

March 18, 2022

DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD-CAPE GIRARDEAU, MISSOURI
One Church, East to West: Loving Jesus, Serving Jesus, Sharing Jesus

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▲ **PLANNING COMMITTEE & TWO SPEAKERS**—The planning committee for the 2022 Catholic Men's Conference in Springfield on Feb. 26 took a photo with two of the speakers. Pictured were Matthew Henderson, Bruce Horine, Nick Calvert, Mark Ellman, Fr. Andrew R. Williams, keynote Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers, Craig Henley, Bob Carlew, and Paul Sullivan. Another Catholic Men's Conference is scheduled for April 30 in Cape Girardeau. (Submitted photo)

Catholic Men's Conference hitting its stride

NOW IN ITS THIRD YEAR, BP. RICE CALLS THE SUCCESS OF THIS GRASSROOTS EFFORT 'CRITICAL' FOR THE DIOCESE

By Matthew Henderson

Springfield

The third annual Catholic Men's Conference attracted about 350 to Springfield Catholic High School on Feb. 26 for a day-long event filled with Mass, inspirational presentations, and fellowship activities.

Bishop Edward Rice led Saturday morning Mass before giving the day's first presentation.

"Events such as this are critical as we strive to turn the tide of the decline in the sacramental life of our diocese," he said.

Bishop Rice said he hoped this event would continue to gather men of all generations to come together in sharing the faith.

Another Catholic Men's Conference is slated for April 30 in the Drury Plaza Hotel Cape Girardeau Conference Center. Sponsored by the Aquinas Institute for Catholic Studies, speakers include Bp. Rice, Michael Dauhinais, PhD, Fr. Charles Samson, STD, Taylor O'Neill, PhD, and Fr. Dylan Schrader, PhD. Registration is free.

For more information, contact gideon.barr.aics@gmail.com.

Keynote address

Nationally-known keynote speaker Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers gave two passionate presentations challenging men to identify "Goliath-sized" temptations in their lives and use the Catholic Church's sacraments to defeat sin while growing closer to God.

Deacon Burke-Sivers also encouraged men to invest more time studying the faith and praying.

"Spend time fostering a deep, intimate, personal relationship with Jesus Christ," Burke-Sivers said.

During lunch, the crowd broke up into small groups to discuss specific ways they'd like to grow in their faith. Many men also took advantage of confession throughout the day.



▲ **RUSS PIGNON** and Mike Calliotte with other attendees at the 2022 Catholic Men's Conference. (The Mirror)

Growing in holiness, one step at a time

The goal for organizers of this year's conference was to encourage every man to choose one thing they could add to their routines to help them grow spiritually. Since many men struggle with isolation, the conference favored activities that

MEN'S CONFERENCE // *Continued on page 13*



▲ **MARK ELLMAN**, Nick Calvert, and MC Craig Henley worked behind the scenes at the 2022 Catholic Men's Conference. (The Mirror)



▲ **DEACON ROB HUFF**, Bishop Edward Rice, and Father Daniel Belken celebrated Mass at the 2022 Catholic Men's Conference. (The Mirror)



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

Catholic healthcare must keep its Catholic directives

In the last edition of *The Mirror*, I tried to shed light on the document outlining the guiding principles of a Catholic hospital, the *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services*, commonly referred to as the **ERDs**. Of course, this is a major concern for me in the Diocese of Springfield – Cape Girardeau because of the three Catholic hospitals in Joplin, Springfield, and Cape Girardeau, as well as smaller Catholic Hospitals in Dexter and Mountain View. At the same time, our major Catholic hospitals, Mercy and Saint Francis, also sponsor many smaller Catholic clinics throughout southern Missouri in areas where there is difficulty in getting access to quality healthcare. I recall a letter sent to me by a doctor in Kennett, MO, asking if a Catholic hospital could be established there because the local hospital in Kennett had shut down. People in that area have to drive over an hour just to reach Cape Girardeau for healthcare.

