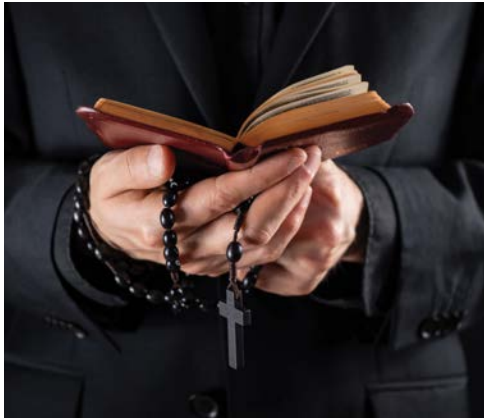


The CATHOLIC TIMES

THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS' INFORMATION SOURCE
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Inside this issue



More seminarians for diocese

A class of nine new seminarians will begin the discernment process this month, bringing the total number to 43 men discerning the priesthood for the diocese, Page 2



Sisters profess vows

Three sisters from religious orders serving in the diocese professed vows in July and August at Columbus St. Aloysius Church and in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Page 8



Time for football

The high school football season began during the third week of August for 10 diocesan teams, led by defending Division III state champion Columbus Bishop Watterson, Pages 16-17



Jubilee of Anniversaries

Robert and Mary Smithberger, celebrating 70 years of marriage, have their picture taken with Bishop Earl Fernandes after a Mass celebrating the Jubilee of Anniversaries on Aug. 16 at St. Joseph Cathedral, Page 3

Nine new seminarians boost total to 43 in diocese

By Hannah Heil

Catholic Times Reporter

Nine young men entered seminary this year for the diocese, bringing the total number to 43 in formation for the priesthood.

The nine will be split between the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus and Mount St. Mary's Seminary & School of Theology in Cincinnati. Five will study at the Cincinnati seminary and four will study in Columbus.

The class is a mixture of men entering seminary from high school, post-college and the workforce.

The nine will begin the propaedeutic stage of seminary, which can last between one to three years. It is a time of discernment as the men transition to seminary. Preparation is largely focused on human and spiritual formation rather than academics.

This year's cohort includes Benjamin Arnold from Columbus St. Leo the Great Oratory, Aron Aziz from Westerville St. Paul the Apostle, Joshua Dulin from West Jefferson Ss. Simon and Jude, Liam Hughes from Johnstown Church of the Ascension, Quang Nguyen

from Columbus Holy Family, Nicholas Schmelzer from Lancaster St. Bernadette, Charles Schoenlaub from Junction City St. Patrick, Dylan Shoemaker from New Albany Church of the Resurrection and Andrew Smith from Scioto County St. John Paul II parish.

Schmelzer, 18, recently graduated after being homeschooled through high school. His favorite class was religion. He said the priesthood "was something in the back of my head pretty much all throughout my life."

"There are a few times when I was like, well, if I didn't become a priest maybe I'd become an engineer or a firefighter. Later on, though, I just decided that I know I didn't want to go to college because a lot of different types of work just seem kind of repetitive."

Schmelzer will study at the Josephinum this fall.

He attended multiple Quo Vadis discernment retreats at the Josephinum and attended live-ins to experience seminary life. He was also involved in the Melchizedek Project at his parish, which gives young men an opportunity to discern the priesthood, and he was an altar server at St. Bernadette.

"Then I met Father (Ty) Tomson," he

said of the former St. Bernadette pastor currently studying in Rome. "He was different than a lot of the priests. He had a biretta (a square headpiece with three peaks). He wore a cassock (a long garment worn by clergy). It just looked cool and different."

"He was alive. That's really what sold it to me."

Hughes, 25, is entering seminary after graduating with a business degree from Franciscan University of Steubenville and spending three years as a missionary at Damascus Catholic Mission Campus in Knox County.

A desire to discover where God is leading him resulted in applying for seminary. Hughes said he is excited to discover if the priesthood is that path.

His time serving as a missionary at Damascus helped guide him in the decision.

"One thing that I really appreciated about my time there was, there was a deep emphasis on the radical call of Christianity, and that helps me realize that life with Jesus is the best thing that I could live for," he said. "If that means the priesthood, great. If that means something else, that's also great, but it's worth exploring."

Arnold, 18, will begin seminary at the

Josephinum this fall after graduating from high school. He was homeschooled all the way through.

Arnold said he began discerning the priesthood around age 15.

"It just was kind of like silent, just kind of an attraction to that," he explained. "I had a friend who was very influential in that decision. He was a lot like me – a homeschooling friend – and I was like, well, he's doing it. He's a normal guy. Certainly I should be able to."

Like Schmelzer, Arnold attended several Quo Vadis retreats at the Josephinum, seminary live-ins and participated in the Melchizedek Project to discern.

"I ended up getting a spiritual director and started discerning a little bit more seriously and just continued to feel more drawn to it as time went on," he said. "And then, eventually, I got to a point where I was like, I can't discern anymore outside of seminary. I've got to join or at least apply."

Aziz, 29, will begin formation at Mount St. Mary's this fall after working for several years after college.

He spent the past four years at St. Paul

See SEMINARIANS, Page 6

Two seminarians admitted for candidacy

Diocesan seminarians Dominic Ratliff and Ben Van Buren were admitted to candidacy for the priesthood on Thursday, Aug. 7 at Columbus St. Catharine of Siena Church.

Bishop Earl Fernandes admitted them during the rite of Admission to Candidacy for the Sacrament of Holy Orders at a Mass held at Van Buren's home parish. Ratliff is from Gahanna St. Matthew the Apostle Church.

Both seminarians will be entering in the Configuration stage of their priestly formation this fall at Mount St. Mary Seminary in Cincinnati.

Admission to Candidacy was

instituted in 1973 by Pope Paul VI as one of the steps toward ordination. During the simple ceremony, the aspirant states his intention to receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders and embrace the clerical state. He states that he's morally certain of his calling to be a priest and that he wishes to give himself wholeheartedly to this vocation. The bishop then accepts the aspirant as an official candidate.

The rite signifies that the diocesan bishop is open to eventually ordaining the candidate as a transitional deacon and then as a priest for the Church

The rite includes three components: the call to candidacy, the scrutiny of the candidate and the blessing of the candidate. The call is a symbol of the vocation, the scrutiny includes the bishop asking two questions to determine the candidate's resolve, and the blessing concludes the ceremony with prayers for the aspirant.

The seminarian's acceptance by the bishop serves as the first official recognition by the Church that the candidate is on a path toward the priesthood and is a public declaration that he has discerned a divine vocation to seek ordination.



Diocesan seminarians Dominic Ratliff (second from left) and Ben Van Buren were admitted to candidacy for the priesthood by Bishop Earl Fernandes on Aug. 7 at St. Catharine of Siena Church. Also present was Father Michael Haemerle (left), director of vocations for the diocese.

Photo courtesy Office of Vocations

Gaza - Special Collection



We join with Pope Leo and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in prayer for families in Gaza who are enduring conditions of catastrophic collapse as hostilities escalate and basic elements for survival vanish. Death from starvation and severe malnutrition has been rising daily. Families and civilians are grappling with death, injury, forced displacement, and deep psychological trauma. May God hold them in the palm of His hand. And may they know the love and compassion of many neighbors. If you would like to provide financial support to families in urgent need of assistance, consider an online gift to Catholic Relief Services. CRS is the official international relief agency of the Catholic Church, providing critical support to devastated communities. Give today at <https://www.crs.org/donate/holy-land-conflict> or by phone at 1-877-HELP-CRS. Photo courtesy CRS



The
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Diocese of Columbus

JUBILEE of ANNIVERSARIES

Married couples recognized for reaching milestones in their vocation

By Doug Bean

Catholic Times Editor

Long-married couples, families and guests crowded into Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on Saturday, Aug. 16 for the annual Jubilee of Anniversaries Mass.

Approximately 400 people filled the cathedral for the vigil Mass celebrated by Bishop Earl Fernandes along with Father Jan Sullivan, the Cathedral rector.

For the third straight year, the Jubilee was held at St. Joseph Cathedral after moving between several diocesan parishes in previous years. The event was organized by the Office of Marriage and Family under associate director Jason Spoolstra.

The 165 registered couples received certificates signed by Bishop Fernandes commemorating anniversaries of 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55 and 60-plus years.

Six couples were celebrating at least 70 years of marriage: Bernard and Jane Paumier (76 years) of Buckeye Lake Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Donald and Suzanne Cruickshank (73 years) of Columbus St. Francis of Assisi Church, Emery and Sylvia Lombardi (72 years) of Columbus St. Andrew Church, James and Rita Marsinek (71 years) of Westerville St. Paul Church and John and Mary Moodie (70 years) of Marion St. Mary Church and Robert and Mary Smithberger (70 years) of Sunbury St. John Neumann Church.

Another 32 couples were recognized for 60 or more years of marriage and 44 couples had reached their 50th anniversary.

Dublin St. Brigid of Kildare Church had the most registrants with 14 and Pickerington St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish followed with 14. Fifty-four parishes were represented.

Some of the older couples sat in the front pews and were assisted by family members. Other couples were accompanied by relatives and friends.

Afterward, couples were invited to have a picture taken in front of the altar

with Bishop Fernandes, who remained after Mass to pose with jubilarians. They formed a long line that stretched down the center aisle to wait for photos that will be made available through the diocese's Office of Marriage and Family website at www.columbuscatholic.org/marriage-family.

In Bishop Fernandes' homily, he stressed the importance of couples' witness to their sacramental vocation in a world that increasingly disregards marriage.

"I really want to thank you for saying yes to the call not only to be a disciple but also for responding generously to the call to witness to Christ's love for His bride, the Church, throughout the many years of your marriage," Bishop Fernandes continued, "... and for witnessing to the goods of marriage: children, fidelity, and the sacramental bond, which gives us help during difficulties."

The bishop acknowledged the many sacrifices -- seen and unseen -- that husbands and wives make in marriage for each other and for their families but reminded that "they are not unseen by the Lord."

The principle of sacrifice, the Church teaches, is one key to successful marriages.

Quoting from the old "Exhortation before Marriage," the Bishop said: "Sacrifice is usually difficult and irksome. Only love can make it easy, and perfect love can make it a joy. We are willing to sacrifice in proportion to our love, and when our love is perfect the sacrifice is complete."

The bishop encouraged couples to remain faithful, keep their eyes fixed on Christ and invite young people to consider "the beautiful vocation of marriage."

"If we want to have a strong Church, we need strong families," he said, later adding, "Now is the time, whether you are young or old, to let your light shine so that young couples can find the way that God is calling them."



Members of the congregation at St. Joseph Cathedral for the Jubilee of Anniversaries pray after receiving Holy Communion during the Saturday Vigil Mass on Aug. 16. Photos courtesy Ben Romaker



Bishop Earl Fernandes speaks to the Jubilee of Anniversaries couples attending Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral.



Couples celebrating milestone anniversaries ranging from 25 years to 70-plus fill St. Joseph Cathedral at a Mass where they were recognized.

Two couples count blessings after 70-plus years of marriage

By Elizabeth Pardi

For The Catholic Times

The Jubilee of Anniversaries, an event within the 2025 Jubilee Year honoring couples with notable wedding anniversaries, was commemorated Saturday with a vigil Mass celebrated by Bishop Earl Fernandes at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral. Two couples who have now been married more than 70 years are John and Mary Moodie of Marion St. Mary Church and Emery and Sylvia Lombardi of Columbus St. Andrew Church.

The Moodies first met at a drive-in where John spent time on the weekends and Mary worked as a carhop, delivering food to customers in their cars. Mary's manager introduced them to each other and they dated for 11 months before discussing their future together.

When Mary asked if they should break up or get married, John responded by telling her to wait two weeks while he arranged for a wedding date. Father Robert Noon, who passed away in 2020, married the couple in the rectory at St. Mary because Mary wasn't yet a Catholic. She began the process of coming into the Church shortly after their wedding.

Asked which qualities her husband possesses that have made him a good spouse, Mary noted John's ability to provide for his family, his sense of humor and especially his patience both in marriage and parenthood.

"Our firstborn had colic," Mary, 90, said of their first of five children. "Even though John had worked during the day, he would walk the floor at night with the baby to stop his crying."

Mary also cited examples of John's dedication to her, such as when she was healing from injuries.

"Whenever I was in the hospital or nursing home for rehab, John would visit every day," she said. "He would stay until our daughter or one of our sons would come to visit. He would then go home for about an hour to take care of things at home (and) to get a bite for lunch (and) would then come back and stay until visiting hours were over."

Similarly, John, 94, spoke of his gratitude for Mary's commitment to him.

"She has always been there for me whenever I needed her," he said, going on to explain how Mary cared for their children and home in addition to helping run John's family moving business by

working as its secretary-treasurer.

The Moodies' children were all involved in the family's business that John took over after his father's retirement. They would help book moving jobs and the boys would work to load and unload trucks. The business closed in 2002 when

John retired.

In spite of the stress and busyness the Moodies experienced in owning a business and raising many children, Mary

See MARRIAGE, Page 6



John and Mary Moody (left photo) have been married for 70 years and Emery and Sylvia Lombardi are celebrating their 72nd anniversary.



Family photos

Familiarity led to marriage for Seton Parish couple

By Tim Puet

For The Catholic Times

Clarence and Barbara Smithberger said their marriage of 66 years didn't result from instant attraction but from knowing each other for so long that friendship somehow turned to love.

"I don't think either of us really know when we realized we loved each other. We just did," Barbara said. They had known each other for years as Barbara Schell and "Smitty" ("nobody calls me Clarence," he said) while growing up in the Noble County community of Fulda, where they went to the same school but didn't have classes together because of a four-year age difference.

"Square dancing was still a big thing back then in our hometown and Smitty asked to take me home from a dance one night," said Barbara, 85. "He just kept taking me home, we started becoming closer and things developed from there. We went to midnight Mass on Christmas Eve in 1958 when he was on leave from the Army. After Mass, he asked me to marry him and I said 'Yes.'"

"We were married on Oct. 31, 1959 at Fulda Immaculate Conception Church with Father Andrew Hohman, my husband's uncle, as the officiating priest. The Catholic Church has meant a lot to us, and it's interesting that we became engaged on Christmas Eve and were married on the eve of All Saints Day."

"Our honeymoon was in West Virginia, but it was so long ago that neither of us can remember where we went," said Smitty, 89.

The Smithbergers are one of five couples from Pickerington St. Elizabeth Seton Parish married 60 years or longer who were among those honored at the diocesan Jubilee of Anniversaries on Saturday, Aug. 16. The other four are Emery and Marion Eck (64 years), William and Rose Wright (62 years), and Donald and Joanne Miller

and David and Janet McVay (60 years).

Smitty and Barbara are charter members of both Seton Parish, established in 1979, and Reynoldsburg St. Pius X Church, which when it was established in 1959 included the area now covered by Seton.

After their marriage, the couple moved to the Reynoldsburg area because Smitty had a job as a tool and die maker at the former Western Electric plant on Columbus' far east side, once the Columbus area's largest employer, which made switchboards and telephones.

Barbara worked for a while at the Ohio Liquor Control Commission office in Columbus, then left so she could spend all of her time raising the couple's three children — Lynn Tuskes, now 65, living in Chagrin Falls; Deborah Riley, 63, of the Philadelphia suburb of Downingtown; and Patrick, 57, of Marine City, Michigan, all graduates of St. Pius X School. The Smithbergers have four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

"Looking back, I don't think there's any question that the most difficult part of our marriage was when I was called to the Army for a second time," Smitty said. "I know that was difficult for Barbara because she was left with two small children to raise and no husband to help. It also was hard for me because I wasn't expecting to return to active duty and had to do it."

Smitty served in the Army in 1957 and 1958 at Fort Knox, Kentucky, then became part of the inactive Army Reserve. He was called back to serve in 1962 and 1963 as an ammunition specialist because of the situation in Berlin at the time after the Berlin Wall was built. His second tour began at Fort Polk, Louisiana, before he was transferred to Fort Knox. "We replaced troops who were sent to Europe and we trained for that possibility, but I never had to go overseas," he said.

"That time was a struggle, but we got through it," Barbara said. "Really I'd say we haven't had a lot of problems in our



Clarence and Barbara Smithberger, parishioners at Pickerington St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, were married 66 years ago in 1959. *Family photos*



marriage. Back when we got married, people just knew they were going to stay together and they'd work out any issues. One good thing with us is that we had the same background and had seen each other for years before we started dating, so we had plenty of time to get acquainted."

The Smithbergers went to the same public school in Fulda for 11 years before transferring to the high school in the Noble County seat of Caldwell to complete their education. "Because Fulda was a strong Catholic community, the teaching staff at the Fulda school included several Ursuline sisters, one of whom taught my mother. This wasn't an issue with the school board," Barbara said. "So we got a Catholic education in a public school. That wouldn't work now."

The couple said they were involved with several parish organizations while they were St. Pius X parishioners and continue attending Mass each Sunday at Seton, where Barbara is on the bereavement committee and distributes the Eucharist

to the homebound.

Asked about challenges married couples face today that weren't so prevalent 66 years ago, Barbara said, "It seems when they start today, they all have money. I'm not sure that's such a good thing."

Smitty added, "One big difference is the media and its effects on children. When we grew up, it was in the early days of TV. What I can remember most about that time was watching 'I Love Lucy' and Bishop Sheen. There's a lot more now to be concerned about on TV. You have to keep an eye on what the children are watching there and on the computer screens we didn't have."

"One thing I can say about having the church be such a part of our lives is that it has made our marriage so much better," Barbara said. "I'd tell any couple starting out that you can't make marriage a 50-50 proposition." Then both she and her husband said in unison, "It's 90-10" — with the 90 percent referring to consideration for the person of the opposite sex.

THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS *along with the* DIACONATE COMMUNITY *congratulates* DEACONS, DEACON CANDIDATES *and their wives on their* JUBILEE WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

60 or more Years

Dcn. Richard & Kay Baumann
Dcn. Joseph & Phyllis Schermer
Dcn. James & Rose Rouse
Dcn. Peter & Judi-Ann Peterson
Dcn. Robert & Barb Ghiloni
Dcn. Harry & Elaine Turner
Dcn. Dennis & Melayne Rotondo
Dcn. Eugene & Peggy Dawson
Dcn. Lawrence & Laura Koebel
Dcn. Dan & Janice Norris

5/09/1953
11/28/1959
9/07/1961
1/04/1961
2/02/1963
2/09/1963
2/15/1964
8/29/1964
1/14/1964
2/27/1965

55 Years

Dcn. W. Earl & Donna McCurry
Dcn. Philip & Ellen Paulucci
Dcn. Charles & Judy Miller

6/14/1970
8/22/1970
9/05/1970

50 years

Dcn. James & Jean Morris
Dcn. Michael & Toni Sowers
Dcn. Hank & Linda Orlik

06/14/1975
07/04/1975
08/15/1975

45 years

Dcn. Christopher & Lisa Reis
Dcn. Dean & Robin Racine
Dcn. Mark & Teresa Scarpitti

06/14/1980
09/06/1980
11/03/1980

40 years

Dcn. Mark & Linda Allison
Dcn. Ron & Marjorie Onslow
Dcn. Frank & Rebecca Sullivan

05/18/1985
05/25/1985
07/20/1985

35 years

Dcn. Mark & Patricia Weiner
Dcn. Joseph & Amy Knapke
Dcn. Dave & Jane Collinworth

05/12/1990
09/29/1990
11/17/1990

30 years

Dcn. Matthew & Christine Shaw
Dcn. Steve & Dawn Petrill
Dcn. Michael & Camille Kopczewsk

05/06/1995
06/17/1995
07/08/1995

25 years

Dcn-Cand. Thomas & Kari Brady

07/29/2000

JUBILEE of ANNIVERSARIES 2025

76 years
Bernard & Jane Paumier
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Buckeye Lake

73 years
Donald & Suzanne Cruickshank
St. Francis of Assisi, Columbus

72 years
Emery & Sylvia Lombardi
St. Andrew, Upper Arlington

71 years
James & Rita Marsinek
St. Paul the Apostle, Westerville

70 years
John & Mary Moodie
St. Mary, Marion
Robert & Mary Smithberger
St. John Neumann, Sunbury

68 years
William & Laura McGee
St. James the Less, Columbus

67 years
James & Madonna Ketcham
St. Mark, Lancaster

66 years
Clarence & Barbara Smithberger
Seton Parish, Pickerington
Donald & Rita King
St. Paul the Apostle, Westerville
Ed & Pauline Merklin
St. Patrick, Columbus
Joseph & Carol Scholl
Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Newark

65 years
Frederick Nicholas & Mary Ellen Lancia
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
John & Mary Ellen Shomber
St. Margaret of Cortona, Columbus

64 years
Emery John & Marian Eck
Seton Parish, Pickerington

63 years
James & Ann Golden-Reiser
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
Lee & Katy Paolini
Our Lady of Peace, Columbus

62 years
Charles & Geraldine Nance
St. James the Less, Columbus
James & Margaret Daniel
St. Mary, Marion
William & Rose Wright
Seton Parish, Pickerington

61 years
John & Carol Rees
St. Mary, Columbus

60 years
Bernard & Billreda Affinito
St. Ann, Dresden
Bob & Marjorie Telerski
St. Thomas the Apostle, Columbus
Carl & Sharon Merhar
St. Michael, Worthington
David & Janet McVay
Seton Parish, Pickerington
Donald & Joanne Miller
Seton Parish, Pickerington

Frederick & Janet Harris
St. Bernadette, Lancaster
Harold & Ruth Crabtree
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Buckeye Lake
John & Mary Dimond
Immaculate Conception, Columbus
Mike & Martha Hammontree
St. Michael, Worthington
Robert & Barbara Schneider
Sts. Simon & Jude, West Jefferson
Robert & Janet Cassell
St. Francis de Sales, Newark
Ronald & Vivian Tussing
St. Joseph, Circleville
Terry & Sharon Carlson
Our Lady of Peace, Columbus
Timothy & Maralee Scheeler
St. Peter, Chillicothe
William & Mary Hillis
St. Rose, New Lexington

55 years
Bill & Marsha Highfield
St. John Neumann, Sunbury
Ed & Donna Olenhouse
St. Brendan the Navigator, Hilliard
Edgar M. & Nancy P. Sneed
St. Andrew, Upper Arlington
Gary & Joanne Snow
St. Vincent de Paul, Mt. Vernon
George W. & May Lynne Hill
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
James & Caroline Gilmore
Sacred Heart, Coshocton
James & Cheryl Miller
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Grove City
John & Patricia Harsh
Sacred Heart, Coshocton
Leonard & Dorothy Janchar
St. Mary, Marion
Richard & Mary Ann Barbone
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Buckeye Lake
Richard & Sandra Borland
St. Mary, Marion
Robert & Anna Harrison
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Grove City
Robert & Judith Broderick
St. Matthew, Gahanna
Ronald & Barbara Rowland
St. Peter, Columbus
Stephen & Gayle Blubaugh
St. Matthew, Gahanna
Tim & Susan Wilcox
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
William & Teresa Dickson
St. Mary, Marion

50 years
Allen & Kathleen Robinson
St. Paul the Apostle, Westerville
Anthony & Shirley Iannarino
Seton Parish, Pickerington
Arthur & Charlene Plante
St. Cecilia, Columbus
Barry & Marianne Hesseltine
St. Joan of Arc, Powell
Christopher & Joan Lorenz
St. Timothy, Columbus
Craig & Theresa Wollenberg
St. Francis de Sales, Newark
Darnell & Carmenceta Perkins
St. Michael, Worthington

David & Joann Richards
St. Joan of Arc, Powell
Deacon Michael & Antoinette Sowers
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Grove City
Dennis & Mary Alice Kabelac
Our Lady of Lourdes, Marysville
Donald & Renee Klos
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
Donald & Teresa Keller
St. Cecilia, Columbus
Douglas & Mary Ellen Baker
St. Joseph, Circleville
Edwin & Barbara Gebauer
St. Paul the Apostle, Westerville
Ernest & Maureen Walther
Seton Parish, Pickerington
Francis & Lucy Robinson
Our Lady of Lourdes, Marysville
Glenn & Judith Brown
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
Hugh & Bonnie Boeshart Roberts
St. Brendan the Navigator, Hilliard
James & Karen Jilek
St. Matthew, Gahanna
James & Paulette Hemmelgarn
St. Peter, Columbus
Jeffrey & Julianna Wilt
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
Johann E. & Linann Kay Knodel Duren
St. Mary, Columbus
John & Deborah Edwards
Seton Parish, Pickerington
John & Debra Blakeslee
St. Francis de Sales, Newark
John & Jennifer Schmidt
St. Mary, Delaware
Joseph & Nancy Tapocsi
St. Luke, Danville
Konrad & Marilyn Kmetz
St. Joseph, Plain City
Leo & Suzanne Fox
St. Edward the Confessor, Granville
Mark & Janet Dunham
Sts. Simon & Jude, West Jefferson
Mark & Mary Jo Byrum
St. Matthew, Gahanna
Michael & Ann Federer
St. Matthew, Gahanna
Michael & JoEllen Gohr
Seton Parish, Pickerington
Richard & Catherine Kowalczyk
Seton Parish, Pickerington
Robert & Deborah Dees
Seton Parish, Pickerington
Robert & Lorraine Curtin
St. Matthew, Gahanna
Rodger & Marilyn Davis
St. Mary, Chillicothe
Ronald & Barbara Bodart
St. John Neumann, Sunbury
Ronald & Maria Horn
St. Thomas Aquinas, Zanesville
Thomas & Mary Nightengale
Sacred Heart, New Philadelphia
Thomas & Veronica Garrity
Our Lady of Peace, Columbus
Timothy & Christine Clapper
Sacred Hearts, Cardington
Tunney & Norah King
Seton Parish, Pickerington
Vincent & Treva Walsh
St. Francis de Sales, Newark

William & Debra Fondoulis
St. Joan of Arc, Powell
William & Teresa Harris
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Grove City

45 years
Charles & Paula Hathaway
Sacred Heart, Coshocton
Daniel & Eileen Martin
St. John Neumann, Sunbury
David & Michele Bianconi
St. Paul the Apostle, Westerville
Dennis & Terese Kelley
St. Elizabeth, Columbus
Doug & Janice Bean
St. Patrick, Columbus
Louis C. & Sandra Flarczyk Matt
St. Patrick, Columbus
Michael & Catherine Worley
St. Luke, Danville
Richard & Elaine Broderick
Our Lady of Victory, Columbus
Scott & Missy McKnight
Seton Parish, Pickerington
Wiliam & Patti Jo Fantozz
Our Lady of Lourdes, Marysville

40 years
Daniel & Amy Kapusta
St. Agatha, Upper Arlington
Daniel & Karen White
St. Patrick, Columbus
Darren & Susan Metzger
St. Joseph, Circleville
Jon & Laurie DiSabato
Immaculate Conception, Columbus
Jonathan & Patricia Warner
Immaculate Conception, Kenton
K. Christopher & Karen Kaiser
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
Kevin & Maureen Pugh
Church of the Resurrection, New Albany
Marty & Debbie Luffy
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
Michael A. & Christine M.T. Pirik
Our Lady of Victory, Columbus
Robert & Andree Thomas
Sacred Heart, Coshocton
Robert & Rebecca Craig
Sacred Heart, New Philadelphia
Thomas J. & Mary Catherine A. M. Pelot
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin

39 years
Thomas M. & Pamela S. Mesharer
Seton Parish, Pickerington

35 years
Dale & Carla Bruggeman
St. Brendan the Navigator, Hilliard
Gerard & Elizabeth Riendeau
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
John & Christina Carr
Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Lancaster
John & Tuesday Trippier
St. John Neumann, Sunbury
John & Vicky Hart
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
Joseph & Stacey Nerone
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
Kurt & Joan Niermeyer
St. Agatha, Upper Arlington

Larry & Kelly Wagoner
Holy Cross, Columbus
Roger & Lisa Grywalski
St. Joseph, Plain City
Stephen & Rita Giere
St. Paul the Apostle, Westerville
Timothy & Jeanne Dooley
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin

30 years
Charles & Anne Marie Geiger
Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Newark
Eric & Margo Seyboldt
St. John the Baptist, Columbus
Eugene & Terri Theibert
St. Matthew, Gahanna
Jeff & Jane Siefker
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
John and Angela Miller
Our Lady of Lourdes, Marysville
Kevin & Elizabeth Carpenter
St. Andrew, Upper Arlington
Mark & Mindy Francisco
St. Vincent de Paul, Mt. Vernon
Matthew & Amy Starr
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
Mont & Cynthia Goss
St. Joseph, Sugar Grove
Patrick & Stacey Stacklin
Immaculate Conception, Kenton
Robert & Elizabeth Carle
St. Thomas the Apostle, Columbus
Timothy & Michelle Schnurr
St. Brendan the Navigator, Hilliard

25 years
Andres & Samary Cecchetti
St. Matthew, Gahanna
Christopher & Lisa Lynch
St. Brendan the Navigator, Hilliard
Doug & Tina Costello
St. John Neumann, Sunbury
Douglas & Laura Navarro
St. Matthew, Gahanna
Gregory & Stacy Oyster
St. Joan of Arc, Powell
Jason & Maria Dishop
St. Peter, Columbus
John & K. Odette James
Church of the Ascension, Johnstown
John & Laura Jacon
Holy Trinity, Bolivar
Kurt & Janet Rodenkirchen
St. Pius X, Reynoldsburg
Kurt & Michelle Loudon
St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin
Matthew & Danielle Whitehead
St. Paul the Apostle, Westerville
Matthew & Michele Faehnle
St. Agatha, Upper Arlington
Michael & Christina Langhans
St. John Neumann, Sunbury
Michael & Martha Bogue
St. Michael, Worthington
Michael & Michelle Matthews
St. Mary, Delaware
Nicholas & Olivia Fetko
Immaculate Conception, Columbus
Dr. Perry & Marisa Cahall
St. Michael, Worthington
Richard & Katharine Graham
St. Matthew, Gahanna
Thomas & Karri Brady
St. Joan of Arc, Powell

MARRIAGE: Two couples count blessings after 70-plus years of marriage, *Continued from Page 3*

said she would reassure young couples in that phase of life “as long as you love one another, everything will work out. ... When things are hectic or not working out, always pray to God for guidance. Also, thank God for the many blessings bestowed on you.”

John stressed the importance of forgiveness, saying, “Be tolerant and patient with each other.”

The couple is currently enjoying the fruits of their 70-year marriage, now with eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren, soon to be four. John remains active at their parish by participating in the St. Mary choir.

Both the Moodies and Lombardis have made the faith central in their marriages. “(My parents) continue to go to Mass

together,” Mary Hatem, one of Emery and Sylvia Lombardi’s six children, said. “(They) honor Catholic teachings and doctrine which they also imparted to their children.”

Regarding religion in a marriage, Sylvia said that sharing the same faith with one’s spouse is more important than anything else, noting that “it will help you with life’s challenges.”

Emery agreed, saying that it was their faith that equipped them to raise a family, which consisted of six children and now 10 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

An emphasis on the importance of family has also been primary for the Lombardis, who have ancestral roots in Italy.

“My parents’ commitment and dedication to each other help embody the strong sense of family that their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren continue to have,” Hatem said. “We are a large Italian family and have always prioritized ‘family’ and making it the center of everything.”

Emery and Sylvia, who met in the 1950s at Columbus St. John the Baptist Church’s festival when Sylvia was selling raffle tickets, were active in their parish community well into old age. Sylvia volunteered for numerous positions at St. Andrew, especially within the Bereavement Committee. Until recently, Emery remained an avid golfer while belonging to the American Italian Golf Association.

“(You) keep moving forward,” Sylvia said. “Good and bad things will always happen ... but ... the bad won’t last forever.”

Hatem has seen her parents’ devotion to one another stand out particularly as they encounter the struggles of aging.

“My parents are well into their 90s and their dedication to one another is still strong,” she said of Sylvia and Emery, who are 94 and 99, respectively. “This helps them navigate the obstacles that come with age.”

Additionally, Hatem praised her parents for the way they take care of one another. “My mom always makes sure that my dad eats well and my dad is always present and helpful,” she said. “They obviously love and care for each other.”

Asked what advice she would pass on to younger couples, Sylvia said, “I would say pick your battles. Not everything is a battle.” She also expressed how impactful it was when Emery brought home unexpected gifts for her. “There have been lots of expensive gifts along the way, (but the) unexpected gifts were always fun.”



Mary and John Moodie (top photo) were married in the rectory at Marion St. Mary Church. Sylvia and Emery Lombardi met at Columbus St. John the Baptist Church in the 1950s.

Family photos

Both the Lombardis and the Moodies live mostly independently, attending Mass at their respective parishes.

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SEMINARIANS: Nine men enter formation, *Continued from Page 2*

the Apostle, his home parish, working in the office as an assistant to the director of evangelization and then as a parish business analyst. He also assisted with the liturgy and the Knights of the Holy Temple altar serving program.

“The draw to a desire for a priestly vocation has continued to remain steady and to grow during that time,” he said, “and so, this year, decided to pursue that further – to pursue that time of discernment further – and see where the Lord is taking me with it.”

Aziz graduated from Vanderbilt University in 2018 with a bachelor’s and master’s in computer science. He previously served as a missionary with the Fellowship of Catholic University Students and spent time discerning a vocation with Dominican friars.

He was also involved in the Catholic Worldview Fellowship, a study abroad program for college students focused on forming Catholic leaders. Aziz participated in the program his last summer of college and has served on staff during summers.

“That was definitely sort of a catalyst experience for me in understanding the role of evangelization and the life of the Church, really, as the mission and vocation proper to the Church as a whole,” he said.

“It’s been a great source of just continuing to energize and cultivate that apostolic zeal and that sense of being driven for the mission of the Church and also the intellectual life.”

Another seminarian who began his studies at the Josephinum in February is Kevin Negaga, 25, originally from Kenya

who came to the United States to serve as a priest in the Columbus diocese. He has an uncle who resides in the area.

He looks forward to continuing priestly formation – something he had desired for years.

“My discernment began when I was a little boy, still in Kenya,” he explained. “I used to work with my pastor. We were so close together, and I got attracted to being a religious, being a priest and getting to serve people.”

“The idea of priesthood that I had in mind back in the day was a missionary priest, someone who (goes) far away from home and lives with new people, new culture.”

Negaga began his propaedeutic formation at the Avila Institute, which offers online courses in spiritual theology, formation and direction.

Since coming to the diocese, he described his first months at the Josephinum as a “phenomenal experience,” noting profound spiritual direction and fraternity among seminarians.

He completed his propaedeutic stage this summer. Negaga met several diocesan priests and learned their stories.

“It was kind of a formative experience for me, especially as I continue discerning this path to priesthood, and priesthood not in my home country but in a foreign land, as a missionary from Kenya,” he said, “and I hope to continue growing in my prayer life and my spiritual journey and God helps me to become a priest, not for myself but for His people.”

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Millions of Monicas group follows saint's example

By Hannah Heil

Catholic Times Reporter

Millions of Monicas ministry was founded with an idea of praying for souls to return to the Church. It has expanded to be a source of consolation for families in Columbus.

Amy Liss, a parishioner at Columbus St. Andrew Church, was inspired to start a local chapter at her parish while experiencing heartache from having children leave the faith. The group includes members from various diocesan parishes and meets monthly in St. Andrew Church.

Millions of Monicas began in 2021 as a prayer ministry for mothers seeking their children's and loved ones' return to the Catholic faith. It has expanded to 2,000 members in more than 100 parishes.

The group is open to mothers and all individuals with loved ones away from the faith. Many are mothers, but those who unite can pray for any individual no longer in the Church.

"The Millions of Monicas is not just for the return of our children – it's for all of our fallen away loved ones," Liss said. "I've had many people come to the Millions of Monicas prayer ministry and they thought it was only for children, and they didn't realize they could be praying for their niece, their aunt, so on."

Since the local chapter was founded in 2023, "Monicas" in the diocese have united in prayer for their loved ones to return home.

Liss is the mother of four children ages 21 to 39, three of whom no longer practice the Catholic faith.

"The guilt and the pain and the embarrassment that I think many moms go through when their children were brought up Catholic, went to Catholic high schools, had all the sacraments and all of a sudden they're completely away from the Catholic Church – it's quite devastating," she said.

Three years ago, Liss started the St. Monica Book Club at St. Andrew. The group meets monthly in the parish center to read and discuss a book related to the topic. After continued prayer in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, she was inspired to bring Millions of Monicas ministry to Columbus.

"The St. Monica Book Club and the Millions of Monicas, very different ministries, just allow us to come together to support, to understand, to know that God loves our children more than we do and wants their return more than we do, and there's a lot of comfort in that," she said.

St. Monica was born in 332 in Tagaste, a north African city located in present-day Algeria. Her oldest son, St. Augustine, embraced a wayward lifestyle that brought her much grief.

Her son fathered a child out of wedlock and began practicing Manichaeism, a religion that originated in Persia in the third century.

St. Monica prayed for her son's conversion for years. A bishop assured her that it was "impossible that the son of such tears should perish." St. Augustine was later baptized and went on to become a priest and bishop of Hippo.

St. Monica is the patroness of mothers, wives, difficult marriages, abuse victims, alcoholics and the conversion of relatives, especially children.

The Monicas in Columbus relate to St. Monica's years of suffering during her son's years away from the Church. They follow her example in staying faithful.

"You see these poor choices, these bad pattern behaviors and you just see who has them in their grip, and it's certainly not Christ," Liss said of individuals the group prays for.

"There are several mothers who are truly holy women – saints, if you ask me – and there's a real deep embarrassment because

it's like, how can you be so faith filled and so convicted and so holy and have your child or your fallen away loved one off doing Lord knows what ... How can that be?"

Mothers often blame themselves for their child's choice to leave the faith.

"We have many, many, many women who (have) just that guilt of, 'What did I do wrong? What happened? What could I have done differently?'" Liss explained.

"Sometimes you just get into the routine of, 'I'm going to pray, pray, pray,' but when you really stop and take the time to realize how catastrophic that so many people are fallen away from the Church, it's devastating, because you see where it's taken the world and where it's taken our children and our fallen-away loved ones."

Millions of Monicas meetings begin with reflection and contemplation. The group often uses a reflection from the Millions of Monicas national organization that is posted online weekly. Gatherings also include a Scripture reading.

The group reflects on tangible ways they see God working in their lives and in their fallen-away loved ones through a "Signs & Sowings" activity.

"I remember my oldest son, Joseph, started to ask me questions about the Millions of Monicas, and I was kind of blown away because I've been doing this for quite a long time, and those are the kinds of signs and sowings that are relatable to me and others," Liss reflected, "when you have those little conversations that are completely unexpected, and you know God's at work, is at hand here and to have faith and trust and hope in that."

Monicas also strive to plant seeds of faith in other people. As an example, they might ask a person they meet at the store how they can pray for them. They strive to plant seeds of faith in all children of God, not simply their own.

After reflecting on seeds planted and signs

of growth during the meeting, Monicas place a card with their signs and sowings written out in a basket before the tabernacle. While prayers are between each mom and Christ privately, Liss takes the cards to Adoration and offers each up to the Lord.

The group also prays the "Trust Me" prayer and spends time praying for a person by name.

Monicas gather in groups of three or four, and each shares a name with her small group. Group members pray for the individuals by name while holding a small crucifix.

"We just fixate on Christ on the crucifix and pray for each of these names that the moms have given," Liss said. "It's really a beautiful, beautiful way just to really fixate on Christ and His sacrifice for us as we sit in the pew praying for all of our loved ones who have fallen away to come back to the Church."

