring love where there is no love, to bring relationship where it does not exist."



PICHLER

"I graduated in May 2023 from Benedictine College in Atchison, KS. The ministry services on the campus would have mission trips during breaks and I got to attend a mission trip to Christ in the City Denver," Pichler said. "I knew nothing about Christ in the City going into it. But I got to live life with the full-time missionaries and learned a lot about the apostolate and poverty. From this experience, I determined that I really wanted to do a mission year after graduation before moving on to a career or graduate school."

WHAT IS THE DAILY LIFE OF A MISSIONARY?

Christ in the City is a community-based missionary life with all the missionaries living and working together in one house in a life of prayer and charity. Every Monday through Friday, after morning prayer and chores, teams of young men and women head to the streets on pre-assigned routes to begin interacting with the homeless.

"We each have an assigned team and an assigned route. For instance, I am in a team of four people, two men and two women assigned to the old city area of Philadelphia including the Pines' Landing, which is a river port area," Pichler said. "We walk the same route every morning and we make friends over time with the people that stay on the route consistently, sometimes people

move around a little so we might have just one-time encounters."

After their morning walks, missionaries typically attend Mass before returning home. Afternoons are dedicated to internships and class learning. Evenings include a community night once a week, small group check-ins, and two nights are spent in ministries: either a street walk, going to a nursing home, or leading a youth group.

"The night ministry I am in is affiliated with the Newman Center at Pennsylvania State (University)," Pichler said, "and we train college students and lead them on a street walk on Wednesday and Friday nights to give them a chance to see what it is like to encounter the homeless."

◀ HOMELESS MINISTRY-

Springfield native **Aubrey Pichler** is part of the mission team for Christ in the City, serving the homeless in Philadelphia. She is a former parishioner of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish. (Photo courtesy of Christ in the City)

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE MINISTRY?

Christ in the City addresses the poverty of loneliness, specifically among the homeless. Through the daily interactions of the missionaries, the homeless begin to rebuild their human interactions and sense of dignity.

"We talk a lot at Christ in the City about the poverty of loneliness," Pichler said. "We try to form lasting relationships with people. One of the common roots of loneliness, and specifically homelessness, is of course the things on the surface, such as losing a job and addiction but underlying that is a poverty of ruptured relationships. Very often, for various reasons, when these people have faced hardship in life, they haven't had people to turn to. Bridges were burned, etc. Very often the problem with homelessness isn't just finding a roof to cover your head. It is the reintroduction into society and rebuilding of human connections. At Christ in the City, we are focused on that latter part. We can of course accompany our homeless friends to different resources as they need them, but we are primarily there to show them what it is like to have a support system again. To help them get in contact with family members that maybe they lost track of years ago. To provide friendship and love, so they can be seen and known and loved. It is amazing how

much loneliness affects everyone, not just the homeless, and you will notice a renewed sense of dignity whenever others recognize your life, your humanity."

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE OUTCOMES ONCE CONNECTIONS ARE MADE?

"We call the state that a lot of our homeless friends are in a survival mindset. Reconnection with humanity is our primary concern, but once people have that restored sense of dignity, the mindset changes, a person begins setting goals, there is more motivation there," said Pichler. "Our primary focus is the human connection, and whenever that connection is restored, we see a certain change in our friends to take the next steps they need to take. That might mean going to an AA meeting, applying for housing, or applying for identification. We have a YouTube channel and spotlight different homeless friends we have walked with and talk about their journey and experience. There have been several that have established support systems, like reconciliation with family. I have a

“It is not enough to give bread and clothing; it is the warmth of the human heart that is needed.”

– St Vincent de Paul

good friend whose name is Crow, and we were able to get him reconnected with his family in South Carolina and he went there for Christmas. Just little things like that, very, very small steps, but they are huge when someone hasn't seen their family for maybe 20 years."

HOW DID YOU BECOME COMFORTABLE ENGAGING WITH THE HOMELESS?

"Good question. One thing that is very, very critical is that we go out on to the streets in teams. No one is ever alone," Pichler said. "For several reasons, we have as many women as men on a team. So being able to walk in teams and have great communication with teammates is huge with feeling comfortable on the



▲ **CHRIST IN THE CITY MISSIONARIES** walk with the homeless through a one- or two-year ministry in downtown Denver and Philadelphia. Its sole purpose, "is to bring love where there is no love, to bring a relationship where it does not exist."