The ERDs clearly outlines the role of a Bishop:

"Catholic healthcare expresses the healing ministry of Christ in a specific way within the local church. Here, the diocesan bishop exercises responsibilities that are rooted in his office as **pastor, teacher, and priest**. As the center of unity in the diocese and coordinator of ministries in the local Church, the diocesan bishop fosters the mission of Catholic healthcare in a way that promotes collaboration among healthcare leaders, providers, medical professionals, theologians, and other specialists. As **pastor**, the diocesan bishop is in a unique position to encourage the faithful to greater responsibility in the healing ministry of the Church. As **teacher**, the diocesan bishop ensures the moral and religious identity of the healthcare ministry in whatever setting it is carried out in the diocese. As **priest**, the diocesan bishop oversees the sacramental care of the sick. These responsibilities will require that Catholic healthcare providers and the diocesan bishop engage in ongoing communication on ethical and pastoral matters that require his attention."

There is a lot expressed in the

above quote from the document.

Bishop David L. Ricken, the Bishop of the Diocese of Green Bay, WI, was one of the presenters at the Workshop for Bishops that I attended, sponsored by the National Catholic Bioethics Center. In his experience, he was very honest and said it took him several years to truly learn about and appreciate all the Catholic health ministries that were in his diocese. Here in southern Missouri, we have a long-standing and rich history connected to our Catholic hospitals. Hopefully, all of us are aware of the sacrifice of the Mercy Sisters, the Franciscan Sisters, the Visitation Nuns, the Sisters of Charity, the Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, who brought healthcare to southern Missouri. There were generations of sisters that dedicated their entire lives to the care of the sick. And, as "pastor," in a time when religious sisters are no longer directly involved, it is my responsibility to encourage the faithful to greater participation in this ministry of the Church into the future. As "teacher" the moral and religious identity, along with the guiding principles of our faith must always be upheld by all those working in Catholic hospitals and in our diocese, where less than 6 percent of the population are Catholics, it is important that those who work in our Catholic hospitals, see themselves as part of the mission of Catholic healthcare. As **priest**, I am responsible for the sacramental life of Catholics who may desire to receive Holy Communion, anointing of the sick, or have their confession heard while in the hospital. And even more, to offer pastoral care for those who are not of the Catholic faith.

I am aware of the fact that we do not have a full-time priest in the pastoral care department at Saint Francis in Cape Girardeau. This also speaks to the urgent need for all of us to foster a culture of vocation and actively pray for and encourage vocations to the priesthood and

the religious life from our local Church and more so in your various communities. I greatly look forward to filling that position in due time.

Bishop Ricken, in sharing his experiences, said that communication and building a good relationship with hospital administrators is crucial. If the only communication occurs when there is a crisis, then there is a vast room for improvement. The bishop is to partner with Catholic hospital administrators on how to improve healthcare, keep alive the charism, the unique spirit of the founding sisters who established the Catholic hospitals, and to always fight the tendency to want to tolerate exceptions to the **ERDs**. As I've said numerous times, if a Catholic hospital has to rely upon prescribing contraceptives in order to stay afloat, then it is already in deep trouble.

One of the best questions Bp. Ricken posed to us was, "What consequences does the often-brutal competition among healthcare entities, some of which are owned and operated by fellow Catholics, have on Catholic identity and other Catholic issues?" I don't have an answer to this question but we must fight the "creep factor," where we let down our guard, cease to be vigilant, and push the **ERDs** to the side. When that happens, immoral practices can creep into our Catholic hospital systems.

I ask that all of you pray for our hospital administrators, doctors, nurses, and all hospital personnel, who over the last two years have been tested in ways that we cannot begin to comprehend—many of whom have and continue to struggle with exhaustion. We are indebted to these men and women for their heroic service during this ongoing pandemic. May the Lord bless and keep them all. Together let us faithfully extend the healing hand of God to all those who come into our hospitals. ©TM



March 23 - April 3, 2022

PUBLIC CALENDAR

WED., MARCH 23

6:30 p.m. Project Andrew Dinner, Immaculate Conception Parish, Springfield

FRI., MARCH 25

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LORD
Holy Father & Bishops to consecrate Russia & Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