Those gathered also pray the rosary, the Millions of Monicas mom prayer and a prayer for St. Monica's intercession during monthly meetings. Small groups pray for their group members' loved ones throughout the month.

"It really gives, I think, the women hope and inspiration to continue on this journey of praying ceaselessly – like St. Monica did – forever or as long as we can pray for them," Liss said.

A special Mass will be held at St. Andrew Church at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 27, the feast of St. Monica. All individuals with fallen-away loved ones are invited to attend.

To learn more about the ministry or starting Millions of Monicas at a parish, contact Liss at AmyLiss14@gmail.com.

Diocesan couple leads Worldwide Marriage Encounter retreats

By Hannah Heil

Catholic Times Reporter

When Beth and Mike Dible attended their first local Worldwide Marriage Encounter retreat, Beth joked that "the Holy Spirit was a bird that didn't have very many feathers left before we got to our weekend."

That was February 2015.

For the past decade, the couple has committed to strengthening their marriage and remain active in the ministry. They currently serve as local Marriage Encounter leaders for the region that includes Columbus.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter is the world's largest faith-based marriage enrichment organization. Its mission is to proclaim the value of matrimony and Holy Orders in the Church and the world.

The organization is divided into regions across the United States and the world. Ohio is composed of three regions.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter offers a peer-to-peer experience, typically over a weekend, when married couples and priests reflect privately on the meaning of their vocations. Tools are provided to nurture love between spouses, and priests and their bride, the Church.

"They can learn that, even though they have their difficulties, the love that brought them together in the first place is a love that's really worth fighting for," Beth said.

"If they pick up the tools that they need to rekindle that love, then they can make that marriage last their entire lives and be that example for other married couples."

The Dibles, who are members of Sunbury

St. John Neumann Church, have been married for 37 years. They have three children and two grandchildren.

Their oldest daughter heard about Worldwide Marriage Encounter at church and gifted registration for a weekend retreat to her parents one Christmas.

Beth said she knew about Marriage Encounter for the duration of the couple's married life. She wanted to go on a local encounter weekend, but Mike needed some convincing.

With their daughter's Christmas present, the Dibles attended the retreat.

"We weren't initially quite sure what we were going to expect," Beth recalled. "We knew it was going to be a marriage retreat. We thought that there would be interaction, advice for your marriage, but we found out quite the opposite."

"More of a way to improve communication," Mike added.

The encounter weekend helped the couple return to the days when they first discovered their love for each other.

After the first years of marriage, Beth explained, couples can begin to drift apart. The weekend retreat was an opportunity to attend to each another.

"Even though we knew another couple there, we hardly talked with them because all the talk was focused like you were the only ones in the room, and it helped us to engage and really get to know each other again," Beth recalled.

The format is the same for encounter retreats worldwide.

Couples learn how to forgive when they wrong each other. They also discover that there is more to intimacy in a relationship

and a deeper level of sharing, such as communicating what experiences mean for each other. "It just brings us so much closer," Beth said.

For the past eight years, the Dibles have served as presenters for weekend encounters and most recently as local leaders.

Outside of the encounter weekend, marriage can be tough. Difficulties often arise when communication breaks down.

"I thought my husband could read my mind, and kind of vice versa, but we always make these assumptions about each other in our marriage," Beth admitted, "and that kind of leads us down this road of fighting and 'he says, she says,' but once we understand where each party is coming from and how we feel about a subject matter, it just opened a whole new world into our marriage."

The couple's children visibly saw a change when their parents returned from the first retreat, Beth recalled. They noticed that their parents were much closer than before the weekend.

Mike noted the importance of children seeing a closeness between their parents. It provides a sense of confidence or security that the marriage will endure.

As the primary teachers of their children, Beth added, a strong marriage teaches children what a loving relationship is in contrast to the world's idea of a relationship.

"We can celebrate that we're not just a couple; we're a sacrament," Beth said. "That's far better than anything secular could ever offer them."

After the weekend retreat, there are share groups that meet monthly for a community experience. Social events are offered, such as a community-wide picnic. A community-

wide gathering also takes place during Christmastime.

Community events are not mandatory for couples, but they can help improve dialogue and be an extra support for marriages.

Share groups meet in couples' homes or in a parish.

"It helps to reinforce what you learned on the weekend and to then get to know other married couples who see the value in their marriage and marriage in general," Beth said.

Father Pete Gideon, a priest of the diocese, serves as a regional minister for Worldwide Marriage Encounter. He has been active in the ministry for decades.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter began in Spain in 1952 with a series of conferences for married couples. Father Gabriel Calvo began presenting retreats in his native Barcelona in 1962. The encounter experience spread to several major cities in the United States in 1971.

A Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend experience will be held Friday, Sept. 5 to Sunday, Sept. 7 at the Procter Camp and Conference Center in London, Ohio. Registration includes a fee of \$75, but couples who cannot afford the fee will not be denied attendance.

Married couples, although at least two years of marriage is encouraged, and priests are invited to attend. Previous attendees are invited to attend for an "anniversary re-encounter."

The retreat can accommodate 18 couples. Space is currently available.

To register, visit www.WWME.org.



Sister Mary Aurea Tesha prays before her final vows.



Sister Mary Aurea Tesha kneels before Bishop Earl Fernandes to profess her final vows on Sunday, Aug. 10 at St. Aloysius Church. Photos courtesy Andy Long



The Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Kilimanjaro and other sisters serving in the diocese witness the final vows of Sister Mary Aurea Tesha.

Consecrated religious sisters make final vows

By Hannah Heil

Catholic Times Reporter

Consecrated religious sisters serving in the diocese have taken the next step in their vocation by professing final vows.

Sister Mary Aurea Tesha, 33, a sister of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Kilimanjaro, professed final vows on Sunday, Aug. 10 at Columbus St. Aloysius Church.

Sister Mary, the second born of four children, is a native of Tanzania. The motherhouse for the Sisters of Our Lady of Kilimanjaro is located in Tanzania by Mount Kilimanjaro.

Five sisters in the religious order currently serve in Columbus. Three serve at Mother Angeline McCrory Manor health care facility and two at Cristo Rey Columbus High School. They reside in the old rectory at St. Aloysius.

The order's charism is simplicity and readiness to do the will of God for His glory and the salvation of humanity. Its consecrated religious focus on evangelization, education and health services. They serve in schools, hospitals and health centers, parishes and in social work.

Sister Mary works as an office assistant at Cristo Rey. She has been at the school since May 2024 and previously served at Columbus Holy Family soup kitchen, which was her first assignment upon arriving in the diocese in the fall of 2023.

She received word two years ago from the order's superior general that she

would be transferred to the Diocese of Columbus. Sisters in the order take a vow of obedience, and so, if asked to move, they obey.

"I responded positively," Sister Mary said. "And when I came here, I was so happy because the people here are very welcoming, and they invited me in a good way, and I met my fellow sisters who were already here."

Sister Mary entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Kilimanjaro in 2011 after graduating from high school. She professed her first vows in 2016.

"I felt a strong attraction to religious life when I was in high school," she said. "I began to pray to see if this was really God's will, not just my desire."

"I felt like God wants me to do something, so I shared with one of the sisters who was in charge of the school where I was studying, and those sisters, they were the Sisters of Our Lady of Kilimanjaro."

"She told me, don't ignore it. You have to keep praying and to see which life will be good for you in serving God. For me, I decided to become a nun because I knew that, by becoming a nun, I will be able to help God's people, and I will be able to be very close with Jesus Christ."

Upon joining the congregation in 2011, Sister Mary spent a year each in various stages of formation: aspirancy, candidacy and postulancy. Her novitiate lasted two years before making first vows.

She spent nine years between her first and final profession of vows this month, known as a juniorate.

"During that period, you really deepen

your relationship with Jesus, testing yourself if you are ready to give Him your all – your entire life," she explained.

After making first vows, Sister Mary served in apostolates in Tanzania caring for the order's consecrated sisters in a community hospital, serving in the local cathedral with the liturgy and religious education, and as a secretary in a secondary school. She also earned a college degree during her juniorate.

In the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist order, Sister Josefa Langhals, OP made her final profession of vows on July 29 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, the location of the order's motherhouse.

Sister Josefa spent the past two years as a middle school religion teacher at Worthington St. Michael the Archangel School. Several of the order's consecrated religious sisters serve as teachers at St. Michael.

Sister Maria Caritas Schaefer, OP, 25, professed first vows with the Dominican Sisters on July 31. Sister Maria Caritas is a native of Columbus and parishioner at Columbus Ss. Augustine and Gabriel Church.

Bishop Earl Fernandes concelebrated both Masses in which Sisters Josefa and Maria Caritas professed vows. Priests of the Diocese of Columbus were also present.

Many St. Michael parishioners made the trip north to witness the occasion. The parish organized a pilgrimage for the professions, and nearly 50 individuals from the school and parish attended the vows and reception afterward at the

motherhouse.

Sister Maria Caritas entered the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist in 2022. She attended the former Christifideles School in Granville through 12th grade.

She received a degree in nursing from Franciscan University of Steubenville. She spent a year in Pittsburgh as a neonatal intensive care unit nurse before entering religious life.

She will serve as a teacher assistant at a Catholic school in Ann Arbor this year.

Sister Josefa was raised in northwest Ohio. She entered the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist in 2017 and professed her first vows in 2020.

She graduated from Franciscan University of Steubenville with a degree in theology. After spending two years at St. Michael, she has been reassigned to teach high school theology in Ann Arbor.

The Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, a recent addition to the Dominican Order founded by St. Dominic in the 1200s, began in 1997.

They embrace the New Evangelization called for by Pope John Paul II with a focus on proclaiming the Gospel of Life and educating youth. The primary apostolate is serving the mission of Catholic education in schools as teachers and administrators.

The order prioritizes evangelization, common life, cloister, times of silence, the Divine Office and daily Mass. It has more than 140 consecrated religious sisters. The average age of the sisters is 37.



Sister Josefa Langhals, OP greets some of her former students from Worthington St. Michael School after her final profession of vows in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



Sister Josefa Langhals, OP, chats with (from left) newly ordained Fathers Sam Severance, Joseph Rolwing and Kevin Girardi. Photos courtesy St. Michael Church



Sister Josefa Langhals, OP greets visitors from Worthington St. Michael Parish for her profession of vows.

Dominican sister celebrating golden jubilee in religious life

Sister Nadine Buchanan, OP, who has been widely recognized for her work in the last 16 years aiding victims of human trafficking, is celebrating her golden jubilee as a member of the Dominican Sisters of Peace.

Sister Nadine, a native of Zanesville, made her perpetual profession of vows for the congregation then known as the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the Springs in August 1975. She received a Bachelor's degree from Ohio Dominican University and a Master's degree in education from Ohio State University, obtained a chaplaincy certification and is a member of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.

She initially served as an elementary school teacher and later was in hospice ministries before becoming involved with CATCH (Changing Actions to Change Habits), a program set up by the Franklin County judicial system to assist in the recovery of persons convicted of prostitution more than once.

She met human trafficking victims at the jail when they were released, drove them to a rehabilitation center, provided them with a support package of clean clothes and other items and continued her support as they went through the CATCH program.

She also has been active in Freedom a la Cart, which empowers survivors of sex trafficking and exploitation to build lives of freedom and self-sufficiency through employment in the restaurant industry. She has literally taken it to the streets for Save our Adolescents from Prostitution (SOAP), leaving bars of soap printed with the phone numbers of human-trafficking rescue agencies at various hotels.

She also loaded her car with items to distribute in areas where girls and women are sold and exploited, particularly on Columbus' west side.

"I would just open my car door and offer them something to eat ... there were so many victims that I felt they needed people whom they could feel safe with," she said. "Women I encountered were both starved and barefoot. ... I would simply offer them something to eat, clothes, shoes and toiletries.

"If people that I have come in contact with now see me as helpful, then I can say I have made small differences in a problem as big as human trafficking. God has had a mantle around me, I know he helped me improve others' situations. My life as a sister is a calling from God."



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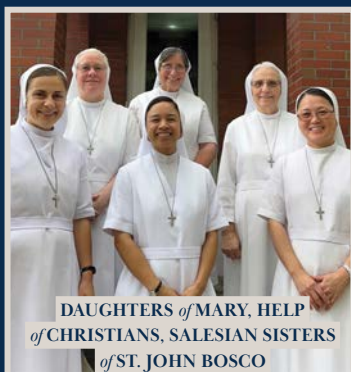
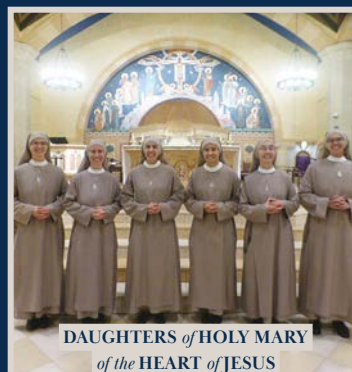
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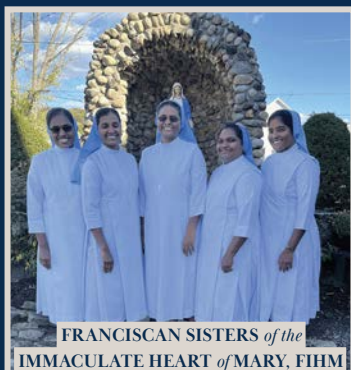
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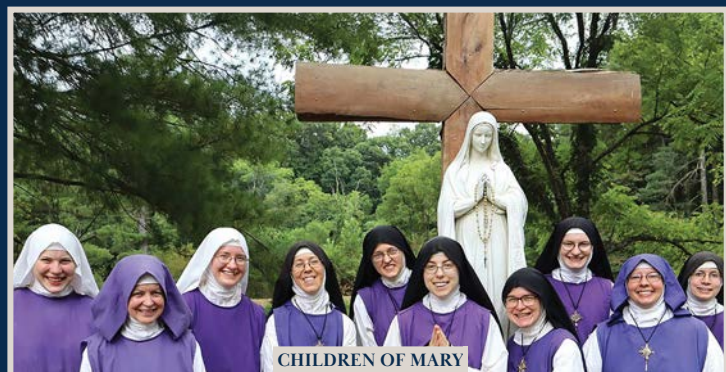
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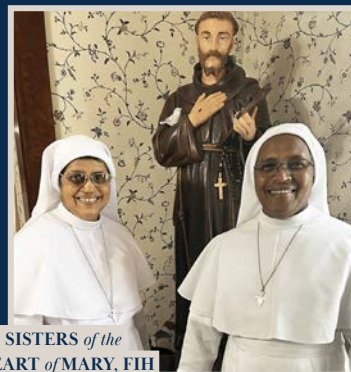
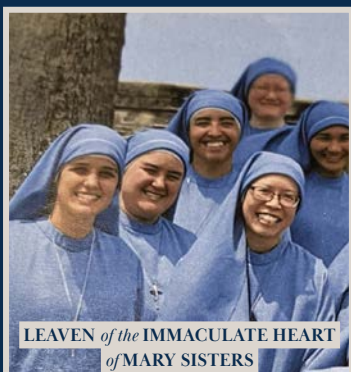
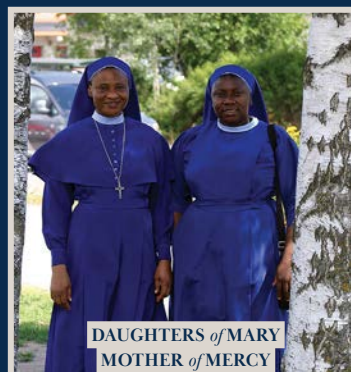
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Lancaster basilica welcomes Assumption pilgrims

By Hannah Heil
Catholic Times Reporter

The Lancaster Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption hosted a pilgrimage on its patronal feast day, Aug. 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Pilgrims from across the diocese were invited to make a pilgrimage to the basilica.

The day included tours of the basilica, Eucharistic Adoration, confessions, praying of the rosary, Mass celebrated by Bishop Earl Fernandes and an outdoor procession with an image of Our Lady.

"We've never had a day like this before," said Msgr. Craig Eilerman, rector of the basilica.

The Basilica of St. Mary was designated by the bishop as one of four diocesan pilgrimage sites during the Jubilee Year of Hope, which is taking place in the Church in 2025.

St. Mary of the Assumption was elevated to a minor basilica in 2022. (Major basilicas are limited to inside the city of Rome.) Basilica insignia were officially installed in 2023.

Msgr. Eilerman said it is a great honor to receive the title.

"With every honor comes responsibility, and I think we here at the parish understand that now we have the responsibility to be a site for people to come," he said.

"Being a basilica means that, in some ways, you have a special relationship with the Holy Father. Of course, it was Pope Francis who granted us the title, but now, Pope Leo, we have that relationship with him."

The basilica has welcomed several pilgrims so far this year. Msgr. Eilerman said the parish wanted to set aside a special day for the faithful.

"People have been coming here throughout this year, but we wanted to do something that we would intentionally invite the larger diocese to come to – the people of the diocese – and so we chose our patronal feast, the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady," he explained.

Pilgrims can receive a plenary indulgence by visiting the basilica. A plenary indulgence removes all temporal punishment for sin.

To receive the indulgence, certain requirements must be met: being in a state of grace, detachment from sin – including venial sin, receiving the sacraments of reconciliation and the Eucharist within 20 days before or after the indulgence is sought, and to pray for the intentions of the Holy Father (typically by offering an Our Father and Hail Mary).

Plenary indulgences are not meant to be rigorous, Msgr. Eilerman explained. The requirements help an individual dispose themselves to the grace that God desires to bestow on



A patronal feast day Mass is celebrated on Friday, Aug. 15 at the Lancaster Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption. Photos courtesy Melissa Zuk



Above the altar is an image of the Assumption of Mary into Heaven.

them.

He noted that making a pilgrimage requires effort. Planning and designating time for travel are factors that differentiate a pilgrimage.

"It's not like Sunday Mass, where you get up and you go and you come back – that takes a certain degree of intentionality, but to plan a day and to come and to make intention to receive the indulgence, to fulfill those requirements, I think, opens one up to the grace that God desires us to have, but we have to be intentional about that," he said.

Having the pilgrimage on the solemnity of the Assumption was also an opportunity for pilgrims to draw close to the Blessed Mother and grow in Marian devotion.

"A pilgrimage is, in some ways, a reflection of life," the rector said. "Our whole life is a pilgrimage heading towards the kingdom of God, to heaven."

"And then, by having it on the Assumption day, we understand that Mary accompanies us on this pilgrimage as an intercessor and also as a model of what it means to be a disciple and a follower of her Son."

The day took extensive preparation. A subcommittee was created from the basilica's parish council to plan for the pilgrimage.

Several priests were invited to



Bishop Earl Fernandes and clergy members process ahead of a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary outside Lancaster Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption on Aug. 15.

come and serve as confessors.

An image of Our Lady was selected for the outdoor procession after Mass. A wooden statue of the Blessed Mother was chosen from the former Lancaster St. Mark Church. The parish merged with the basilica in April 2024.

Tony Smith, a St. Mary parishioner, fashioned a gown for the statue of the Blessed Mother. Another parishioner created a carrier for the statue.

The procession, which included singing hymns and chanting the Litany of Loreto, was especially important during the pilgrimage.

Msgr. Eilerman said the procession allowed the faithful to profess and declare their faith publicly. He described a public procession as a form of prayer.

Pilgrims witnessed to those in the area the importance of their Catholic faith.

"We live in an age in which we're often told that, 'It's fine; you can believe whatever you want to, but please keep that to yourself,' and a procession is precisely the opposite," the rector acknowledged.

"We're not keeping the faith to ourselves. We're proclaiming it. And so, in that way, it's a means of evangelization."

"The procession, I feel as though, is a way for our parish to show the strong Catholic faith in our community as we process



Bishop Earl Fernandes is joined at the altar by priests from the diocese for the holy day Mass at Lancaster Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption.

around Main Street and around our church," said Julie Ogilvie, a volunteer at the parish.