(Photo courtesy of Christ in the City)

street. I really became comfortable once I got into the mindset of what it might be like to be homeless. What it might be like to not be talked to and not to be named for potentially months. For someone, a familiar face, coming up to them throughout the week brings great joy. It is helpful when practicing empathy to realize they are a human being just like me. They have a family somewhere, they might be a son, a brother, a dad, a brother, just realizing that restores the sense of humanity. The person probably isn't dangerous, they just look a little rough around the edges. Getting into that mindset has made me quite comfortable starting out conversations and building friendships on the streets."

WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON YOU BEING A CHRIST IN THE CITY MISSIONARY?

"Oh, my goodness, so many things. I grew up Catholic and I always thought I knew how to live the gospel. I thought whenever I came into this mission I would be bringing the faith of Jesus to them," Pichler said. "But I am really finding that they are the face of Christ. I have met some of the wisest people on the streets and some people that have a stronger faith than I ever thought I had. They are people, but they find great consolation, love, and humility in their brokenness. That is something that people sometimes like to sweep under the rug: our own brokenness. I know I do," Pichler said.

ARE THERE PLANS TO EXPAND THE PROGRAM BEYOND DENVER AND PHILADELPHIA?

"Right now, we are just in those two

Continued next page...



▲ PRAYER & FRIENDSHIP—Christ in the City missionaries pray with the homeless in downtown Denver and Philadelphia, offering friendship and support. (Photo courtesy of Christ in the City)

'CHRIST TO THE CITY' *continued...*

locations, but we do go to satellite locations during the summer months," Pichler said. "This summer, our Summer Service will be in five to seven satellite locations. We are affiliated with the diocese we are in, so a lot of it is working with that diocese to see what resources are available."

ANYTHING ADDITIONAL YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?

"I would like to share that homelessness isn't just something in Philadelphia, we have homelessness in Springfield as well," Pichler said. "I would encourage everyone to look twice, you don't have to give them money if you're not comfortable with that. Often, we bring backpacks out with hand warmers, socks, snacks that are soft. Just having those things to give to people, it is a small gesture

but opens up a place for encounter. It is amazing the things you learn when talking to a homeless person. I encourage people to not be afraid, to step out of their comfort zone, and strike up a conversation with a homeless person. Jesus says, 'something you did for the least of my brothers, you did for me.'"

"Another great thing that people can do, aside from donations, is praying for the homeless," Pichler said.

"Friends that I know that could definitely use some prayers are Mike, who has cancer and is struggling with some addiction and reconciliation in his family," said Pichler. "In addition, Scott, Joe, Amber, Sam, Deonna, and Karen. Those are some individuals that would love some prayers."

For more information about Christ in the City, to listen to their Podcasts, or to donate, visit <https://christinthecity.org/>. ©TM

'INVITE ONE BACK' // *Continued from Page 1*

feel welcome," Melendez observed. "They feel as if everything in parishes is geared toward families and couples. The widowed and divorced are in a different state of life. I just recently received an email from someone divorced that reinforced this. The divorced especially often feel isolation and judgment, even those that have had a declaration of nullity. They need a sense of a loving community, a sense of our loving God. Without a loving and welcoming parish community, it is harder to sense the loving God. That is another reason this initiative is so important, to reach those that feel isolated or unwelcome."

When it comes to tools for reaching those who've stopped attending Mass, resources include letter and postcard templates as well as scripts for starting phone calls with former parishioners. Creativity and personalization are encouraged in these conversations

with the goal of listening to the individual and meeting them where they are.

"I believe the challenge is to make face-to-face contact, or by phone, and then follow up in writing," said Melendez. "Let them know you will be there personally with them; some may not be ready to go back [to church] but would be willing to come to a social gathering or for coffee. Engage with them to better understand why they aren't attending Mass. You can then respond appropriately, letting



PERSONAL CONTACT—An invitation can be as simple as accompanying a person to a parish social event. "I believe the challenge is to make face-to-face contact," said Lynn Melendez. "... Some may not be ready to go back [to church] but would be willing to come to a social gathering or for coffee. Engage with them to better understand why they aren't attending Mass."