10:15 a.m. Mass and lunch at Notre Dame Regional High School, Cape Girardeau

SAT., MARCH 26

10 a.m. Diocesan Youth Conference (DYC), Congregation of the Mother of the Redeemer Monastery, Carthage

4 p.m. Mass at DYC

SUN., MARCH 27

9 a.m. Mass, blessing & dedication of the new tabernacle, Sacred Heart Parish, Webb City;

3:30 p.m. 2022 DDF Deanery 5 Meeting, Sacred Heart, Willow Springs

MON., MARCH 28

6:30 p.m. 2022 DDF Deanery 3 & 4 Meeting, The Catholic Center, Springfield

TUE., MARCH 29

Roman Catholic / Pentacostal Dialogue

WED., MARCH 30

Priest Advisors Meeting, St. John Vianney Parish, Mountain View;

6:30 p.m. Final Dress Rehearsal, The Addams Family, Springfield Catholic High School

THU., MARCH 31

8:30 a.m. School Mass, McAuley Catholic High School, Joplin

FRI., APRIL 01

8:15 a.m. School Mass St. Henry School, Charleston (Adoration & Grandparents Day)

SAT., APRIL 02

10 a.m. Diocesan Youth Conference (DYC), St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Cape Girardeau;

4 p.m. Mass at DYC

SUN., APRIL 03

10:30 a.m. Sacrament of Confirmation, St. Francis Xavier Parish, Sikeston

Where to donate to help Ukrainian refugees

One of the best ways to support refugees is to support the individuals and organizations assisting them. Right now there are many groups making sure that refugees crossing the border into Poland and other neighboring countries are receiving the help they need.

These 9 experienced and reputable Catholic organizations are bringing hope and assistance to many needy people and welcome donations to make that possible...

The Knights of Columbus Solidarity Fund

The Knights of Columbus is a global Catholic fraternal service order founded by Michael J. McGivney in 1882. Working with their Councils in Poland as well as the Latin and Greek Catholic Churches in Ukraine, the Knights have been responding to the growing refugee crisis by providing temporary shelter, food, clothing, medical attention, and communications support. 100% of any donations they receive goes directly to support humanitarian aid in Ukraine. You can make a donation at <https://www.kofc.org/secure/en/donate/ukraine.html>.

Caritas Poland

Caritas provides aid to victims of natural disasters and armed conflicts around the world. It is the largest charity in Poland and made up of 44 diocesan Caritas organizations, which act at the regional level. You can make a donation at <https://www.caritas.org/ukraine-appeal-22/>.

Catholic Relief Services

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is an international humanitarian agency serving the poor and vulnerable around the world. CRS responds to major crises, working with local, national and international Catholic institutions and structures, as well as other organizations, to assist people on the basis of need. You can make a donation at <https://www.crs.org/>.

Jesuit Relief Services

Jesuit Relief Services (JRS) is an international Catholic organization that assists and advocates for refugees and other forcibly displaced persons around the world. JRS was founded by Fr. Pedro Arrupe, SJ, in 1980 to respond to the plight of Vietnamese refugees fleeing their homeland during the Vietnam war. You can make a

donation at <https://www.jrsusa.org/crisis-in-ukraine/>.

Aid to the Church in Need

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) is an international Catholic pastoral aid organization, which assists more than 5,000 projects worldwide. For over 74 years, under the guidance of the pope, ACN has provided pastoral and humanitarian assistance to the persecuted Church around the world in over 145 countries. You can make a donation at <https://www.churchinneed.org/>.

SemperFidelis Foundation for the Archdiocese of Lviv

The purpose of the SemperFidelis Foundation is to support the development of the Archdiocese of Lviv, Ukraine, especially the development of pastoral activity, social and economic exchange, and providing charitable aid to the needy. You can make a donation at <https://tinyurl.com/2p8tzm95>.

The Humanitarian Aid Fund of The Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is part of the ecclesiastical territory (archeparchy) of the Catholic Church in the Eastern United States. Its episcopal see is Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Humanitarian Aid Fund allows the Church to assist Ukrainians during this time of war. You can make a donation at <https://ukrarcheparchy.us/donate>.