Ogilvie, who served as an administrator at St. Mary for 27 years, gives tours as part of the basilica's docent committee. Docents act as tour guides, highlighting different parts of the basilica and share its history with visitors.

The docent program formed after Bishop Fernandes announced the basilica as a Jubilee Year pilgrimage site.

"We're very proud of our designation of the Jubilee site, and we're excited to share our parish and our beautiful church with the people who come," Ogilvie said.

Several parish groups across the diocese come to visit and tour the basilica. Some come by bus. In mid-August, nearly 40 people came through on one day.

St. Mary of the Assumption "is very strong in our community," she explained. "Our first Mass in Lancaster was over 200 years ago, and our present basilica, which was consecrated in 1864 during the Civil War, has been renovated several times, and our most recent renovation was in 2019."

St. Mary has an extensive history of families. Several generations are active in the parish.

Ogilvie's family has been



Members of the congregation follow the Mass on the Solemnity of the Assumption at Our Lady's patronal church in Lancaster.

active in the parish for three generations. Some parishioners are the fifth or sixth generation in their family at St. Mary of the Assumption.

"Our hopes are that those who come will see the beauty, feel the presence of God in the church and come out with a wonderful feeling and awe that Christ is alive in the church, and we're doing good things – doing good things within our parish – and serve the Lord," she said.



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Deaf community gathers for Mass with bishop at Cathedral

By Ken Snow

For The Catholic Times

A special Mass for approximately 140 deaf persons and their families was celebrated on Saturday, Aug. 9 at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral by Bishop Earl Fernandes.

Concelebrating were Father Mike Depcik, OSFS, chaplain for the Deaf Ministry in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, and Father Dave Cornett from the Diocese of Steubenville. Other priests in attendance were Father Charles Onumaegbu, chaplain for the Deaf Ministry in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, and Fathers Elias Udeh and Joseph Thomas from the Diocese of Columbus.

The Mass was the culmination of six months of intense planning, mostly by Kathy Hodges, the interpreter for the Deaf Ministry at New Albany Church of the Resurrection.

Ministers of the Word included John Hodges (a hearing person), accompanied by interpreter Bob Donaldson-Pirc (a deaf person); Kathy Hodges (hearing), accompanied by interpreter Meredith Burke (deaf); and Yvette Peterson (hearing), accompanied by interpreter Jeff Prince (deaf).

Father Cornett proclaimed the Gospel and Father Depcik offered the homily in ASL (American Sign Language) at the ambo.

"The Deaf Catholic community was grateful for the Mass with the bishop because this showed them (the congregants) that the Diocese of Columbus acknowledges their presence within the Church," Father Depcik said afterward. "Due to their invisible handicap, the deaf frequently are overlooked in the Church. People who organized this Mass and the dinner that followed did a fabulous job."

Deaf couple Georgia and Robert Garrison have been married for 30 years. They attend New Albany Church of the Resurrection, which has an active deaf ministry.

"We would like to thank Bishop Earl Fernandes, Father Mike Depcik and Father Dave Cornett for celebrating this Mass for the Deaf at St. Joseph Cathedral," Georgia said. "It was a blessing to see ASL used at the Mass. Everyone did a wonderful job. Dinner (in the cathedral undercroft after Mass) was lovely. ... It was especially beautiful to see Father Depcik preach the homily in ASL."

Her husband, who is a tactile interpreter, added, "I was one of the interpreters for a deaf-blind man for the Mass and dinner reception. I am deaf myself. I always like to learn more about the Catholic Church even though I am a Baptist. My wife has been Catholic all her life. Thank you, Bishop Fernandes, Father Mike and Father Dave for celebrating the Mass for the Deaf."

Denise Cordonnier and her husband, Aaron, of Russia, Ohio, are deaf. She is a Christian and her husband and their four hearing children are Catholic.

"The Mass for the Deaf in St. Joseph Cathedral was so beautiful and wonderful," Denise said. "We enjoyed watching Father Depcik and the other priests using sign language to help us gain more of an understanding of God through our language, ASL. It was a good opportunity for all deaf people to understand the Bible/God's Word better, as well as to socialize and feel included."

A voice interpreter was provided during the homily offered by Father Depcik, who used ASL, for those who didn't know sign language.

"It was an honor to attend the Mass for the Deaf," said Diane LeMay, a medical



Father Mike Depcik, chaplain for the Deaf Ministry in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, uses American Sign Language during his homily on Aug. 9 at a Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral. Photo/Anna Lincoln



A Mass for deaf persons and their families at St. Joseph Cathedral includes an interpreter at the front of the altar. Photo courtesy Anna Lincoln

doctor and consecrated virgin who is a member at Church of the Resurrection. "This community of differently abled brothers and sisters in Christ represents a beautiful part of the Kingdom of God, alive and rich in faith. Watching them sign during the Mass was a wonderful reminder of what one Body of Christ looks like today. It was humbling ..."

Meredith Burke of Grove City attended the Mass with her hearing family. Burke, who is deaf and has cerebral palsy, graduated from Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. — the only four-year liberal arts college for the Deaf with bachelor's and master's degrees in deaf (cultural) studies. She returned to Ohio after teaching disability studies and deaf community courses for 2 ½ years at Georgetown University. She will begin a faculty position at Ohio State University teaching American Sign Language and deaf culture this fall.

"I have to say it brought such joy to have had the opportunity to be there, watching the Mass being conducted in ASL," she said. "It felt like home."

She said she participated in a pilgrimage for the deaf and disabled in Rome and Assisi during this Jubilee Year of Hope.

"It was amazing to witness people both in Rome, Italy and in Columbus, Ohio, signing, participating in the Mass, and being very happy to share this special time with each other," she said. "It showed me that the Deaf Catholic Community in central Ohio is hungry for Jesus and for the Mass to be in their language."

"I also attended the dinner (in the cathedral undercroft) following Mass. I can say that socialization after Mass is very important for the deaf community because many of us live so far from each other."

Bishop Fernandes was elated that so many people were present in the congregation.

"The Jubilee Mass for the Deaf was a blessing and a joy," he said. "Jesus came to bring glad tidings to the poor, but you don't always have to have lots of music and a loud message to proclaim the joy of the Gospel."

"I was happy to welcome the hearing-impaired and their families to the Cathedral of St. Joseph. Our Church is an inclusive one, and our diocese is one that participated in the National Catholic Partnership on Disability. I wanted to remind all those who participated, including their families, that they are always welcome in the Church and in our cathedral. Personally, as their bishop, I wanted to be close to them."

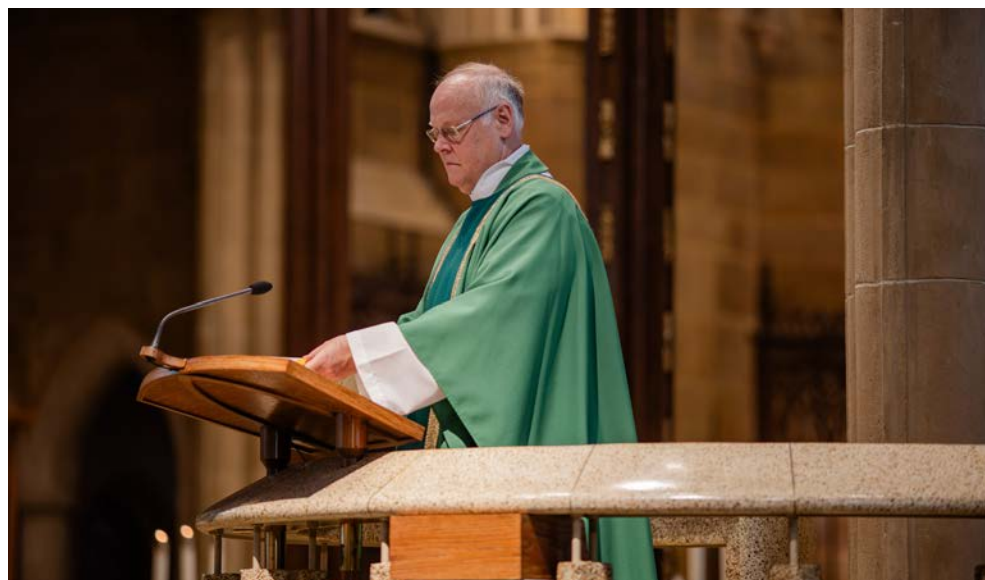
"Father Mike Depcik preached about



John Hodges (left) presents the second reading at Mass while Bob Donaldson-Pirc, who is deaf, uses American Sign Language. Photo courtesy Anna Lincoln



Meredith Burke (right) uses American Sign Language for the responsorial psalm spoken by Kathy Hodges. Photo courtesy Anna Lincoln



Father Dave Cornett, a priest in the Diocese of Steubenville, reads the Gospel during the Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral. Photo courtesy Anna Lincoln

the need to pray and to come to Mass every Sunday. I was elated, not only at the attendance, but also at the gratitude of those who attended. I was impressed by their desire for fellowship and their warmth at the reception which followed. Everyone was genuinely happy to be together. I was just as impressed by how many volunteers were there, willing to give themselves over

to serving the deaf community."

Bishop Fernandes indicated that he's searching for a priest who knows ASL to serve in the diocese.

"For far too long, this portion of the Lord's flock has been neglected," he said, "but soon we will be able to provide for them. Truly the whole event was yet another grace of the Jubilee Year."

Bishop returns to Southeastern Correctional on holy day

On the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Bishop Earl Fernandes visited Southeastern Correctional Institution in Lancaster to offer Mass in the chapel for several dozen incarcerated men and staff members.

Bishop Fernandes had previously visited the facility to celebrate Mass on Jan. 8, 2024.

In addition to Mass, the bishop heard confessions, visited with the men and blessed religious objects.

Several hours later, Bishop Fernandes celebrated another Mass on the holy day at Lancaster Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Dalton Snell, one of the incarcerated individuals, said he appreciated the opportunity to receive the sacraments from the bishop.

"It's very important," he said, "this person who is a very reputable person coming and taking his precious time to show us love and kindness -- and also the the bishop's charism, you know there is an actual power to his office that Christ has given."

"And he's sharing that with us, so he elevates us into a higher form of divinity. It's very good."

Snell said receiving the sacraments and sacramentals mean a great deal to himself and others.



Incarcerated men kneel during the consecration at a Mass celebrated by Bishop Earl Fernandes for the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the chapel at Southeastern Correctional Institution in Lancaster on Friday afternoon, Aug. 15.

Photos courtesy Andy Long

"It's very important," he said. "The sacraments are life. And without the bread of life, there is no life. I truly believe that."

He's also appreciative of the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation while in prison.

"For myself, it's completely lightened my conscience," he said. "I remember the first time I took confession here I did experience something like a psychological revival. I actually felt like 30 years of grace that my

conscience was alleviated."

He explained that some of the individuals get together in the dorm for communal prayer that includes the Liturgy of the Hours.

"The participation in communal prayer and worship, it fosters camaraderie and brotherhood and it's absolutely instrumental for all walks of life, whether you're incarcerated or not," he said.



As Bishop Earl Fernandes speaks during his homily at Southeastern Correctional Institution, one of the men attending Mass reflects on his message.



Bishop Earl Fernandes blesses religious articles during his visit to Southeastern Correctional Institution on Aug. 15



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AUG 31

6p-7p

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Dominicans celebrate patron's feast at St. Patrick

By Doug Bean
Catholic Times Editor

The observance of St. Dominic's feast day in August is always a special time for the Dominican friars and sisters who minister at Columbus St. Patrick Church. This year, the Dominicans commemorated the patron and founder of their community, the Order of Preachers, with a weeklong celebration.

The culmination of the festivities came on Saturday, Aug. 9 with the dedication of a new St. Dominic Shrine in the parish gallery after the 5 p.m. vigil Mass on the 140th anniversary of the Dominican friars serving at St. Patrick Church, which was established in the 1850s.

The celebrant for the Mass and presider at the shrine dedication was Father Michael Mary Dosch, OP, a former St. Patrick pastor and now the Socius and Vicar Provincial for the Dominican Province of St. Joseph in the eastern United States. He led a procession to the shrine after Mass while the Dominican *Salve Regina* was sung.

The shrine, which was put in place over the past year, includes a statue of St. Dominic that sits on a wooden pedestal with the order's shield carved into it. The pedestal was designed by Daniel DeGreve, a parishioner and architect, and the craftsman was Tim Sprosty.

"It wasn't so much an unveiling, but we wanted to find a good date to formally dedicate it and so that's why we felt that the Aug. 9 date, being the 140th anniversary of the friars being here, would be a better date than ever to dedicate it," said Father Paul Marich, OP, the pastor at St. Patrick.

The St. Dominic statue was purchased as part of the parish renovations in 2002-03. It was initially placed on a side altar and then moved when the historic church's two reredos were redone in the early 2010s.

"A number of the smaller statues went to other parts of the building and we really didn't have a prominent place for St. Dominic," Father Marich said. "So, one of my visions upon becoming pastor (in 2024) was having some type of notable place to honor the founder of the order."

The St. Dominic shrine is positioned opposite a St. Patrick shrine at the east entrance next to the parish center. The two shrines are situated on either side of a Sacred Heart of Jesus statue on the east wall of the gallery.

"And so it creates this image as you are coming down the gallery, walking past the baptismal font, that your focus is on the Sacred Heart," Father Marich said, "but with Patrick and Dominic on either side, you see it is these two patrons of our parish and of our order are leading us to the heart of Christ."

At the feet of the St. Dominic statue are a dog holding a torch in its mouth and a globe. The torch was lost when the statue was moved about 15 years ago, but artist Ann Anderson created a replacement.

"That goes back to the dream that his mother, Blessed Jane Aza, had that she would give birth to a son who would set the world on fire with the Gospel," Father Marich said.

St. Dominic Week events began the Saturday before the dedication with an annual day of recollection for the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic on Aug. 2, the feast of Blessed Jane, led by Father Edmund Ditton, OP, parochial vicar at St. Patrick and the group's religious assistant.

On Monday, Aug. 4, the traditional feast of St.

Dominic, a Solemn High Mass in the Dominican Rite was celebrated by Father Maximilian Jaskowak, OP, a professor at St. Mary Seminary in Baltimore whose homily focused on the life and work of St. Dominic.

"We celebrate the Dominican Rite Mass (in Latin) several times a year and we always try to bring in a visiting friar for that Mass," Father Marich said. "But this year, we did the Solemn High Mass, which we haven't done one since before COVID."

Then on Friday, Aug. 8, the Solemnity of St. Dominic on the current liturgical calendar, Father Stephen Dominic Hayes, OP, the prior at the parish's St. Patrick Friary, served as the principal celebrant and homilist at the parish's 11:45 a.m. Mass. He was joined by seven concelebrating Dominican friars and the Dominican Sisters of the Immaculate Conception Province, who were part of the large congregation.

Throughout the week, a display on the history and spirituality of the Dominican order, which originally was created in 2016 for the 800th anniversary of the order's founding in 1216, was made available in the parish gallery.

"The 140th (anniversary of the Dominicans at St. Patrick) is not necessarily a milestone, but it's a way to look ahead to 10 years from now when we reach 150 years and that'll certainly be a bigger celebration," Father Marich said. "A lot has happened in 140 years."



Father Michael Mary Dosch, OP, offers a blessing at the dedication of the St. Dominic Shrine at Columbus St. Patrick Church. Photos/St. Patrick Church



Father Michael Mary Dosch, OP, former St. Patrick Church pastor and currently Socius and Vicar Provincial for the Dominican Province of St. Joseph, presents his homily at Mass on Aug. 9 before dedicating the new St. Dominic Shrine.



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MARCHEL - IANNARINO

In the marriage case styled Dorota Lidia Marchel Iannarino and Michael Joseph Iannarino, the Tribunal of the Diocese of Columbus, Ohio is currently unaware of the present address of Michael Joseph Iannarino. The Tribunal herewith informs him of the case and invites him to contact REV. ROBERT KITSMILLER, M.DIV., JCL, no later than – 9 September 2025 or call phone (614)241-2500 Extension 1. Anyone who knows of the whereabouts of MICHAEL JOSEPH IANNARINO, is herewith asked to make this Citation known to him or to inform the Tribunal of his current address.

Given this 24 August 2025,

REV. ROBERT KITSMILLER, M.DIV., JCL | Judge KAREN KITCHELL | Notary

The Blessed Mother has once more taken a great burden from my daughter and I want the world to know to pray to Our Lady when you feel lonely and she will surround you with her protection and love. Patty & Toni

Diocesan football teams ready to open season

By Tim Puet

For The Catholic Times

Nine of the 10 diocesan high school football teams will open the season on Friday, Aug. 22, with New Philadelphia Tuscarawas Central Catholic getting things underway one day earlier at Bowerston Conotton Valley.

Columbus Bishop Watterson will be defending the Ohio Division III championship it won last season and trying to make it to the state final in December at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium in Canton for the third straight year.

The four other Columbus-based teams will be aiming for a return to the playoffs, as will two of the five from outside Franklin County. One of the remaining three will be trying for the postseason after a near-miss last year, while the other two had rosters filled with underclassmen in 2024 and hope the experience those players gained will help them rebound from disappointing seasons.

Watterson was unbeaten in 16 games in 2024, defeating Toledo Central Catholic 19-14 for the Division III state title after losing to the Irish in the previous year's championship game. The Eagles were dominant all season, averaging 39.8 points and 368.3 total yards per game and having the running-clock rule invoked in 13 of their 16 victories.

"We're in a different position this year, but it's one we're glad to be in," ninth-year Watterson coach Brian Kennedy said. "Two years ago, we wanted to make it to Canton and we did. Last year, we wanted to win a state championship and we did."

"This year, we know everyone we play has us circled on their schedule and will have their best week of practice when they get ready to play us, but we're ready. We have eight starters back on offense and six on defense, all with lots of playoff experience, so we're well-stocked."

Drew Bellisari, a first-team Division III All-Ohio selection by the state's high school sports writers in 2024, will be back for a second season at quarterback. He passed for 2,106 yards and 30 touchdowns last year and ran for 734 yards and 14 scores and has college offers from Grand Valley State and Indianapolis.

"Drew just kept getting better each week," Kennedy said. "He had a deep thigh bruise for most of the playoffs and we wondered each week if he could play as he hobbled around school, but come game time, he always seemed to get better."

Another returning first-team All-Ohioan is offensive lineman Pete Eglitis, who has committed to Iowa State. "He's the first Power 4 conference commitment Watterson's had in more than 20 years," Kennedy said. "He's 6 foot 7 now and is up to around 290 or 300 pounds. He just keeps growing and, like Drew, has been getting better all the time."

Defensive lineman Michael Boyle, a two-time state wrestling champion, has several offers in that sport from major colleges. "It's hard to describe his impact," Kennedy said. "The best way is to say the energy he brings to every play spreads to his teammates." Also with college offers in other sports are junior wide receiver-cornerback Nate Henderson (baseball) and junior cornerback Joe Hayes (lacrosse).

Columbus Bishop Hartley will have a new coach for the first time since 2008 as Matt Melle replaces Brad Burchfield, who left the Hawks after 168 victories and three state championships in 17 seasons. Melle was Hartley's defensive coordinator last year and linebacker coach in 2023 and has more than 20 years of coaching experience in Ohio and Pennsylvania, including two years as head coach at Cleveland Villa Angela-St. Joseph.

He has retained several members of Burchfield's staff and brought in Jahari Murdock, head coach at KIPP Columbus last year, as defensive coordinator and Austen Rankin and Drysen Crallie from Thomas Worthington and Dublin Coffman, respectively, as co-offensive coordinators.

"I'm honored to take over for Brad but won't try to be him," Melle said. "That won't work for us or the team. Things will change, but we want to retain the constant level of success Brad brought. We have an outstanding running back in Robert Lathon and will be trying to develop our passing attack because we want to be a little less ground-oriented."