(The Mirror)

them know they are heard and valued."

"This fall, our diocesan Summit guest speaker, Marcel LeJeune, president of Catholic Missionary Disciples Ministry, will be addressing how to reach those that have walked away to make them feel welcomed and

to bring them back," said Melendez, "and ultimately make them missionaries of the Church themselves."

Prayer also is a central part of the campaign, as the initiative calls for

parishes to put a prayer in the bulletin for the campaign as well as for parish groups to dedicate rosaries and Holy Hours for the effort.

"Let us pray earnestly for the Holy Spirit's guidance and fortitude to carry out this sacred mission," urged Bishop Cozzens, chairman of the board of the National Eucharistic Congress Inc. "Let us embrace each soul with open arms, rejoicing as they return to the embrace of the Church and our parish communities through the gift of the Eucharist."

©OSVNews

Lauretta Brown is culture editor for OSV News.

Paula Wright of Springfield-Cape Girardeau contributed to this article.

NOTE: Resources for National Eucharistic Revival's "Invite One Back" initiative can be found in English and Spanish at www.eucharisticrevival.org/invite-one-back.



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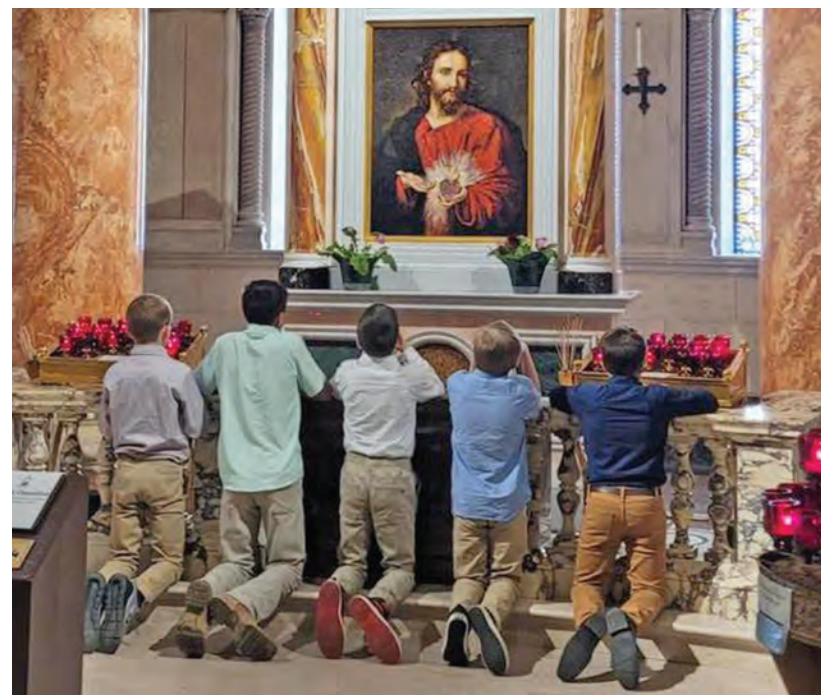
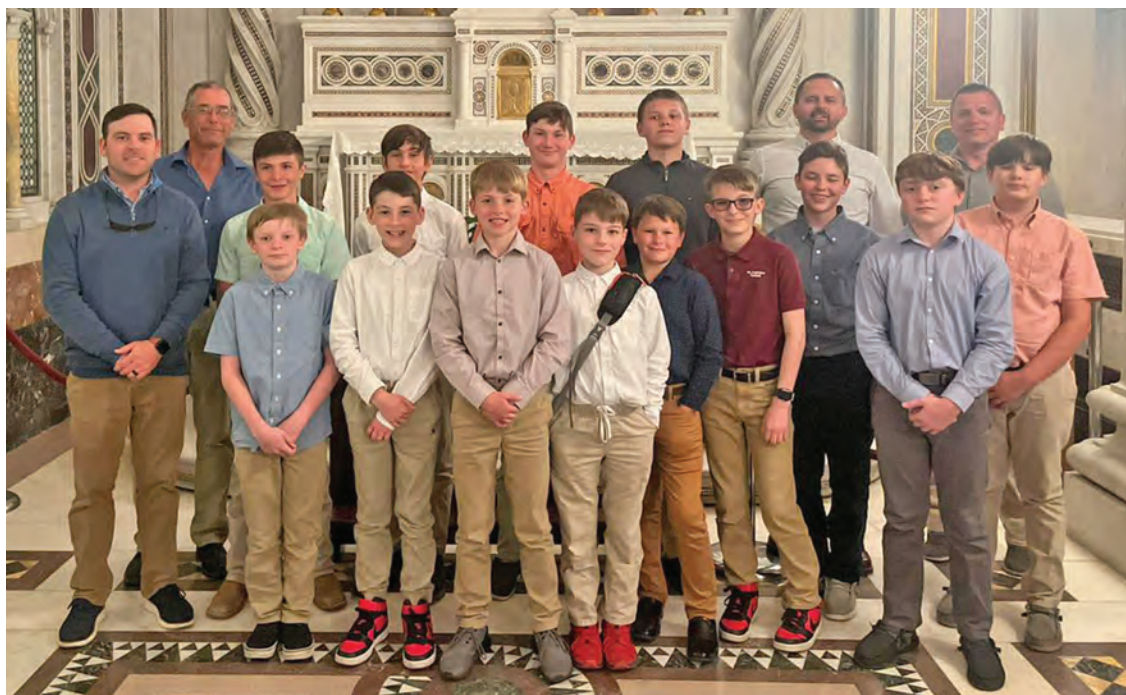
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MIDDLE-SCHOOLERS TOUR SEMINARY