Catholic Near East Welfare Association

Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) works in areas of the world where there is poverty, war, and displacement. CNEWA provides funds to ensure that the Eastern churches and the devoted religious sisters who run clinics, schools, orphanages, and other sanctuaries can continue their essential work. You can make a donation at <https://cnewa.org/donate/>.

World Central Kitchen

World Central Kitchen (WCK) is a not-for-profit NGO that rushes to the front lines after major crises and natural disasters to provide meals to the hungry. It was founded in 2010 by celebrity chef and humanitarian José Andrés. While not a Catholic organization per se, Andrés has said that what drives his work is his Catholic faith. You can make a donation at <https://donate.wck.org/give/396273/#/donation/checkout>.

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This story first appeared on Aleteia.org.

Prayer for Ukraine

Heavenly Father,
From age to age, you have never failed come to the aid of your people.
Bless and protect the people of Ukraine.

For those who have fled from their homes,
give them comfort and shelter.
For those who have stayed to fight,
give them courage in battle.

For those who have lost homes and livelihoods from missile attacks,
give them aid and the strength to rebuild.

For those who worship in the streets and in underground shelters,
hear their prayers and calm their fears.

For those who have died,
welcome them to the warmth of your embrace.

Make your presence known
in all the leaders that strive to protect them,
in all the neighbors who welcome them,
in all the clergy who serve them,
and in all people of good will who are praying for their safety.

For victory over evil, we pray — Lord, have mercy.
For courage over fear, we pray — Christ, have mercy.
For everlasting peace, we pray — Lord, have mercy.

Our Lady of Ukraine, pray for us.
Our Lady of Kyiv, pray for us.
Our Lady of Pochiv, pray for us.

Amen.

SOURCE: RITA THIRON, FDLC (FEDERATION OF DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMISSIONS)



ANOTHER WALK THROUGH: 'WALKING TOGETHER' by Bishop Emeritus John J. Leibrecht

*Bishop John Leibrecht recently celebrated his 37th anniversary of his episcopal consecration, which was on Dec. 12, 1984. Before his retirement as the fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, he wrote a standing column in **The Mirror** entitled, "Walking Together." At the end of each article, Bp. Leibrecht would normally share a funny story referencing his travels to the schools, or time with friends, family, or other bishops. **The Mirror** has decided to share a few of these in an ongoing series entitled, "Another walk through: Walking Together." We hope you enjoy them.*

March 14, 1986 I remember as a seminarian being part of the very happy celebrations at Kenrick Seminary which honored alumni returning on the occasion of their anniversaries of ordination to the priesthood. I especially remember how **old** the priests were who came back for their 25th anniversary. (Naturally, I've changed my mind after all these years that they were really **old**). Anniversaries, whether of priesthood or marriage or some special happening in our lives, are times of blessing. Anniversaries invite us to review, to appreciate more deeply. Next Mon., March 17, I celebrate my 30th anniversary of priestly ordination. Alone, I cannot thank God enough for His loving call to be a priest, so will you please thank Him with me? I would sincerely appreciate that!

March 21, 1986 During my homily recently at St. Canera's in Neosho, a small boy became a bit fidgety. Thoughtfully, his mother began to take him out of the church. He

cried loudly and screamed: "I wanna stay! I wanna stay." "This is the first time in my experience," I told the people after the boy was gone, "that anyone with the chance to leave during the homily, wanted to stay."

March 28, 1986 I have invited my classmates to our diocese for the formal celebration of our anniversary of ordination. Some 25 classmates from Kenrick Seminary will come from Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Florida, and Missouri. Our Class of 1956 is the largest class in Kenrick history ("Gentleman," our rector told us with a grin, "this year we are going for quantity.") A Mass of Thanksgiving, a dinner, and countless can-you-top-this stories will make up Easter Monday.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Belleville, IL—The National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, in collaboration with King's House Retreat Center, will offer a **Couples Retreat** entitled, "Lazarus, Come Forth: Our Path to a Better Future," Fri., April 29-Sun., May 01, at the Shrine Visitors Center and Guesthouse. Facilitating this retreat are Fr. Mark Dean, OMI, Fr. Sal Gonzalez, OMI, and Scott & Karen Seaborn. Cost is \$350 per couple, lodging & meals included. Pre-registration is required, information and registration at <https://snows.org/couples-retreat/> or call the Shrine (618) 394-6281.