Lathon gained 2,032 of Hartley's 4,112 rushing yards and was on the All-Ohio Division III first team last year. Melle said he has offers from 13 Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) schools, including Marshall, Ohio University and Purdue. "He's bound to be the focus of many defenses, so we plan to have Matt Galich (who passed for 630 yards in 2024) be more active at quarterback and less of a game manager this year."

Offensive and defensive lineman Jake Beatty, described by Melle as having "a work ethic second to none," was a second-team All-Ohioan last year and will be attending the U.S. Air Force Academy. Linebacker Jay Zang was a third-team all-state player. Melle describes him as "the poster child for toughness and accountability."

The dean of diocesan coaches, Ryan Wiggins, returns to DeSales for his 19th season and has two players – running back Jonathan Brown (Michigan) and defensive lineman Frankie McCallister (Army), with major-college commitments and one – tight end Jordan Karhoff – with offers from what Wiggins said are several FCS schools, including Ohio State and Penn State.

Brown had 1,295 yards and 16 touchdowns last season and was a first-team All-Central District and honorable mention All-Ohio pick. He bulked up over the summer and was chosen as most valuable player of a camp in Ann Arbor, leading to

the Michigan offer.

"Some extra training and extra work on speed and agility and physical maturing has gone a long way" for Brown, Wiggins said. "He's always been this long, athletic guy. Now he's put a lot more muscle on that frame."

"Frankie (McCallister) is a dominant defensive end who really disrupts quarterbacks, with 25 tackles for loss and seven or eight sacks last year. Karhoff is a dangerous tight end, and his excellence also as a blocker led to his offers."

Third-year starting QB RJ Day, a junior, is bound to draw a lot of attention because he's the son of Ohio State coach Ryan Day, but Wiggins said he'd be noticed without his family connection.

"He's passed for nearly 3,000 yards (the school record) and 29 touchdowns, so the skills are there," the coach said. "He's someone who works on his craft all the time and we're looking to a great season from him." Purdue and Syracuse are among 14 FBS schools that have made him offers.

Columbus St. Charles lost all three of its Central Catholic League (CCL) games to Watterson, DeSales and Hartley but went 4-3 in other games to get into the playoff field, losing to Ashland in the first round.

"We're building on a strong foundation from last year and are excited to enter this season," coach Anthony Colucci said. "We're looking for big things from juniors Trey Davis and Ben Nickey at wide receiver and Nick Kummar, a senior running back and linebacker."

"Trey and Ben each caught 30 passes last year – Trey for 559 yards and seven TDs and Ben for 468 yards. Nick started on both sides of the ball and plays at a high rate of speed. He's our leading returning rusher with 59 carries for 236 yards."

"Last year was my first as a head coach and it was such a learning experience," Colucci continued. "Another coach I value said you might as well describe Year 1 as Year Zero because there's so much you have to learn and this year is the true Year 1. Now I understand. I found so much last year that wasn't on my radar, and now I feel I can really get into coaching."

Bishop Ready, the only Columbus-based diocesan school not in the CCL, will be gunning for a third straight Central Buckeye League (CBL) championship.

"We lost 16 seniors and have only eight returning so this year's team will be a young one, but joining the CBL, having back-to-back unbeaten seasons in the league and winning a first-round playoff game in each of the past two years has given us high expectations," coach T.J. Burbridge said.

"Some of our senior leaders are center Jacob Troth, tackle Chaz Sanders and running back Wes Abbott. In the early weeks of practice, it's been 'quarterback by committee' rather than having a definite starter, with Ethan Mutnich, Mikey Daniels and Tyler Moscinski all taking a turn. It's the same at running back with Luke Kamerer, Sier Grimes and Kingston Norris."

"Abbott, Troth and Norris, a junior, were all-conference last year. Troth in particular is likely to provide a steady hand based on the way he moved into a leadership role last year."

Zanesville Bishop Rosecrans and Lancaster Fisher Catholic are both in the Mid-State League Cardinal Division. Rosecrans finished 6-4 overall and 3-3 in the league and Fisher was 4-6 and 2-4, yet Fisher made the playoffs and Rosecrans didn't because they were in different enrollment classes.

"We're back in Division VII this year after being Division VI last year. This is where we should have been all along, so that gives us a break," Rosecrans coach Chris Zemba said.

Brody Zemba, the coach's son, was a third-team All-Ohio selection last year at running back. "He's an extremely hard worker and has been a natural team leader since he started playing," the coach said. "We didn't have to tell him to lead. It just seems to have come naturally. One of his best attributes is he doesn't care if he gets one or 50 carries in a game. He's just out to win."

"Haiden Omen plays both ways and is extremely good on both sides of the ball. Hayden Perdue, our quarterback, has a great arm – he can throw more than 60 yards standing still – and at 215 pounds is bigger than some of our linemen. Coen Grandstaff is a tight end and linebacker with a nose for both sides of the ball."

"We have 10 seniors and about 20 returning players on a 23-man roster, so it's a pretty experienced team. With such small numbers, it's the epitome of iron man football."

At Fisher, "we lost an outstanding athlete in Hyde O'Rielley (a first-team All-Ohio receiver) last year but our cupboard certainly isn't bare," coach Luke Thimmes said. "Our strength is an experienced offensive line with senior Caden Delabar and the rest juniors."

"The thing we need to do is finish games. We let three or four losses slip away and that kept us from a winning record and a higher seed in the playoffs. We really must try to control the clock this year."

He said his key players are Delabar and juniors Nick Harris and Jude Clum on the line, Sam Tencza, Mike Zachery, Leo Hampshire, Luke Cairns, Blake Wohler and O'Rielley's



Jay Zang



Robert Lathon



Jake Beatty



Kingston Norris



Jacob Troth



Brody Zemba



Hayden Perdue



Haiden Omen

2025 high school football schedules for diocesan schools

<div>NEWARK CATHOLIC</div> <div>8-22 at Allen East 8-29 at West Jefferson 9-5 at Buckeye Trail 9-12 Worthington Christian 9-19 Licking Valley 9-26 at Johnstown Northridge 10-3 at Utica 10-10 Heath 10-17 at Hebron Lakewood 10-24 Johnstown</div> <div>2024 record: 1-9 overall, 1-4 conference CONFERENCE: Licking County League Cardinal COACH: Josh Hendershot (4-16 in two seasons at Newark Catholic and overall)</div>	<div>BISHOP READY</div> <div>8-22 at Dalton 8-29 Licking Heights (at Ohio Dominican) 9-5 at Licking Valley 9-12 St. Charles 9-19 KIPP Columbus 9-26 at Whitehall 10-3 at Buckeye Valley 10-10 Bexley 10-17 at Columbus Academy 10-24 Franklin Heights (All home games except 8-29 at Fortress Obetz)</div> <div>2024 record: 7-5 overall, 4-0 conference CONFERENCE: Central Buckeye League COACH: T.J. Burbridge (17-7 in two seasons at Bishop Ready and overall)</div>	<div>ST. FRANCIS DESALES</div> <div>8-22 Olentangy Berlin 8-29 Columbus Northland 9-5 at Columbus Africentric 9-12 Hamilton Badin 9-19 at Winchester (Ky.) G.R. Clark 9-26 Bishop Watterson 10-3 at Huntington (W.Va.) Cabell Midland 10-10 at St. Charles 10-17 at Harrison 10-24 at Bishop Hartley</div> <div>2024 record: 9-3 overall, 2-1 conference CONFERENCE: Central Catholic League COACH: Ryan Wiggins (153-69 in 18 seasons at St. Francis DeSales and 157-75 overall)</div>	<div>BISHOP HARTLEY</div> <div>8-22 Elyria Catholic 8-29 at Youngstown Ursuline 9-5 Columbus Walnut Ridge 9-12 Watkins Memorial 9-19 at Hamilton Badin 9-26 St. Charles 10-3 at Cuyahoga Falls Walsh Jesuit 10-10 at Bishop Watterson 10-17 at KIPP Columbus 10-24 St. Francis DeSales</div> <div>2024 record: 6-5 overall, 1-2 conference CONFERENCE: Central Catholic League COACH: Matt Melle (first season at Hartley, 10-10 in two seasons as a head coach)</div>	<div>ST. CHARLES</div> <div>8-22 Central Crossing 8-29 at Hamilton Township 9-5 Westerville South 9-12 at Bishop Ready 9-19 at Franklin Heights 9-26 at Bishop Hartley 10-3 Dublin Scioto 10-10 St. Francis DeSales 10-17 at Hunting Valley University School 10-24 Bishop Watterson</div> <div>2024 record: 4-7 overall, 0-3 conference CONFERENCE: Central Catholic League COACH: Anthony Colucci (4-7 in one season at St. Charles and overall)</div>
<div>BISHOP WATTERSON</div> <div>8-22 Big Walnut 8-30 Middletown, Del. (at Ironton) 9-5 at Westerville North 9-12 Tiffin Columbian 9-19 Harvest Prep 9-26 at St. Francis DeSales 10-3 Open 10-10 Bishop Hartley 10-17 at Canal Fulton Northwest 10-24 at St. Charles (All home games at Ohio Dominican)</div> <div>2024 record: 16-0 overall (state Division III champions), 3-0 conference CONFERENCE: Central Catholic League COACH: Brian Kennedy (65-30 in eight seasons at Bishop Watterson and overall)</div>	<div>BISHOP ROSECRANS</div> <div>8-22 at Beachwood 8-29 at New London 9-6 at Steubenville Catholic Central 9-12 Grove City Christian 9-19 at Fisher Catholic 9-26 Fairfield Christian 10-3 Caldwell 10-10 at Hemlock Miller 10-17 Millersport 10-24 at Berne Union</div> <div>2024 record: 6-4 overall, 4-3 conference CONFERENCE: Mid-State League Cardinal COACH: Chris Zemba (28-35 in five seasons at Bishop Rosecrans and overall)</div>	<div>PORTSMOUTH NOTRE DAME</div> <div>8-22 at Fairfield Christian 8-29 West Union 9-6 at Fisher Catholic 9-12 at Miami Valley Christian 9-20 Shadyside 9-26 South Gallia 10-3 at Franklin Furnace Green 10-10 Beaver Eastern 10-17 at Symmes Valley 10-24 at Sciotoville East</div> <div>2024 record: 6-6 overall, 3-2 conference CONFERENCE: Southern Ohio Conference Division I COACH: Bob Boldman (first season as a head coach)</div>	<div>TUSCARAWAS CENTRAL CATHOLIC</div> <div>8-21 at Conotton Valley 8-29 Fisher Catholic 9-5 Louisville St. Thomas Aquinas 9-12 at Millersport 9-19 Federal Hocking 9-26 at Buckeye Trail 10-3 Newcomerstown 10-10 at East Canton 10-17 at Malvern 10-24 Strasburg-Franklin</div> <div>2024 record: 0-9 overall, 0-5 conference CONFERENCE: Inter-Valley Conference North COACH: Giovanni Ionno (0-9 in one season at Tuscarawas Central Catholic and overall)</div>	<div>FISHER CATHOLIC</div> <div>8-22 Belpre 8-29 at Tuscarawas Central Catholic 9-6 Portsmouth Notre Dame 9-12 at Fairfield Christian 9-19 Bishop Rosecrans 9-26 at Hemlock Miller 10-4 Millersport 10-10 Berne Union 10-17 at Grove City Christian 10-24 at Manchester</div> <div>2024 record: 4-7 overall, 2-4 conference CONFERENCE: Mid-State League Cardinal COACH: Luke Thimmes (16-35 in five seasons at Fisher Catholic and overall)</div>

FOOTBALL: Diocesan football teams ready to open season, Continued from Page 16

brother Ethan in the backfield. Either senior Jacob Welsh or sophomore James Wilkinson will be the quarterback. “Jacob has more experience, but James is taller,” Thimmes said.

Portsmouth Notre Dame athletic director Bob Boldman unexpectedly had the title “interim head football coach” added to his job description when Buster Davis handed in his resignation in mid-July after two seasons, with the Titans making the playoffs both years. *The Portsmouth Daily Times* said indications are that Davis is taking a high school coaching job in his home state of Florida.

“That was kind of a shocker,” Boldman said. “I offered the job to two other guys, but they had previous arrangements, so it seemed the best thing was for me to take over for this year. I’ve been an assistant coach for nine years, including four here under (Davis’ predecessor) Bob Ashley, so I have that experience, plus we have two fine coordinators in Jason Coleman, who used to play here, offensively and Bill Shannon, with 20 years of coaching experience, handling the defense.”

Key players will be third-team All Ohioan Bryce McGraw teaming with Luke Cassidy at running back, along with all-state honorable mention quarterback Ethan Kingrey.

“Bryce at 5 foot 9 and 210 pounds is a gritty, thick player, a real leader and a talented kid,” Boldman said. “He started the season at quarterback, but Ethan took over that position after Week 5. Ethan is 6-2 and 220 and we found he had a strong arm that got more accurate as the season went on. He’ll be one of the best quarterbacks in southern Ohio.

“Luke missed half the season last year with an injury and could only play offense when he returned. He was a real



Bryce McGraw



Ethan Kingrey



Luke Cassidy

speedster at receiver two years ago and we’re anxious to see him at full strength. We’ve also added a kicker, Coleman Shaffer, who hadn’t played in the last two seasons and has been booming 45-yard field goals in practice.”

For a team with eight state championships and 39 playoff appearances, Newark Catholic’s last two seasons have been uncharacteristically disappointing, with records of 3-7 in 2023 and an unprecedented 1-9 last year. Coach Josh Hendershot said his players have put that season behind them and have good reasons to anticipate a return to form in 2025.

“Most of our starters were sophomores last year, so combine that lack of experience with the loss of our top running back to a fractured leg bone and the loss of our quarterback to a broken wrist and it was the recipe for a tough season,” he said.

“But I feel pretty good this year because we have 38 players this year, the largest number in several years, and only three of them are seniors. Our 13 juniors have lots of experience now and we have plenty of strong leaders who took their licks last year and learned.

“Our best athlete is Jaxon Holman, who can switch between fullback and slot receiver. We’ll find multiple ways to get him the football. Max Childers should be strong at safety and linebacker and we’ll probably have him as a running back. Malone Hutchison will be back at quarterback after being hurt last year.”

Hendershot also anticipates good years from the three seniors – linemen Carmine Annarino and Billy Stanearnt and back Kylan Eskins.

Coach Giovanni Ionno said his Tuscarawas Central Catholic (TCC) team “had a perfect season last year. It just went the wrong way.” The Saints went 0-9 last year, but Ionno said he was grateful there was a season at all.

“At one point before the season, we only had eight kids and there was doubt we’d have a team,” said Ionno, a TCC graduate who shares ownership of a construction company with his father, who played at the school and was an assistant coach there.

Ionno took the coaching reins on June 24 with little time to prepare. “We ended up with 17 coming out and were down to 14 by the end of the season because of injuries,” he said. “This year, we have 25 on the roster, including 15 coming back. Last year, the theme was saving the season. This year, we hope to do something with it.”

He said his key players are senior Christian Tarralla, juniors Grady Stein and Anthony Bollon and sophomore Caleb Bowers.



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Sacred Art and Music camp ends with sung Mass

A weeklong Sacred Art and Music Camp culminated with a Friday evening Mass on Aug. 1 at Gahanna St. Matthew the Apostle Church.

The votive Mass to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus on the first Friday was chanted from the opening prayer to the final blessing, including the Psalm by the choir, the first reading by seminarian Jacob Wilson and the Gospel by Deacon Joe Meyer.

There was no organ accompaniment at the Mass and all of the text was sung whenever possible.

The camp was based on the Chant Camp format designed by Canticle.org, a U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops-approved apostolate based in southern California. The art portion was added to provide diversity of interest for students who participated.

"It just felt that art and music go together too," said Dawn Shining, the camp organizer and director of music at St. Matthew.

A maximum 50 students registered and each day an average of 42-44 campers were in attendance. Six diocesan parishes were represented: St. Matthew, New Albany Church of the Resurrection, Columbus St. Patrick, Delaware St. Mary and Columbus St. Catharine churches and Columbus St. Leo the Great Oratory. Student ages ranged from third grade to recent high school graduates.

The day camp ran from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday with sessions on sacred music, which was prepared for Mass celebrated at the end of the week.

The sacred art created by the campers was blessed at the end of Friday's Mass for them to take home. Students wrote an icon of the Face of Jesus, which was a process developed as a homeschool project and found online.

Students also received blessed religious articles to take home to place in their home altar or sacred space area. Included were Theophany water from the Melkite tradition (holy water from the Eastern rite church), tealight beeswax candles blessed in February at Candlemas, blessed/exorcised salt, a blessed/exorcised St. Benedict medal, and prayer cards/booklets that contained a picture of all articles in the album.

Sessions were interspersed with recreation and lunch. The Angelus was prayed at noon.

Each day began with a brief talk from the parish pastor or staff about the topics incorporated into the camp. Father Ted Sill, the parish pastor, spoke about the spirituality of icons; Shining discussed sung prayer and active silence in the Mass and in personal prayer time; and Rob Saley, the parish director of evangelization, talked about liturgical living at home.

At the end of each day, midday prayers from the Liturgy of the Hours were led by one of the parish priests. Students learned how to recite the psalms in common while alternating sides.

Shining said she received positive feedback from parents and parishioners, who look forward to next year's camp slated for the first week of August with a Marian theme in art and music.



Sacred Art and Music Camp participants, support staff and clergy spent a week together.



Students are hard at work creating sacred images during the Sacred Art and Music camp at Gahanna St. Matthew the Apostle Church.

Photos courtesy Dawn Shining



The campers' artwork is on display at the Sacred Art and Music camp that ended Aug. 1. Students were allowed to take their work home at the end of the week.

DeSales alumni assist in Gospel Road ministry



Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School alumni gave their time this summer to serve in the weeklong Gospel Road ministry run by New Albany Church of the Resurrection. Young adults who traveled to Vinton County to help with repair projects for residents included (from left) Mia Slanoc (Class of 2021), Evie Brown '25, Evan Kopala '24, Vince Marchese '24, Brandon Heil '24, Evie Frazier '25 and Annie Ryan '19.

Photo courtesy St. Francis DeSales High School

DeSales students go to Salesian Gospel Roads



Nine Columbus St. Francis DeSales students traveled to New Orleans this summer to participate in the Salesian Gospel Roads service retreat, volunteering at a new site every day. They began each morning with a lesson on Catholic Social Teaching and attended Mass each evening. Students also played games, sang karaoke and became acquainted with other students from across the eastern United States. Among the retreatants and teachers were (from left) Mr. Chris Baldwin, Mrs. Shannon Huelskamp, Larkin Hatton, AnnaLee Beach, Emma Minser, Tereza Sprungle, Will Hartman, Jimmy Momoh and Ben Reither. The students planned to share their experiences with their peers and infuse more of the Salesian spirit into the school community.

Photo courtesy St. Francis DeSales High School

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd training held



Nearly 100 people received training in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in the Diocese of Columbus this summer. Many were from central Ohio, but others traveled from California, Colorado and Florida. The future catechists spent a minimum of 45 hours in training, with many spending more than twice that many hours. Training consists of community prayer, reading, theological and pedagogical lectures, practice and materials making. Level one five-day sessions took place at Columbus St. Catharine of Siena Church and level three 14-day formation training was held at Delaware St. Mary Church that included attendees from Florida and California. The Montessori-based religious education program for children ages 3-12 emphasizes the development of a personal relationship with God through hands-on learning and spiritual formation.

Photos courtesy Cathy Johanni

21st Sunday of Ordinary Time Year C

For us disciples to be saved, we must be disciplined

Isaiah 66:18-21
Psalm 117:1, 2
Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13
Luke 13:22-30

The academic year is gearing up again, to the mixed delight and dread of students, parents, and teachers. The standard exchange of questions and answers between the Lord and His followers hearkens to the Greek Socratic method, a typical dialogue format of philosophy employed in the ancient world that long preceded our modern schooling system.