Chaffee, MO

On Mon., April 22, Fr. Joseph Kelly, Pastor, and several dads took the 5th-8th grade boys from Guardian Angel Parish, Oran, and St. Ambrose Parish, Chaffee, to Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in St. Louis (Fr. Kelly's Alma Mater!) for a tour of the seminary and to learn about what life is

like there. Fr. Kelly reminded them that the seminary could be their home someday, if they discerned a vocation to the priesthood. After the seminary visit, and meeting diocesan seminarian Matt Byers who attends Kenrick, they enjoyed lunch and some ice cream from famous local Ted Drewes. The day concluded with a visit to the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis. ©TM




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Sacred Heart, St. Mary's in Joplin, and St. Peter the Apostle are partnering together to offer VBS for the greater Joplin area from July 22-26 at McAuley Catholic High School - 930 S. Pearl Ave.

Family Night is on July 26 with 5:30 Mass at St. Peter's, followed by a family picnic and concert of VBS songs.

VBS is for kids Preschool (age 4) through incoming 5th grade. Those entering 6th grade and up can volunteer! Adult volunteers needed. Must be Virtus trained. Contact Molly Zibert at mollyzibert@gmail.com to volunteer.

Register online at <https://tinyurl.com/JoplinVBS2024>



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Two Catholic radio stations launch in Jasper County

“Through the power of radio broadcasting, the network aims to reach and inspire individuals, fostering a deeper connection to their faith.” – Catholic Radio Network

Webb City, MO

On May 18, the birthday of Pope St. John Paul II, Catholic Radio Network (CRN) celebrated its 20th anniversary. For 20 years, CRN has been reaching audiences and offering Catholic-focused programming in Missouri, Kansas, and Colorado. Catholic Radio Network offers a variety of programs that include inspirational, talk radio, current events, and Catholic questions and answers. The variety of programs is designed to appeal to a wide audience and meet a variety of needs.



CATHOLIC RADIO—Jim O’Laughlin, president of Catholic Radio Network looked on as Bishop Edward Rice blessed the ground upon which sits the transmitters and tower for new AM and FM Catholic radio stations in the Webb City/Joplin area. *(The Mirror)*

Tune in locally

If you haven’t listened to their programming, tune to KQOH 91.9 FM in the Springfield market, and listeners in the Joplin/Webb City area may check out the new Joplin/Webb City stations KJCS 1100 AM or 92.1 FM to listen to a variety of Catholic programs. Bishop Edward M. Rice blessed and dedicated the new stations on March 12. The Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau has six Catholic radio stations: The three mentioned above plus K232FF 94.3 FM Cape Girardeau, and KHJM 89.1 FM Dexter and the Bootheel, run by Covenant Radio; and parish-based KFSS 94.5 FM Joplin.