Belleville, IL—The National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows will offer a five-part **Scripture study** series entitled "Religions in America" on the following Saturdays: March 19, March 26, April 2, and April 9. Held at the Shrine Visitor Center, the presenter is Mark Etling, PhD. Fee is \$50 for the series or \$10 for an individual session. Pre-registration is required. For information and registration, go to <https://snows.org/ministries/spiritual-programs/> or call the Shrine (618) 394-6281.

Billings—St. Joseph Catholic Church will pray the **Stations of the Cross** every Friday evening during Lent at 7 p.m. All are welcome.

Branson—The Knights of Columbus will co-sponsor an **American Red Cross Blood Drive** on Fri., March 25, 12-5 p.m., at Our Lady of the Lake Parish Center located at 202 Vaughn Dr. Appointments suggested: please call 1-800-733-2767 or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter OURLADY.

Cape Girardeau—Skin Cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States, affecting millions every year. Saint Francis Healthcare System will offer **free skin cancer screenings**, Sat., April 09, 8 a.m.-noon, at Cape Radiation Oncology, located at Entrance 6 of Saint Francis Medical Center. An appointment is required. To schedule, call (573) 331-5784.

Glennon—St. Anthony Parish will have its **Annual Spring Dinner**, Sun., May 01, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., in the parish hall. Menu includes kettle beef, dumplings, dressing, all the trimmings, dessert, and drink. Cost: \$14 adults, \$8 children, ages 6-12 and no cost for children under age 5.

Kelso—St. Augustine Parish located at 211 N. Messmer St. will have a Parish Mission April 1-2. John Edwards, PEW Ministries will present a **RESTORED Parish Mission Event**. Fri., April 1 is **Catholic Man Night**, 6:30 p.m. **From Addict to Evangelist: John's Powerful Conversion Story**. Sat., April 2 is open to Men and Women with Mass, 8:00 a.m.; 9:00 a.m. **Identity Restored: Understanding Who You Are, Whose You Are and Why You Are Here**; 10:30 a.m. **The Game Changer: The importance of a Personal Relationship with Jesus Christ**.

Kimberling City—Our Lady of the Cove Parish will host **Donna Cori Gibson**, Fri., March 25, 7 p.m., for Stations of the Cross in music and video. On Sat., March 26, she will

present at a Ladies Retreat, 9 a.m. For more information, contact Rita Lueckenotte, (417) 527-3633.

Oran—Troops of St. George Troop 102 is an outdoor apostolate for fathers and sons, ages 6-18. Camping, hiking, canoeing, and other outdoor activities. **Now is an excellent time to join the troops.** For information or to join, contact Anthony Riley, Troop Captain at TSGtroop@gmail.com or call (573) 837-2556.

Marshfield—Holy Trinity Parish Council of Catholic Women will have a **Rummage Sale**, Thu., May 05, 7 a.m.-5 p.m.; Fri., May 06, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sat., May 07, 8-11 a.m. Donations of clean & working household items, jewelry, clothing, toys, outdoor items, holiday décor, antiques & furniture are appreciated and will be accepted on Mon., May 02 and Tue., May 03 at the parish hall behind church. Proceeds benefit PCCW supported charities.

Scott City—St. Joseph Catholic Church will have a **Spring Dinner** on Sun., April 10, 10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Menu is buffet style: fried chicken, chicken & dressing, green beans, corn, slaw, dessert, and drink. Cost is \$12 adults, \$6 children, ages 5-12, and free for children under age 5. Dine in or carry-out available. The Council of Catholic Women will be selling crafts, religious articles, breads, and sweets at the Country Store and Bakery Shop.