However, Christ comes to us not as some type of Semitic Confucius. He is not just Teacher but Truth. He intends to communicate Himself. The matter at stake by far surpasses all conventional intellectual inquiry; they ask, "Lord, will only a few people be saved?" While we often speak with Him about material needs, health concerns, and our struggles with virtuous living, the ultimate concern that contextualizes everything else must focus on the one eternal one: our salvation.

As any good professor would, Our Lord leads His listeners, including us, on a progressive path toward full proficiency over this most crucial material. Instead of the simple revelation of the answer, as though it were some problem to be solved, He encourages us to exert our best efforts to meet demanding ideals. At times, His voice in the



SCRIPTURE READINGS

Father Tyron Tomson

Father Tyron Tomson is a priest of the Diocese of Columbus pursuing a Licentiate in Sacred Scripture in Rome.

explanatory parable becomes quite stern: "I do not know where you are from. Depart from me, all you evildoers!" And there will be wailing and grinding of teeth when you see ... you yourselves cast out." What an ex-acting and strict instructor!

This phenomenon signals God's love for us: "Do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart when reproved by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines." This pivotal lesson described as "the exhortation addressed to you as children" that Hebrews invokes can be found both in Proverbs (3:11-12) and in Job (5:17-18), as

well as resurfacing in I Corinthians (11:32) and Revelation (3:19). All reaffirm the same idea: the maturation process requires suffering and struggle. "Endure your trials as 'discipline,'" we are encouraged.

Being a disciple, the Biblical word for student, consists essentially in being disciplined in both its senses of punitive and virtue-building. There must be clear correction that will build self-mastery. "At the time, all discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it." Like so many common elementary Scriptural insights, we seem to forget this one repeatedly right when we need it the most.

We usually find learning a distressing process rife with wrong answers, forgotten facts and even failures. Those who are so naturally gifted or previously educated and know the material ahead of time don't have to engage the rigors of study and can thus hardly be properly considered students; however, those don't exist in the classroom of holiness.

Each of us must run the gauntlet of pain, that is, the Cross, to be corrected, to become truly grateful and to be conformed to the crucified Teacher. Through the predictions of the prophet Isaiah, the Lord indicates what the content of this revelatory lesson will be: "they shall come and see my glory." Indeed, the full grandeur of the Lord's love

is shown forth in the academy of Calvary.

The scope of this salvific message is intended to be universal, a concept latent in the Old Covenant and then lived out as the New began and the Apostles made their missionary journeys to the ends of the earth: "They shall proclaim my glory among the nations." The Responsorial Psalm reiterates its familiar theme addressing "all you nations ... all you peoples!" and its refrain, which is in fact taken from Mark's Gospel, likewise extends the mandate: "Go out to all the world and tell the Good News." Christ promises that the message will have magnetic and even Eucharistic force: "People will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God."

To return to the Lord's response to the original inquiry about salvation from His student-disciples, when it comes to the proverbial "narrow gate," Christ rigorously warns us: "Many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough." As a masterful sage educator, the Lord asserts, "I know their works and their thoughts." Only out of love for us does He regularly test us, like schoolchildren, to challenge us ever higher to the next level ... in this case, the everlasting one. The discipline of discipleship will be arduous, but it will make us His disciples.

22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time Year C

Christ always and everywhere the teacher

Sirach 3:17-18, 20, 28-29
Psalm 68:4-5, 6-7, 10-11
Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24a
Luke 14:1, 7-14

Today's gospel provides us with a window through which we can take a peek at the society of Jesus' times. At first glance, it may seem that Jesus is teaching good etiquette and table manners, or perhaps giving some advice to avoid being overly embarrassed in a social situation. To think of Jesus in this way, in my opinion, diminishes His person. Let us see.

We are aware that a human being is social by nature. We are conceived through the conjoint effort of two people and God (Who creates the soul), we grow by building up relationships and widening our circle of contacts we develop through these interactions and so on.

To be honest, our knowledge of the social customs in Jesus' time and place is very limited. Still, today's gospel presents quite a unique situation to us. It is not clear if Jesus was invited to dine because He was a sort of celebrity at the time or if the invitation was just part of a customary event. It seems that Jewish people used to end their Sabbath celebration with a good meal (like many Catholic families do for Sunday dinner, thus expanding the celebration). The Pharisees would have been particularly prone to do it.



SCRIPTURE READINGS

Father Ervens Mengelle, IVE, SSL

Father Ervens Mengelle, IVE, SSL, is an Assistant Professor of Scripture and Dean of Men in the School of Theology at the Pontifical College Josephinum. He holds a licentiate in biblical exegesis from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome with further biblical studies at the Toronto School of Theology.

In fact, author Elias Bickerman explains very well in his book *From Ezra to the Last of the Maccabees: Foundations of Post-Biblical Judaism*, the influence of Hellenism in the development of Jewish society in Palestine through the third, second and first centuries before Christ. One of the typical activities in Hellenistic society was a formal gathering known as a symposium (which means in Greek "drinking together") that was usu-

ally done alongside some sort of lecture or discussion (rules for how they did it are well known). Considering the importance given by the Pharisees to the study of the law (equivalent to literary education in Hellenistic circles), such an activity would have been quite appealing.

From another perspective, it is also very meaningful that the Gospel of Luke presents Jesus sharing a table with other people with higher frequency than in the other gospels. Catholic writer Eugene LaVerdiere has especially studied this aspect of the gospel, arriving at the conclusion that the ultimate reason for those moments in Jesus' ministry is found in the institution of the Eucharist. So, in this case, the Pharisees' practice was very fitting for Jesus' purposes.

In any case, the Savior did not miss an opportunity to provide a meaningful teaching to His commensals. The first reading shows that, in reality, Jesus is not teaching something entirely new but is reminding people of important lessons that were already part of Jewish tradition. (It is considered that the book of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus was written around the year 190 B.C.)

We know that conventions constitute the scaffolding of society. We always expect people to behave in a certain way and, if they do not do it, we are surprised, maybe even

shocked or scandalized. Without conventions, society breaks down, becomes tribal and eventually falls apart. From the perspective of conventions, Jesus' teaching is very radical. It begs the question if Jesus truly intended for people to behave in the way He teaches in today's gospel or if He is trying to instill a disposition of the heart in His audience. In other words, we may ask how practicable Jesus' teaching is.

But even granting that it may not be so easy to do (again, because of societal conventions or other limitations), it still remains the truth of Jesus' teaching in its essence, which is no other than the consideration we should have of every single person and our own personal role in society in light of our neighbors' situations. The closing sentence of the gospel reminds us of what has to be our final goal in everything we undertake. The second reading reminds us of this same reality with a beautiful description: "You have approached Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and countless angels in festal gathering, and the assembly of the firstborn enrolled in heaven, and God the judge of all, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and the sprinkled blood that speaks more eloquently than that of Abel." Therefore, let us behave accordingly.

DIOCESAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION: Mass Schedule: Weeks of August 24 and 31

SUNDAY MASS
10:30am Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio AM820, Columbus, FM88.3, Portsmouth, and FM106.7, Athens, and at www.stgabrielradio.com and diocesan website, www.columbuscatholic.org.

Mass from St. Francis de Sales Seminary, Milwaukee, at 7:30 and 10 a.m. on WWHO-TV (the CW), Channel 53, Columbus. Mass with the Passionist Fathers at 10:30 a.m. on WHIZ-TV, Channel 18, Zanesville. Check local cable system for cable channel listing.

Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Birmingham, Ala., at 8 a.m. on EWTN (Spectrum Channel 385, Insight Channel 382, or Breezeline Channel 378). (Encores at noon, 7 p.m., and midnight). Mass from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee at 6:30 a.m. on ION TV (AT&T U-verse Channel 195, Dish Network Channel 250, or DirecTV Channel 305).

Mass from Massillon St. Mary Church at 10:30 a.m. on WILB radio (AM 1060, FM 94.5 and 89.5), Canton, heard in Tuscarawas, Holmes, and Coshocton counties.

DAILY MASS
8 a.m., Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Birmingham, Ala. (Encores at noon, 7 p.m. and midnight). See EWTN above; and on I-Lifetv (Channel 113, Ada, Logan, Millersburg, Murray City, Washington C.H.; Channel 125, Marion, Newark, Newcomerstown and New Philadelphia; Channel 207, Zanesville); 8 p.m., St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.
12:05 p.m. weekdays, 8 a.m. Saturdays, Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com and diocesan website, www.columbuscatholic.org. (Saturdays on radio only).

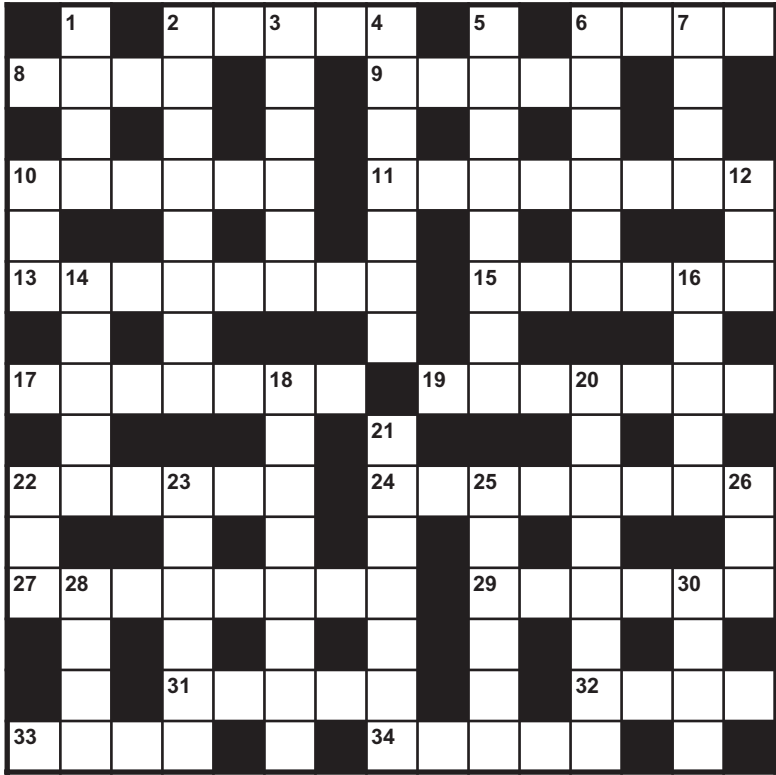
Videos of Masses are available at any time on the internet at these and many other parish websites: Mattingly Settlement St. Mary (www.stannstmary.org); Columbus St. Patrick (www.stpatrickcolumbus.org); Delaware St. Mary (www.delawarestmary.org); Sunbury St. John Neumann (www.saint-johnsunbury.org); and Columbus Immaculate Conception (www.iccols.org). Check your parish website for additional information.

We pray the propers for Weeks I and II of the Liturgy of the Hours

THE WEEKDAY BIBLE READINGS

8-25/8-30 MONDAY 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5,8b-10 Psalm 149:1b-6a,9b Matthew 23:13-22	THURSDAY 1 Thessalonians 3:7-13 Psalm 90:3-5a,12-14,17 Matthew 24:42-51	9-1/9-6 MONDAY 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Psalm 96:1,3-5,11-13 Luke 4:16-31	THURSDAY Colossians 1:9-14 Psalm 98:2-6 Luke 5:1-11
TUESDAY 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 Psalm 139:1-3,4-6 Matthew 23:23-26	FRIDAY 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 Psalm 97:1,2b,5-6,10-12 Mark 6:17-29	TUESDAY 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6,9-11 Psalm 27:1,4,13-14 Luke 4:31-37	FRIDAY Colossians 1:15-20 Psalm 100:1b-5 Luke 5:33-39
WEDNESDAY 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13 Psalm 139:7-12b Matthew 23:27-32	SATURDAY 1 Thessalonians 4:9-11 Psalm 98:1,7-9 Matthew 25:14-30	WEDNESDAY Colossians 1:1-8 Psalm 52:10-11 Luke 4:38-44	SATURDAY Colossians 1:21-23 Psalm 54:3-4,6-8 Luke 6:1-5

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- ACROSS**
- 2 Son of Sarah
- 6 Diocese opening
- 8 Easter is observed on the Sunday following the first full ____ of the vernal equinox
- 9 Wicked chief minister of the Persian king
- 10 Time of preparation for the coming of Christ
- 11 Religious ceremonies
- 13 Archdiocese in Queensland Australia
- 15 Epistle
- 17 ____ Sacrament
- 19 Son of Abraham
- 22 Biblical occupation
- 24 Characteristic of God
- 27 The Apostle James's father
- 29 Nihil ____
- 31 Peter or Paul, for example
- 32 OT book in which you will find 9A
- 33 Marriage vows
- 34 "...thy will be done on ____"
- DOWN**
- 1 The New Jerusalem in Revelation was made of this
- 2 Perfumes the altar
- 3 Patron saint of jewelers
- 4 Jewish month of Hanukkah
- 5 According to Tobit 13, the gates of Jerusalem will be built with sapphires and these precious stones
- 6 Mark with oil
- 7 "____ let us adore him..."
- 10 Tunic-like vestment
- 12 OT wisdom book
- 14 Saint item
- 16 Movie reviewer/film critic who was a former altar boy
- 18 Explanation or interpretation of Scripture
- 20 Elder son of Joseph
- 21 Adjective for Esau
- 22 The ____ of Galilee
- 23 Most likely, Paul's first epistle (abbr.)
- 25 St. Therese, the Little ____
- 26 "When we ____ this bread..."
- 28 "...and ____ us not into temptation..."
- 30 Bible book about the early Christians

LOCAL NEWS AND EVENTS

Mary's Meals founder coming to Columbus

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, the founder of Mary's Meals, a charity that feeds three million schoolchildren worldwide daily, will return to Columbus for a film presentation on Saturday, Sept. 13 and a concert the following day.

MacFarlane-Barrow, who has spoken twice at the Columbus Catholic Women's Conference, will introduce a screening of the new Mary's Meals film "On the Frontlines of Hunger," followed by a question-and-answer session at 7 p.m. Sept. 13 in the Matiesch Theater of Ohio Dominican University (ODU), 1216 Sunbury Road, Columbus. This event is part of ODU's celebration of the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si'.

He also will appear from 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 14 at the second annual Concert for a Cause, a benefit for Mary's Meals at the Edison Brewing Co., 785 Science Blvd., Gahanna. The family-friendly event will feature the musical group The Navigators, children's activities, food and beverages available for purchase.

There is no cost to attend either event. Donations will be accepted. MacFarlane-Barrow founded Mary's Meals in 2002 after hearing the simple wish of a child in Malawi "to have enough to eat and go to school." It partners with local farmers, food suppliers and communities to deliver and manage school feeding programs. Trained volunteers prepare and serve meals, and staff monitor the impact in 16 nations, including Haiti, Ethiopia, Malawi and South Sudan, where a school meal is often a lifeline.

Father Buffer's music to be presented in concert

A free concert of original sacred music composed or arranged by Father Thomas Buffer, pastor of Columbus St. Cecilia Church, will be presented at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 12 at the Lancaster Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, 132 S. High St.

Choirs from the basilica, St. Cecilia, Columbus St. Patrick and Westerville St. Paul churches and the Columbus St. Leo the Great Oratory and the Una Voce vocal ensemble will participate, with organ and brass accompaniment.

Serra sponsors essay contest for boys

The Serra Club of Columbus' third annual essay contest for eighth-grade boys will present \$1,000 tuition assistance grants to a Catholic school to writers of the 10 best essays of 500 words or less on whether God might be calling them to the priesthood.

"The mere fact of writing vocation essays helps form a culture of vocations," the club said. "Last year's essays were very well-written while showing serious thought about what God might have in mind for them. A boy who settles down to write out what he thinks about his future in light of God's will, forms in himself an antidote against secularism."

All eighth-grade boys in the diocese are eligible whether or not they attend a Catholic school. The deadline for submissions is Sunday, Nov. 30. Call or text (614) 558-0806 or email kielkopf.1@osu.edu for more information.

St. Andrew to host program for all affected by addiction

Anyone who has dealt or is dealing with the impact of addiction is invited to Columbus St. Andrew Church, 1899 McCoy Road, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 31 for a late afternoon of prayer, support, and spiritual healing sponsored by iTHIRST Columbus.

The program will begin with time for private prayer, Eucharistic Adoration, and reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Night Prayer and Benediction will take place from 5:15 to 5:30. iTHIRST spiritual companions will be available to pray with anyone.

iTHIRST is a team of individuals who have been trained through Seton Hall University to provide spiritual companionship to anyone who needs support along the journey away from addiction.

For more information about the iTHIRST spiritual companion program or for confidential support and connection to a spiritual companion in your area, call or text (614) 547-9288.

Women's recovery alliance to sponsor breakfast

The OpenDoor Women's Recovery Alliance, a local nonprofit serving women recovering from substance use disorder, is sponsoring a fundraising breakfast featuring former Ohio State and NFL wide receiver Roy Hall Jr. telling his family's personal journey with addiction and how it has shaped his life.

The event will take place from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 20 at the Five14 Church, 5744 N. Hamilton Road, Columbus. An auction will be part of the program.

OpenDoor was founded by Leslie Kristoff, Rachel Muha and Tammy Foeller – three women brought together by the pain caused by substance disorder. Kristoff and Foeller were desperate for their daughters to stop

using drugs and Muha was devastated by the murder in 1999 of her son Brian, a Franciscan University of Steubenville student, by men high on drugs.

Its focus is befriending women suffering from the disease of addiction who lack support, providing them with unconditional advocacy, mentorship and companionship.

This transitional relationship fills the void existing between incarceration or treatment and sustainable recovery. By transforming lives, it impacts future generations.

"We believe the Catholic Church has a vital role in ending the cycles of addiction, isolation, and shame," Muha said. "Our work is not about fixing people. It's about being present, being faithful and building bridges to restoration. The women we serve are mothers, daughters and sisters – often survivors of abuse, trafficking, and generational poverty."

Tickets to the event are \$100 per person and sponsorships are available. For more information, contact Foeller at tammy@opendoorwomensrecovery.org or go to <https://opendoorcolumbus.networkforgood.com>.

Indian Lake shrine groundbreaking set

Groundbreaking is scheduled to take place in October for a new outdoor Our Lady of Fatima shrine overlooking Indian Lake at Russells Point. It will replace the shrine destroyed by a tornado on March 14, 2024.

Bill Quatman, president of the American Society of Ephesus that owns the shrine, anticipates that it will be completed in time for the annual pilgrimage and Mass for the Feast of the Assumption on Aug. 15, 2026. The pilgrimage has taken place there every year since the 1960s, except for two years during the COVID epidemic and one year when high winds forced it indoors. This year's Mass was at nearby St. Mary of the Woods Church.

Quatman said the new shrine will feature a 20-foot-tall fiberglass statue of the Virgin Mary plus three smaller bronze statues of the children who witnessed the miraculous apparition of Mary in Fatima, Portugal in 1917. The shrine's architect is Freytag & Associates of Sidney and the sculptor is Mike Major of Urbana. They were selected from entrants in a design competition.

For more information about the shrine, visit www.ase-gbqfoundation.org.