In addition to radio programming, listeners can find a choice of five

different live streams, each offering different Catholic content on the CRN Website (www.CatholicRadioNetwork.com). The Catholic Radio Network App may also be downloaded from the Website. New programs that have introduced include, “The Bible in a Year” and “The Catechism in a Year” with Fr. Mike Schmitz and “Beacon of Truth” with Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers. ©TM

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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.

The top reasons people listen to Catholic radio:

- **94%** of listeners said they are more spiritually engaged and inspired.
- **83%** say they’ve learned a great deal about their Catholic faith.
- **69%** are better able to teach their children the truths of the faith.
- **47%** attend Mass more frequently.
- **31%** have returned to the Church because of the programming.

Source: Catholic Radio Network

TUNE IN TO LOCAL CATHOLIC RADIO AROUND THE DIOCESE!



KQOH	91.9 FM	Springfield
K232FF	94.3 FM	Cape Girardeau
KHJM	89.1 FM	Dexter & the Bootheel
KFSS	94.5 FM	Joplin
KJCW	1100 AM	Joplin
	92.1 FM	Carthage

Dear Friends in Christ,

You may have heard the news out of Jefferson City that the Missouri State Legislature has expanded the MOScholars initiative to include diocesan, parochial, and private schools. This program is funded by a tax credit model in which anyone who owes more than \$1,000 in annual Missouri state income tax can designate up to half of what they owe to the Bright Futures Fund as an Education Assistance Organization (EAO), which distributes the scholarship to students who meet the criteria. In this program, the state awards full credit to the participant on taxes owed.

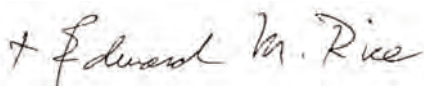
The bottom line is this can be a real game changer for our diocesan schools. While many of our schools are doing well, there are still empty desks which could be filled with students for whom their parents desire a Catholic education. A quick count of our Catholic schools in the Joplin, Springfield, and Cape Girardeau areas indicate a total of 633 available seats. The Missouri Scholars program has the potential to increase student enrollment in our Catholic schools from east to west.

The MOScholars initiative does not reduce the amount of funding designated for public schools. Anyone who owes more than \$1,000 in annual state income tax is eligible to participate: individuals, S-corporations, and corporations. (More information can be found at <https://treasurer.mo.gov/MOScholars/TaxCredits>.)

I ask you to participate in this worthwhile program. Let me be clear, there is no cost to you. It is a simple process in which you notify the State of Missouri that you want up to half of your state taxes to go to the Bright Futures Fund to help qualified families send their children to Catholic schools. The process to participate is very easy and can be accomplished in mere minutes by going to the Bright Futures Fund Website (www.brightfuturesfund.org). With the support of business leaders and individuals, we can make a big difference in our Catholic school enrollment. In turn, this will assist us in the mission of Catholic education, bringing our youth into a deeper relationship with Christ and his Church.

I am excited for this opportunity and thank you for joining me in this extraordinary endeavor.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



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



Bright Futures in our Catholic schools



By giving to the Bright Futures Fund of the MOScholars scholarship program, you'll provide scholarships for students to attend Catholic schools within the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau—many of whom could not attend without your help!

Here are some examples of how you could convert your state tax dollars into scholarship funds:

Household income	\$70,000	\$100,000	\$120,000	\$155,000	\$250,000
Total tax obligation this year	\$3,990	\$5,700	\$6,840	\$8,835	\$14,250
Amount directed to Bright Futures Fund	\$1,995	\$2,850	\$3,420	\$4,418	\$7,125
Adjusted tax obligation	\$1,995	\$2,850	\$3,420	\$4,418	\$7,125

Individuals can donate to BFF and reserve tax credits for any amount \$500 or more; credits can be claimed for up to 50% of each year's owed taxes.



brightfuturesfund.org | (417) 866-0841

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