Sikeston—St. Francis Xavier Parish will hold a **Lenten Bible Study** every Thursday during Lent, 1:30 p.m., in the St. Joseph Meeting Room located at 245 W Front St. The focus is on St. Teresa of Avila's Nine Grades of Prayer. All are invited to attend. For more information, please contact the parish office (573) 471-2447.

Springfield—Followers of Francis Fraternity invite you to their **monthly gathering** at St. Joseph Parish. If you are interested in learning more about St. Francis of Assisi and living your life in a way where you "preach the Gospel every day and when necessary, use words," you are invited to join the monthly meeting on Sat., March 25. For more information, please contact Maureen Gray, (660) 537-0421 or Mike DePue, (417) 881-1381.

Springfield—The Parish Council of Catholic Women in Deaneries 3 & 4 will have a **Sunday Cinema** on Sun., March 20, 2 p.m., featuring "The Reluctant Saint," at Immaculate Conception Parish located at 3555 S Fremont Ave., Community Room A. Refreshments provided. All are welcome!

Springfield—The Parish Council of Catholic Women invite you to come pray **Mary's Way of the Cross** on Fri., March 25, 7 p.m., at Immaculate Conception Parish located at 3555 S Fremont Ave.

Springfield—Perpetual Adoration, in Holy Trinity Parish, has an urgent need for Adorers on Saturdays at 3 p.m. and Sundays at 5 p.m. For more information, or to sign up, please contact Marilyn at (417) 224-4043.

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

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

March 25th

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION celebrates the coming of the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary to announce to her the special mission God had chosen for her in being the mother of His only son.

We are continually reminded of the importance of this feast to our salvation in various devotional prayers. Two examples that highlight the importance of this feast are the joyous mysteries of the Rosary and the Angelus.

The feast of the Annunciation began to be celebrated on this day during the fourth and fifth centuries, soon after the date for celebrating Christmas was universalized throughout the Church.

This feast celebrates the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity and the salvation of all mankind. This point of our salvation was deeply discussed by many of the Church fathers, to explain it to the faithful and to show the deep love God has for us. Some of the Church fathers who wrote on this were St. Athanasius, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and St. Augustine.

25TH

ANNIVERSARY

CONGRATULATIONS

Fr. Samson Dorival, SMM



Fr. Samson Dorival will celebrate the 25th anniversary of his priesthood ordination on April 6th. He is Parochial Vicar (Associate Pastor) for Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Branson & Our Lady of the Ozarks, in Forsyth.

**Happy Anniversary,
Fr. Dorival!**





LENTEN FRIDAY FISH FRIES

Aurora—Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Aurora will have a **Knights of Columbus Fish Fry** on March 18 and April 1 from 5-7pm.

Billings—The **St. Joseph Men's Club Lenten Fish Fries** will be held on Fri., March 18 and Fri., April 1, 5-7:00 p.m. in the parish hall located at 320 NW Washington Ave. Fried fish, grilled cheese, French fries, coleslaw, vegetables, brown beans, cornbread, dessert, and a drink. Cost: \$10 for adults, \$5 for children under age 11. Dine-in and carry out available. Entertainment will be provided. Proceeds to benefit St. Joseph Men's Club charities.

Branson—**Soup & Stations** will be held at **Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church** located at 203 Vaughn Rd, Branson, MO 65616 every Friday through April 8, starting at 5:30pm. A variety of soups will be served from 5:30-6:30 p.m. followed by Stations of the Cross until 7 p.m. Feel free to bring a meatless soup or crackers to share!

Cape Girardeau—The **Knights of Columbus #1111 Lenten Fish Fry Fridays** will be held each Friday through April 8, 4:30-7 p.m. at the K of C Hall located at 318 S. Spanish. Fried fish, hush puppies, French fries, old fashioned slaw, sliced bread, and a dessert. Cost: \$13 adults, and \$6 for children, ages 5-12. Dine in or drive thru available.

Cape Girardeau—**St. Vincent Men's Association** will have a **Catfish Dinner** every Friday during Lent through April 8, 5-7 p.m. Catfish, Cole slaw, hush puppies, side dishes, dessert, and drink. Cost: \$13 adults, \$7 children, children age 7 and younger eat free. Carry-out is available.