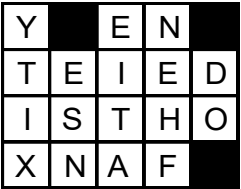
Words of Wisdom

by Pat Battaglia, aka Dr. Fun

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PRAY FOR OUR DEAD

BRACKEN, Samuel J. Jr., 86, July 30
St. Joan of Arc Church, Powell

BAIRDICH, Michael Alan, 73, Aug. 12
St. Francis de Sales Church, Newark

CAVEDA, Rodolfo, 76, July 10
St. James the Less Church, Columbus

CLIPPARD, Patricia A., July 26
Resurrection Cemetery Chapel, Lewis Center

CLIPPARD, Richard W., Aug. 1
Resurrection Cemetery Chapel, Lewis Center

DAWES, Robert, 88, July 15
Church of the Resurrection, New Albany

DiBLASI, William J., 77, July 30
St. Agatha Church, Columbus

DOOLEY, Joseph G., 86, Aug. 13
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

ENGLAND, Sharon M. (Stoffel), 82, Aug. 5
Holy Family Church, Columbus

GRISSETT, Gregory N., 81, Aug. 3
St. James the Less Church, Columbus

HOWELL, Susan J., 77, Aug. 9
Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Canal Winchester

LANIER, Jamie, 48, July 31
St. Brigid of Kildare Church, Dublin

LOGAN, Michael, 70, Aug. 3
St. Joseph Church, Circleville

LUBY, Joseph Thomas, 87, Aug. 4
St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Zanesville

LUIS, Michael R., 81, Aug. 3
St. Peter-St. Joan of Arc Parish, Columbus-Powell

MATTHEWS, Audrey Marilyn (Crow), 93, Aug. 11
Ss. Simon & Jude Church, West Jefferson

McWILLIAMS, Marian "Sue," 92, June 24
St. Francis de Sales Church, Newark

ORTIZ, Laura, 74, Aug. 2
St. Paul the Apostle Church, Westerville

PENQUITE, John William "Bill," 80, July 24
Ss. Simon & Jude Church, West Jefferson

PEREZ PORCAYO, Salvador, 17, July 17
St. James the Less Church, Columbus

PRINCE, Rachel, 46, July 13
St. Timothy Church, Columbus

REINMANN, James A., 92, Aug. 4
St. Timothy Church, Columbus

SHEEHAN, Judith A. (Roberts), 80, Aug. 6
Christ the King Church, Columbus

SMITH, Sharon D. (Baker), 78, July 30
St. Matthew the Apostle Church, Gahanna

TARTAL, Thomas G., 89, July 29
St. Matthew the Apostle Church, Gahanna

WALKER, Lawrence A. "Larry," 71, Aug. 7
St. Nicholas Church, Zanesville

WALLRAVEN, Debra Ann, 68, July 25
Holy Family Church, Columbus

Michael R. Luis

Funeral Mass for Michael R. Luis, 81, who died Sunday, Aug. 3, was celebrated Thursday, Aug. 14 at Powell St. Joan of Arc Church. Burial was at Resurrection Cemetery, Lewis Center.

He was born in Cleveland on April 6, 1944 to the late Luis and Jennie (Leszozynski) Luis.

He was a graduate of Cleveland Rhodes School, Xavier University in Cincinnati and the University of Cincinnati College of Law. His legal career spanned decades, with a strong focus on estate tax planning and corporate law. After retiring from the corporate world, he spent many years as business manager at Columbus St. Peter Church, now part of a joint parish with St. Joan of Arc.

He is survived by his wife, Maureen (Klonne); son, Timothy (Renee); four grandsons and two granddaughters.

CATHOLIC WORD SEARCH

HOLY ORDERS

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Is the St. Michael Prayer part of Mass?

Dear Father,
Maybe you can settle a disagreement I'm having with my friend about the St. Michael Prayer. He thinks it should be said at every Mass sometime after the homily. However, I was taught that, after Vatican II, we don't pray that prayer anymore. We aren't going to lose our friendship over this, but we'd like your help.

-Rand

Dear Rand,

The St. Michael the Archangel Prayer was composed by Pope Leo XIII (not be confused with our current Pope Leo XIV). For the sake of my readers who may not be familiar with it, here's how it goes (there are variants):

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil; May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; And do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

In 1884, the pope ordered that the Leonine prayers (named after him, Leo XIII) be prayed throughout the entire Church. The prayers consisted of three Hail Marys, the Hail Holy Queen prayer, the St. Michael Prayer, and three prayers to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The reason for the prayers was two-fold: thanksgiving to God and for liberty and protection for the Church, especially in light of difficulties with the Italian government at that time. Later, Soviet Russian threats to

the freedom of the Church posed another reason for these special prayers.

After the Second Vatican Council and the updating of the Mass, the Leonine prayers were suppressed. In other words, they were no longer mandatory at the end of Mass. Private recitation of the prayers, however, was always permitted.

Many bishops permit the St. Michael prayer provided that it is recited after Mass because it is not part of the Mass. This means that the St. Michael prayer may not be prayed before the final blessing and dismissal. Nor should it be recited before the priest kisses the altar upon departure from the sanctuary. Use of the St. Michael prayer is usually left to the discretion of the pastor, provided he does not insert devotional prayers in any part of the Mass.

Other prayers after Mass, such as the St. Thomas Aquinas Prayer of Thanksgiving after Mass, are yet another concern. As a Dominican, I love that prayer, but I also know that many people want to pray privately after Mass, and they should be allowed to do so.

St. Thomas did not intend his prayer to be prayed aloud by the congregation. As a Dominican, he knew the importance of private thanksgiving to God after receiving Holy Communion, also recommended by the Doctors of the Church, saints and theologians. Priests may be zealous to help their congregants make an act of Thanksgiving, but they should leave individuals to do this on their own.

Having just received Jesus Christ into our bodies and souls, it is most important to speak intimately with Him. It is the time to thank Him for uniting us to Himself and



SACRAMENTS 101

Father Paul Jerome Keller, OP, S.T.D

Father Paul Jerome Keller, O.P., S.T.D., director of the diocese's Office of Divine Worship, is a priest of the Dominican Province of St. Joseph. His doctorate is from Rome in sacramental theology. He currently assists at Columbus St. Patrick Church.

to intercede for others. You will grow in holiness to the degree that you spend time in thanksgiving after Mass, at least for a few moments. We must not be in a hurry to exit the church after Mass.

It is interesting to note that the prayers were said only after the "low Mass." Our current form of the Mass does not admit of degrees of solemnity, that is, low, sung Mass (missa cantata) and the solemn high Mass (missa solemnis). Thus, when the Leonine prayers were in force, they were only for Masses without hymns and chant, or organ accompaniment.

While there is no such thing as a low Mass in the current form of the Mass, it makes most sense that the St. Michael prayer would not be recited at Masses with hymns

and musical instruments, for example, on Sundays and Holy Days (except when there is no music). On these days, nothing impedes someone from praying the St. Michael Prayer privately.

One abuse of the St. Michael Prayer is to use it as the closing prayer by the priest after the Universal Prayer (the General Intercessions). In this case, the priest is to offer a very short summary prayer addressed to God the Father through Christ, His Son.

The forces of darkness are prevalent in our world. We are involved in spiritual warfare, even if the Leonine prayers are no longer required after Mass. St. Paul tells us to put on the full armor of God "to stand against the wiles of the devil." We are contending, he says, "against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:11-12).

Use the beautiful St. Michael Prayer especially in your private devotions and when you experience temptations. For many people, St. Michael is an aid when browsing the internet. He is also the patron saint of military personnel, the police and others whose work involves protection from danger. Give special thanks to God on St. Michael's feast day, September 29, aka Michaelmas Day.

Questions about the sacraments should be sent to sacraments101@columbuscatholic.org.

By the way, what does a Chancellor do?

Occasionally, someone asks me this question: What does a Chancellor do? The form and content vary, but the point being explored by the curious person is just that: what the Chancellor of the diocese does. Early on in my time in the Chancery Office, I took a look in the Code of Canon Law to see what it had offer on this question. Here are the answers I found in Canons 482 and 483:

Can. 482 §1. In every curia a chancellor is to be appointed whose principal function, unless particular law establishes otherwise, is to take care that acts of the curia are gathered, arranged, and safeguarded in the archive of the curia.

§2. If it seems necessary, the chancellor can be given an assistant whose title is to be vice-chancellor.

§3. By reason of being chancellor and vice-chancellor they are notaries and secretaries of the curia.

Can. 483 §1. Besides the chancellor, other notaries can be appointed whose writing or signature establishes authenticity for any acts, for judicial acts only, or for acts of a certain case or affair only.

§2. The chancellor and notaries must be of unimpaired reputation and above all suspicion. In cases in which the reputation of a priest can be called into question, the notary must be a priest.

Those are very nice, simple answers and, I believe, are the only sections of the Code of Canon in which Chancellors are mentioned. They point to two of the primary purposes of a chancellor. As an archivist, the chancellor is responsible for maintaining the official archives and records of his or her diocese. This includes sacramental but is not limited



THE CHANCELLOR'S ARCHIVE

Deacon Tom Berg Jr.

Deacon Tom Berg Jr. has served the Diocese of Columbus as its Chancellor since 2012 and as a deacon at Columbus St. Andrew Church. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism and a master's degree in Catholic pastoral studies.

to registers, decrees, and dispensations issued by the bishop.

Additionally, I work with diocesan offices and parishes regarding their records management policies and practices, even going out to consult with and advise pastors and their staff when requested to do so. Also, in my capacity as Chancellor, I coordinate the Diocese of Columbus' records management policy and records retention schedule.

The work of a notary in the Catholic Church is similar to that of a civil notary: the authentication of official documents, in this case those issued by the bishop, and certifying copies of documents in the archives. In addition to myself, there are several others in the diocesan offices who are ecclesial notaries – some clergy members and some laypersons. Others serving as ecclesial notaries must be appointed to this role by the bishop.

Chancellors also provide administrative support to the bishop and other diocesan staff members with various projects and serving on diocesan boards and committees. This is very typical and true in my case. I have had the privilege of supporting the work of our bishops and fellow staff members over the years in a variety of ways. From time to time in the future, I'll write some more about such projects.

The Chancellor's duties can also have an element of information dissemination to parishes, clergy, staff members and the faithful. For example, if a member of our clergy passes away, I help provide information about that and the funeral arrangements by preparing a letter to go out to the clergy and the public. If a new clergy protocol is approved by the bishop, I help get this ready to be sent to our clergy. I also prepare occasional informational notes to be placed in our semi-monthly clergy bulletin. The work of disseminating information to these audiences is done in our diocese through a collaboration between the Chancery Office and our excellent Communications Office.

There are also times when I serve as a witness to and help authenticate important events, such as the installation/ordination of a new bishop or the appointment of a diocesan administrator when our diocese has been between bishops (otherwise known being sede vacante).

As Chancellor, I am a member of a number of boards and committees, which gives me the opportunity to support the bishop further by assisting on those advisory bodies. This is also an opportunity to work with other fellow

staff members in collaborative, collegial and creative ways.

With this basic summation in mind, a natural question is "What are the qualifications for being a chancellor?" Chancellors from around the country I know have quite a variety of backgrounds. Many are priests or deacons, some are consecrated religious and many are laypersons.

A number of chancellors are also canon lawyers, others have archivist degrees and many others have other backgrounds. I fall in the last category with bachelor's and master's in journalism and a master's in Catholic pastoral studies.

While I do not hold a degree in canon law, I have taken several canon law courses and am a certified procurator/advocate for our diocesan Tribunal for annulment cases. Regarding archive science and records management, I have taken numerous classes on these subjects to keep myself current on these topics.

Some other qualities that go without saying are being a fully initiated Catholic, a person of good reputation and above reproach, as noted in Can. 483 §2.

In summary, the diocesan Chancellor is a significant position in the administration of a diocese that is entrusted with the care of its official records and playing a vital role in supporting the bishop and the broader diocesan community. It is both the art of preserving and telling the Church's story and the science of assuring that the records that tell the story are safely and properly preserved.

'Temple identity' and what it really means

I've been reading some teachings about "temple identity." The idea is that St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians to make them, and us, aware of our "temple identity."

According to these teachers, Paul was saying that every Christian is a "house of God" filled with the Holy Spirit, who is able to work the same kind of miracles Jesus performed. He wrote, "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? (1 Cor 3:16)" Based on this, Christians are encouraged to make an "identity declaration" in these words: "I am a Temple of the Holy Spirit and God's Spirit dwells in me!" This is supposed to help them "live in the power of the Holy Spirit" and use the authority they have received to "expand the kingdom of God."

Another institution tells its staff to make a "declaration for identity and mission" in these words: "I am anointed. I am temple of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, today, I will proclaim the Gospel to all I encounter. I will proclaim freedom. I will proclaim physical and emotional healing. I set the oppressed free."

Is this really what Paul was saying to the Corinthians? No.

You probably know that Paul wrote his letters in Greek. In Greek, there are two words for "you." One is singular, and one is plural – think of the American word "y-all" or the old English word "ye."

In this passage, Paul uses the plural pronoun. He is not encouraging his flock



A SHEPHERD'S CARE

Father Thomas Buffer

Father Thomas Buffer is the pastor at Columbus St. Cecilia Church.

to make a "declaration" beginning with the word "I" — that's the last thing he wants! He wants to correct Corinthian Christians who are saying things like, "I belong to Paul" and "I belong to Apollos" (see 1 Cor 3:4) and introduce divisions into the local church. To counter this, he employs the metaphor of a building (see 1 Cor 3:10) as a way to name the whole Church. In effect, he is saying, "You — all of you together — are one building, which is God's temple, God's field. Apollos and I are working together on the same project."

In 1 Cor 6:19-20, he again speaks of a temple using the plural form of "you." "Do you (plural) not know that your (plural) body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you (plural), which you (plural) have from God? You (plural) are

not your own; you (plural) were bought with a price. So glorify God in your (plural) body." There is only one temple, because all Christians form one body in Christ. St. Paul would not want anyone in his flock to say "God's Spirit dwells in me;" he would prefer them to say, "God's Spirit dwells in the Church."

Having said that, there is an appropriate way that we can call an individual Christian a temple. The ritual of baptism says that the body of a baptized Christian is a temple of God's glory where the Holy Spirit dwells. For this reason, a Christian's body can be called a "temple of the Holy Spirit." This is why, in our funeral customs, Catholic Christians respect the bodies of the dead and their places of rest. Nevertheless, in the New Testament, Christians are never called "temples," in the plural, of the Holy Spirit. The Church is called the temple of the Holy Spirit, the house of God, God's field.

One group attempts to reinforce their teaching about "temple identity" with a partial quotation from St. Ambrose of Milan (d. 397): "... He who dwells in the temple has divine power ... for it is a temple of Power." However, if you look at the whole sentence Ambrose wrote, it does not affirm the concept of "temple identity." Here is the complete quotation: "Therefore, He Who dwells in the temple has divine power, for as of the Father and of the Son, so are we also the temple of the Holy Spirit; not many temples, but

one temple, for it is the temple of one Power" (On the Holy Spirit, 3.12.91).

What was Ambrose really saying and why? In his day, some people denied that the Holy Spirit was fully divine. He wants to prove that the Holy Spirit is fully divine, that he is worshiped as God just as the Father and Son are worshiped, and that he has unity of nature with the Father and the Son. So, he cites 1 Cor 3:16, which portrays the community of believers as a temple of the Holy Spirit. Ambrose stresses the unity of the temple: "not many temples, but one temple." This means that, instead of declaring, "I am the temple of the Holy Spirit," Ambrose declares "We are the temple of the Holy Spirit." Thus, the full quotation actually contradicts the teaching on "temple identity."

Pope Leo XIV recently cited Ambrose's great disciple St. Augustine in making a similar point about how all Christians form a single temple:

"The desire to work together for a common purpose reflects an essential reality: no one is Christian alone! We are part of a people, a body established by the Lord. When speaking of Jesus' first disciples, Saint Augustine once said, 'They became God's temple, not only as individuals; together they were built into the temple of God.'"

Drawing on Augustine and Ambrose, we could amplify the Pope's statement: No one is Christian alone; no one is God's temple alone.

Our age of martyrdom

Robert Royal and I have been friends, colleagues and co-conspirators for nigh on to four decades.

Dr. Royal is a gifted linguist, a serious Dante scholar and a close student of modern Catholic intellectual life. For years now, he has edited *The Catholic Thing*, one of the few Catholic websites I unhesitatingly recommend. And on dozens of wonderful summer evenings, in the pre-9/11 days when Washington did not approximate an armed camp, we anchored the infield on the Ethics and Public Policy Center softball team, playing on the National Mall with the Washington Monument in center field.

To be sure, Bob Royal is a New York Yankees and New York Giants fan, which would not ordinarily endear him to me. But he earned a lifetime of tolerance when, within 10 seconds of David Tyree's miraculous "helmet catch" setting up the Giants' win in Super Bowl XLII, he went full Elijah and sent me a text message reading, "There

is a God in Israel!"

In the run-up to the Great Jubilee of 2000, Pope John Paul II created a Commission on the New Martyrs, whose report suggested that more Christians had been killed in odium fidei (in hatred of the faith) in the 20th century than in the previous 19 centuries of Christian history combined. Martyrdom, the pope knew, was not confined to the distant past and the Hollywood archives where films like *The Robe* and *Demetrius and the Gladiators* gather dust. Martyrs are all around us today. A recognition of the martyrs of our time, John Paul hoped, would strengthen the faith of Catholics as we marked the 2,000th anniversary of the Incarnation.

Bob Royal made an outstanding contribution to the fulfillment of that hope with his book, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century: A Comprehensive World History*, which was translated into several languages. There, readers not only met such famous figures as St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) and St. Maximilian Kolbe but also the martyrs of the Spanish Civil War, the martyrs who died during the communist subjugation of central and eastern Europe, the martyrs of Maoist China and the martyrs of the Mexican Cristero uprising (including the noble

underground Jesuit, Blessed Miguel Pro, who may have been the first martyr in history photographed at the moment of his death, when he shouted "Viva Cristo Rey!" as the firing squad's bullets sped toward him). No continent, and no decade, was without its 20th-century martyrs, and Dr. Royal's book remains the gold standard for those who wish to learn, and learn from, that story of Christian heroism.

Now, Robert Royal continues his witness to the witnesses with *The Martyrs of the New Millennium: The Global Persecution of Christians in the Twenty-First Century*. Once again, he spans the globe, sketching the cruelties visited upon Christians in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and, yes, the West, where radical Islamists target Catholics and other Christians for no other reason than that they're Christians. His nuanced chapter, "White (and Red) Martyrs in Red China," should be required reading in the Vatican Secretariat of State when, it may be hoped, a root-and-branch reappraisal of the last pontificate's China policy is undertaken. Bob Royal is experienced enough and wise enough to know that there are no easy answers in China, where the border can be porous between the regime-approved Patriotic Catholic Association and the underground Church. But he also knows, as the Vatican diplomats should, that Xi Jinping is not interested in accommodating the Catholic Church but rather in destroying it through a process of "Sinicization" that empties Catholic faith of its Christian content. Anyone who doubts that should consult the redoubtable Cardinal Joseph Zen — or ponder the witness of Jimmy Lai,



THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

George Weigel

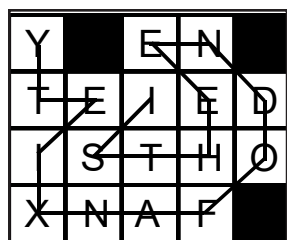
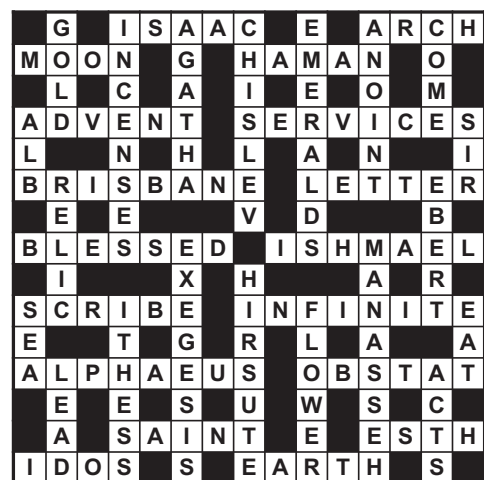
George Weigel is the Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. George Weigel's column 'The Catholic Difference' is syndicated by the Denver Catholic, the official publication of the Archdiocese of Denver.

who has now passed over 1,600 days in solitary confinement in Hong Kong's Stanley Prison.