Fredericktown—**St. Michael the Archangel Parish** will host a **Fish Fry** on Fri., March 25 and again on Sat., April 8, 4-7 p.m. at the St. Michael Auditorium Church located at 304 W Main. Fried fish, French fries, hush puppies, coleslaw, baked beans, green beans, macaroni & cheese, and dessert. Cost: \$15 Adults, \$7 for children.

See our Lenten Fish Fry map at <https://dioscg.org/fishfries>



OPEN FACULTY POSITION

Notre Dame Regional High School, Cape Girardeau, seeks applicants for an open Multimedia/Communications position for the upcoming 2022-23 school year.

Interested candidates should send their resume, cover letter, and list of references to Paul Unterreiner at paulunterreiner@notredamecape.org. Applicants should be committed individuals that can teach Journalism, Yearbook, and Video Broadcasting. Other responsibilities include coordinating and supervising Livestreams and working with Notre Dame's Webpage and social media platforms. Notre Dame is a Roman Catholic school in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, so preference would be given to active Catholics in good standing.



2804 N. Oak Grove Ave.
Springfield, MO 65803

25 BY 2025: Project Andrew Dinners bring discernment to dinner

Joplin

In the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, v. 35 - 42, we are given the details of the call of the first disciples. John the Baptist points to his cousin Jesus, saying, "Look, there is the Lamb of God," and two disciples of John begin to follow Jesus. They ask Jesus where he lives and Our Lord replies, "Come and see." One of the two followers was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother and say to Peter, "We have found the Messiah."

With the encouragement of Fr. Scott Sunnenberg, Director of Vocations and Seminarians, and with the assistance of the area's Regional Vocation Promoter, Fr. Brian Straus, Associate Pastor (Parochial Vicar) for St. Mary Parish and St. Peter the Apostle Parish, Joplin, the first Project Andrew Dinner was held on Feb. 15 at St. Peter's. Two high school men, along with an adult, attended the dinner to pray, share a meal, and learn more about the process of discernment, seminary life, and the priesthood.

Of special note was the presence of members of the Parish Vocation Committee, parishioners who have stepped up to help promote vocations in the parish. They organized the space, prepared the meal and also stayed to pray and listen to the talks. Diocesan priests, Father Joe Weidenbenner, Pastor of St. Mary Parish, and St. Peter the Apostle Parish, Joplin; Fr. Charles Dunn, pastor of St. Canera Parish, Neosho, and Nativity of Our Lord Mission, in Noel; and Fr. William Hennecke, Jr., Pastor of Our Lady of the Cove, Kimberling City, each shared their own thoughts on the priesthood and seminary formation. Bishop Rice offered his reflections on the four pillars of seminary

formation, spiritual, intellectual, apostolic, and human.

"I'm excited for the energy that the parishioners are bringing to promoting vocations from their parish," said Bp. Rice. "The members of the Parish Vocation Committee have given of their time because they love the priesthood and they love the sacraments. They want to have priests for the future. Having a Parish Vocation Committee in every parish throughout the diocese is going to be a big help in reaching our goal of '25 by 25, 'that is, 25 seminarians by the year 2025."

Plans are also in the works for Project Miriam Dinners, promoting vocations among young women to life as a consecrated religious. Once these are finalized, more information will be announced.

"All the studies show that promoting vocations to the priesthood encourages religious vocations as well," Bp. Rice said. "And when we promote vocations to the religious sisters or brothers, vocations to the priesthood come forward. It's not a competition, they complement and support one another."