The Virgin Mary's Fiat — "Be it done unto me according to your word" — set the basic pattern of all Christian discipleship; the martyrs exemplify that pattern in its highest degree of nobility. For their self-sacrifice is the closest human beings can come to the redemptive sacrifice of Christ, who, in obedience to the Father's will, handed himself over to death and in doing so revealed the Resurrection — and the destiny for which God created us, which is eternal life within the light and love of the Trinity. For reminding us of this, Bob Royal has earned the gratitude of the world Church.

Even if he is a Yankees fan.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION



WORDS OF WISDOM SOLUTION

The risk of searching for Christ

In St. Matthew's Gospel, we encounter an immediate sense of the risk involved in following God. As a protagonist event, the temptation of Jesus in the desert reveals what will occur if you choose to follow the will of God (Mt 4:1-11). In the case of Jesus, the entire temptation sequence reveals the sins he will encounter throughout his journey to save the souls of humanity through his death on the Cross. As Jesus withstood the Devil's antagonistic temptations of the flesh, the Devil left, and Jesus was cared for by the Angels.

The significance of the Angels ministering to Jesus reveals that he was not alone in his journey. It expresses that when properly ordered, our journey to Christ does not need to be in isolation. The desire to seek the Kingdom of God through the Son is expressed by Jesus through the analogy of the narrow gate, where Jesus urges us to enter by this gate, even though this path will be hard because it leads to life. (Mt 7-13-14) Jesus provides a more vivid description of the risk of following him,

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before them and the Gentiles. When they deliver you up, do not be anxious about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will deliver up brother to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next;



CALLED TO TEACH, NOT JUDGE

Dr. Marlon De La Torre

Dr. Marlon De La Torre serves as the senior director for the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis in the Diocese of Columbus. His professional catechetical background spans more than 30 years.

for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel, before the Son of man comes. (Mt 10:16-23)

These biblical narratives provide us with a clear understanding that there is a risk in following and actively walking with Jesus Christ. One might ask if the risk is greater than the reward when the subject is Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Word made flesh. The risk of searching or following Christ requires that we stop thinking of ourselves as greater than Jesus himself. The fallacy of building an impenetrable spiritual wall that falsely claims no need for Christ is simply an illusion of the mind and hardening of the heart from developing a loving relationship with Jesus Christ. The act of giving yourself totally to Christ, a totus Christos, means that our love for Christ is greater than our love of self. The risk in this ask declares that Christ is more

important than anyone else. This act of faith initiates the path toward having a personal relationship with Jesus and, at potential great expense, losing relationships and friendships that may view this newfound faith with disbelief, or worse, anger and resentment.

A genuine search or a relationship with Jesus Christ involves and requires that you and I shed our pride and human desires that contradict Jesus as the way, the truth, and the light. (Jn 14:6) We are no longer of the world and instead embrace the risks involved in following Jesus Christ. It is important to consider that when someone seeks Christ for the very first time and understands the great risk involved in doing so, it is the sacrament of baptism that confirms when you and I became members of the Kingdom of God on earth. In a very direct and poignant manner, Jesus provides a clearer picture of the risk involved in following him:

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life? For the Son of man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay every man for what he has done. Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. (Mt 16:24-28)

The search for Christ requires us to conform to him, as St. Paul tells us in his letter to the Galatians. (Gal 4:19) The Catechism reminds us if we are to call ourselves disciples of Jesus Christ, then,

the disciple of Christ, must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it: "All however must be prepared to confess Christ before men and to follow him along the way of the Cross, amidst the persecutions which the Church never lacks." Service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation: "So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1816)

The search for Christ means that you refuse to remain in darkness and desire to be in the light of Christ's grace and mercy. This means that those who choose to remain in darkness will be in conflict with you, reject you, mock you and tempt you because of the lifestyle you have chosen that contradicts theirs. St. John reminds us that when you choose to live a life that reflects Jesus Christ, you shun the lie of the world that you can be happy and joyful apart from God.

The risk of searching for Christ is that ultimately you may end up falling in love with Him and desiring nothing else but him. You run the risk of conforming your life to his will and surrendering yourself to a life of humility, surrender, and redemptive suffering.

I am created to do or to be something for which no one else is created: I have a place in God's counsels, in God's world, which no one else has. Whether I be rich or poor, despised or esteemed by man, God knows me and calls me by my name. - St. John Henry Newman

Little acts of faith with our little ones

As parents of young children, my husband, Brad, and I have gotten to see firsthand how small acts, done out of great love, can help to build a foundation of faith for our children. Our two-year-old son, in particular, has already begun to latch onto these small acts and reflect them back to us. We see this throughout his day. Be it asking to listen to "Jesus music" or reminding us to pray before meals, the small acts of faith that we share with him are becoming part of his daily life.

Others are starting to become witness to his connection to the faith as well. On one occasion, Brad and I were out for the evening when our babysitter called unexpectedly. As any parent would, I answered, worried that something was wrong. When I picked up the phone, our sitter asked me, "What is the song you sing before bedtime? He keeps asking for the prayer song," referring to our toddler who wanted to keep his nightly routine intact.

I let out a sigh of relief that nothing was wrong and then laughed a bit to myself over the reason for her call. I explained that we sing the Salve Regina to him before bedtime every night and finished up the call. This may seem like an unconventional lullaby, but we've stuck with it because singing the "prayer song" has been an easy swap that has left an impact on our son. Anytime he hears the Salve Regina now, he lights up and this warms our hearts.

It can feel daunting, though, to think



LOADS OF LAUNDRY AND LOVE

Rachel Romantic

Rachel Romantic is a wife and mom of two who loves to spend time with her family and make memories together outside in the garden. She is also the Communications Coordinator at New Albany Church of the Resurrection.

about how to share the faith with our children. We made promises at their baptisms accepting the responsibility of teaching them about the faith and how to keep God's commandments, and we want to, but how we do that can feel overwhelming at times. It can also be tough not to get caught up in the idea that we should be doing more or doing something better.

I know I have fallen into the trap of comparing myself to others online and sit down at the end of the day feeling like I should have done more. I want to encourage you, though, that if you take the approach of doing small things

consistently, and with great love, the impact will be felt and seen among your children. It will not always be easy, but it will be worth it.

It is also important to note that we aren't doing anything overly complicated. We are living our lives out in very typical ways, but involving children along the way. For our son, it has been easy to capitalize on this lately with him in a "I want to help!" phase. From laundry to caring for his baby sister, he is right there alongside us learning and soaking it all in.

Sometimes this makes simple acts like loading the washer take longer, but we welcome our son's involvement because we know that the more we do with him the more invested he becomes in these daily activities. In the same way, when we pray with our children and involve them in these faith activities, they become invested in them as well. Simple acts of faith like praying before meals, reading Christian books and attending Mass every week are helping him build habits and forming his foundation of faith.

I'd love to say that we pray a whole rosary as a family or that we never have meltdowns at Mass, but that's not the case. What I can say though is that we have a son who knows the name of our Lord and points at images of Christ and says, "That's Jesus!" We do small things, but we do them daily. These are likely things that many of us are already doing regularly, so why not involve our

children? This is not to say that we take on a token activity of prayer. This is not to just make our children or us feel good. We are called to actually pray with our children and to do so well, especially when it is hard.

Just as we actually do the laundry with our son, we show him the value of prayer and the faith by authentically praying with him. It might only be one Our Father or one Hail Mary, but the prayers and the people that he says he wants to pray for are very real regardless of how many words he stumbles on or forgets.

As much as I hope our son will still want to help with laundry when he is a teenager, I know that likely won't be the case. In the years to come, teaching him about the faith will get harder, and tough questions will come up. I rest easy, though, knowing that we are working now to help him have a strong foundation so that when things are more challenging or confusing for him, he knows that the love of our Lord is unwavering.

In the meantime, we will keep building upon the small habits we've already established, always with great love, and do our best to keep the Lord at the center of our home, so our children can continue to form lives of faith founded on God's graces and love rather than the shifting sands of popular society.

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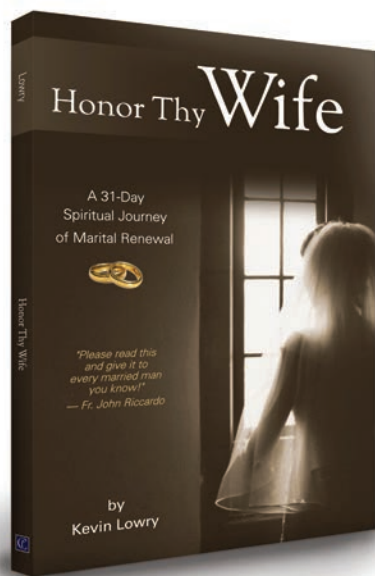
New book shares wisdom for husbands

*Honor Thy Wife:
A 31 Day Spiritual Journey of
Marital Renewal*
Kevin Lowry | Catholic Treehouse
2025

By MaryBeth Eberhard
For The Catholic Times

It is the desire of every parent for their children to learn from their successes and mistakes. There is a wisdom born of living a rich and full life that equips us with many lessons, and we attempt to impart this wisdom over years of parenting. Yet, often the legacy we leave is simply the life we have led. Nowhere is this legacy shown more clearly than in the vocation of marriage.

Recently, my husband and I had the privilege of finishing a book study for *Honor Thy Wife: A 31-Day Spiritual Journey of Marital Renewal*, written by Columbus native and author Kevin Lowry. When I placed this book on the table in front of my husband, he raised his eyebrows — perhaps wondering if this was a gentle suggestion or a firm mandate! The truth is, even for veteran couples, there is a great deal of wisdom to glean from this vulnerable glimpse into the role



as husband and father.

Lowry, the Diocese of Columbus' chief financial officer who is a graduate of Franciscan University of Steubenville and has been married for more than 35 years, has spent much of that time learning how to love, honor and cherish his wife. The father of eight candidly admits he has made his fair share of marital mistakes. Yet

with wit and humility, he guides readers through a month-long journey, sharing stories drawn from his own experience — stories that not only reveal the moral but offer concrete action items to help husbands renew their wedding vow to honor their wives.

Each chapter of *Honor Thy Wife* begins with a verse from Scripture and a personal reflection — sometimes a funny anecdote, sometimes a tender lesson learned through trial. Lowry makes it clear: "It's not an academic work. Rather, I tell a few stories — often of things I've done wrong — and provide concrete challenges and ways of thinking that can help all of us to improve. Including me."

What struck me most about this book was its simplicity and practicality. My husband and I spent our morning coffee time going through each day's reflection together, then texted one or two thoughts back and forth throughout the day. Topics such as "Speak About Her with Honor at Work" and "Compliment and Complement Her" were not only good reminders but meaningful invitations to take stock of our own marriage.

In one particularly moving chapter, he shares how his wife, who is not an effusive, words-of-affirmation kind of woman, encouraged him to finish this book: "You need to finish writing this and get it published." It was, he says, an

incredible compliment and the motivation he needed to move forward.

Father Dave Pivonka, TOR, president of Franciscan University of Steubenville, called *Honor Thy Wife* "both inspiring and relatable." Michael Hernon from the Messy Family Project describes it as "the perfect book for a busy guy who wants to be a better husband," and Father John Riccardo, EWTN radio host and founder of the ACTS XXIX apostolate, simply says, "Please read this and give it to every married man you know!"

Though the book was written with Lowry's sons in mind — a timeless memoir to inspire them toward greatness in their own marriages — it is equally a gift for all of us striving to grow in charity and humility. For any couple, whether newly married or seasoned veterans, this devotional can serve as a yearly renewal in the month leading up to an anniversary or as a touchstone to return to again and again.

This book is a gentle, grace-filled companion that reminds us why married couples said "I do" — and inspires us to keep saying it every day.

Honor Thy Wife is Lowry's third book. It is available in a 142-page paperback (\$14.95) or Kindle edition (\$5.99). You can find it on Amazon or order directly from Catholic Treehouse at www.catholictreehouse.com.

Restoring what's missing in Catholic education

"I sent my children to Catholic school from kindergarten through college, and now they don't practice the faith."

It's painful as an educator to hear these frequent reports from frustrated parents, yet unsurprising when, for decades, we stopped making any serious attempt to pass on the faith. The publishing of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in 1992 marked a turning point, inspiring a new generation of textbooks and faith-filled religious educators. Sadly, however, the drift away from the Church has continued. Something still isn't clicking.

Pope Benedict XVI identified what we've been missing during an address to educators at Catholic University of America in 2008.

"While we have sought diligently to engage the intellect of our young, perhaps we have neglected the will," he told those gathered.

It's not simply enough to give young people information about the faith, no matter how good it may be, without helping them to respond to it and live it out. Among many other influences, faith stands as one more choice to sort out within our individualistic sense of freedom. Pope Benedict urged us to prioritize helping students to encounter Christ and live in relationship with him:

"First and foremost, every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth (cf. Spe Salvi, 4). This relationship elicits a desire to grow in the knowledge and understanding of Christ and his teaching. In this way, those who meet him are drawn by the very power of the Gospel to lead a new life characterized by all that is beautiful, good and true; a life of Christian witness nurtured and strengthened within the community of our Lord's disciples, the Church."



THE CATHOLIC CULTURALIST
Dr. R. Jared Staudt, Ph.D.

R. Jared Staudt, Ph.D., is a Catholic writer, speaker, scholar, educator and the director of content for the Exodus 90 program.

Engaging the will means inviting young people to choose a relationship with Christ and to commit to life in communion with him within his Church.

To thrive, the Christian life requires support, found both in relationships and concrete habits that shape and express faith. The historian, Robert Lewis Wilken, therefore, has argued that "nothing is more needful today than the survival of Christian culture, because in recent generations this culture has become dangerously thin" ("The Church as Culture"). By culture, he meant "the 'total harvest of thinking and feeling,' to use T. S. Eliot's phrase — the pattern of inherited meanings and sensibilities encoded in rituals, law, language, practices and stories that can order, inspire and guide the behavior, thoughts and affections of a Christian people."

It might seem exaggerated to put that much stock in culture, but it boils down to "live it or lose it." To follow Pope Benedict's insight about engaging free will, we need more than isolated choices to sustain faith. We require robust communal life and compelling means to express and sustain

the decision to follow Christ.

We generally conceive of education as a process of receiving information and skills to live a successful life in society. More fundamentally, however, it is a process of initiation into a way of thinking and living that includes information, skills and much more. It entails more than schooling, for education imparts a sense of identity, belonging and purpose.

Understood in this broader sense, it should be easier to understand why education, Catholic schools included, often meets frustration. We are facing a general breakdown of education because we are not initiating young people into a compelling communal vision and mission, leaving them to succumb to the influences of media and technology. Suffering from existential confusion, we're unsure of who we are and lack the support to rise above these challenges.

The current school model is insufficient to initiate young people into the Christian life. Without a broader, communal approach to formation, mere academic instruction falls short. The Church actually developed her own educational approach in the ancient world through the baptismal catechumenate, a process of formation that generally encompassed three years. It entailed personal formation through the role of the sponsor, focused on conversion of mind and heart, and integrated converts into communal life. It involved instruction and much more, serving as an apprenticeship for life with Christ at the center. Its pedagogy follows God's own teaching in the Bible as a gradual, personal, communal, transformational and embodied process of learning. For these reasons, the Church has proposed the baptismal catechumenate as the model of all catechesis for an effective means of handing on the faith.

Petroc Willey has recently explored

the Catechetical

School of Alexandria, the greatest center of Christian teaching in the early Church, in his book *Light from Alexandria: Recovering a Vision of Christian Paideia for Education and Formation* (Angelico, 2025). The catechetical school contained some of the greatest luminaries of the day, such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Didymus the Blind, who served as lead teachers, and St. Athanasius, who studied there. The "central purpose of the school (was) to teach the core Christian doctrines and the Christian way of life to those wishing to be received into the Church" (122). More broadly, this "transmission of doctrine, of paideia, is best understood as the handing on of Christian culture, which includes the learning of all of the practices involved in Christian living and the expression of Christian life and belief in and through what one makes and how one acts" (134). The school integrated a robust teaching of the liberal arts and an effective process of personal formation within a hostile pagan culture.

Given the current challenges of Catholic education, it may seem odd to look to the Church's original, ancient model of education. The catechumenate, however, appears to be structured to make up for what we lack: an engagement with the will and initiation into culture as a way of life. Some catechetical experts, such as Dr. Willey, have explored its significance for religious education, but it is time to examine it as a model for Catholic education as a whole. If we take seriously the deep connection of the liberal arts, which teach us how to think, and Christian formation, ordered toward transformation in Christ, we may find that our formation will begin to take root, helping to form lifelong disciples.



CATHOLIC CEMETERIES
of Columbus

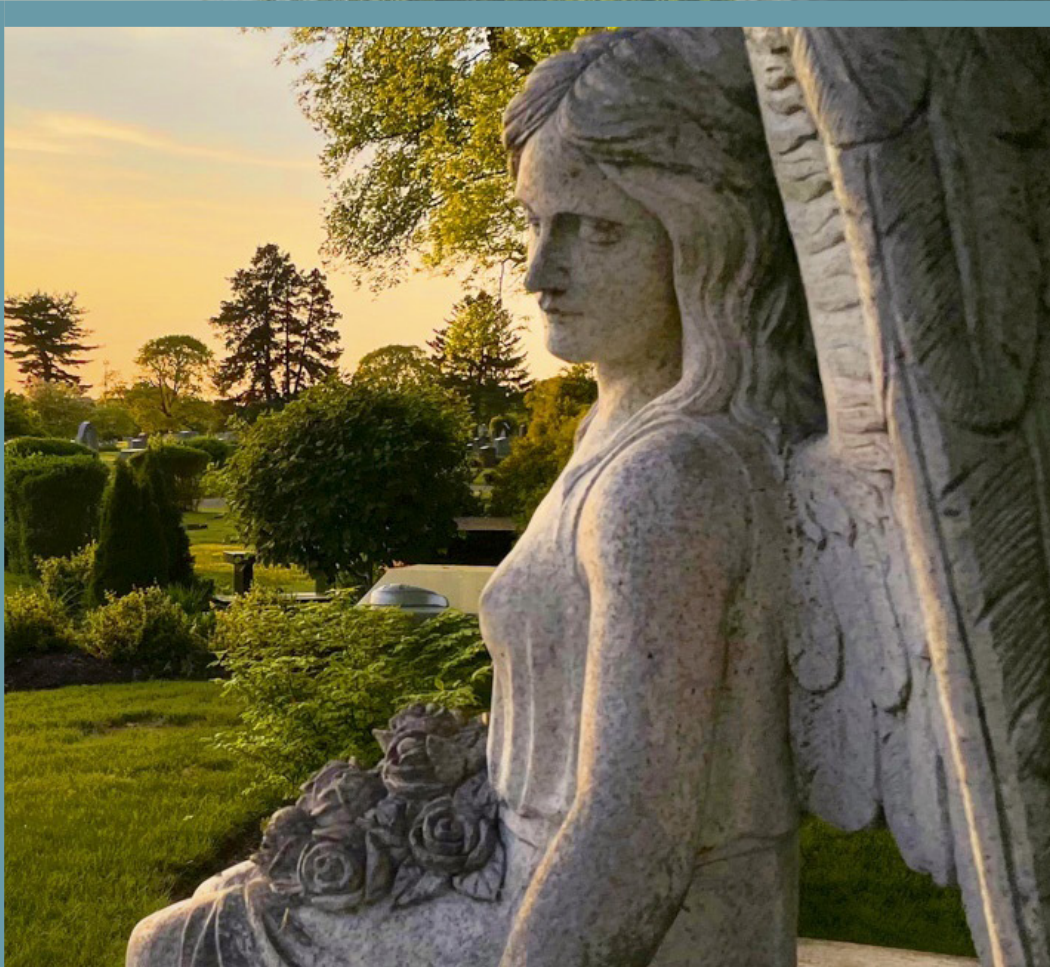
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