The next Project Andrew Dinner will be held in Immaculate Conception Parish, Springfield, on March 23, at 6:30 p.m. Any young man interested in attending is asked to contact Regional Vocation Promoter Fr. Daniel Belken, fbelken@diocsg.org, or Fr. Allen Kirchner, frkirchner@scspk12.org. Fr. Alex Sutachan, also a diocesan Regional Vocation Promoter, has planned a Project Andrew Dinner to be held in St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Cape Girardeau, on May 1, at 6 p.m. Please encourage a young man that you think would make a fine priesthood candidate, to attend one of these upcoming events. ©TM



JOPLIN PROJECT ANDREW DINNER—Three participants joined Bp. Rice and area priests for a Project Andrew Dinner in St. Peter the Apostle Parish, Joplin, on Feb. 15. Members of the Parish Vocations Committee include Kyle Hill (far left, end), Jennifer Larson, (far right, end), and Judy Kukes, (sitting, foreground). (Submitted photo)

PROJECT ANDREW DINNER

Is He Calling
You?

Matthew
4:19



Any young man interested in learning
about the priesthood is invited to join us for
a dinner with Bishop Rice

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2022
6:30 p.m.

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church
3555 S. Fremont, Springfield, MO 65804

RSVP by email to Fr. Allen Kirchner at
frkirchner@scspk12.org

SUNDAY, MAY 1, 2022
6:00 p.m.

St. Vincent de Paul Parish

1913 Ritter Drive, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

RSVP by email to Fr. Alex Sutachan at
fatheralex@svparish.com



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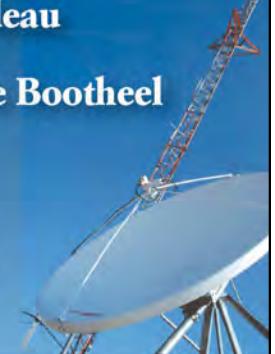
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KQOH 91.9 FM Springfield

Tune-in: Learn, Live, Grow, Be Inspired



OBITUARY | Sister Jane Ann Kiefer, OSF January 21, 1928 -March 8, 2022

Wheaton, Illinois

**The Wheaton Franciscan Sisters invite your prayers...**

Sister Jane Ann Kiefer, a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Wheaton and a former resident of Cape Girardeau, MO, passed away on March 8, 2022, at St. Patrick's Residence in Naperville, IL.

Born in Oran, MO on January 21, 1928, the daughter of Theodore M. (Ted) and Bernadine (Dena) Eftink Kiefer, she was one of eight children. She attended Guardian Angel Catholic

Church and Grade School in Oran and graduated from Oran Public High School.

Sr. Jane worked in the clerical department at Western Electric, supplier of Bell Telephone, in St. Louis, MO until age 20. She entered the Franciscan Sisters in Wheaton, IL, in November of 1948, professing her final vows in May 1954. She attended Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI, where she received a bachelor's degree in Business Administration in 1957 and began work in administration for the Franciscan Sisters' Hospitals. She later attended St. Louis University where she earned a master's degree in Social Work in 1972.

In September 1976, Sr. Jane was assigned to St. Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau, MO where she started the medical social work department. In 1985 she transferred to pastoral care where she remained until her retirement in 1998. She continued serving the medical center as a volunteer

until November 2015. She moved to the Wheaton Franciscan Motherhouse in Wheaton, IL, in 2019.

Survivors include one sister, Sr. Helen Kiefer of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, many nieces, nephews, grandnieces, and grandnephews. Sr. Jane was preceded in death by her parents, her sisters Adela Trost, Ethel Massmann, Rita Hinkebien, and an infant sister Mary Emma, and two brothers Theodore A. and Paul J. Kiefer. ©TM

MEMORY SERVICE

Mon., March 14, 2022, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Our Lady of the Angels Chapel, Wheaton, Illinois

MASS OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL

Tue., March 15, 2022, 10:30 a.m.

Our Lady of the Angels Chapel, Wheaton, Illinois

BURIAL

Assumption Cemetery, Wheaton, Illinois

I would like to be remembered as a Franciscan and Daughter of Mother Clara –Sr. Jane Ann Kiefer



Saint Francis Medical Center honors Sr. Kiefer

Cape Girardeau

Sister Jane was the epitome of Mission at Saint Francis. For more than four decades, she ministered to patients and colleagues across the Healthcare System. She set an example for us to care for all who enter our doors with integrity, dignity, compassion and excellence," said Justin Davison, President and Chief Executive Officer of Saint Francis Healthcare System. "Her legacy is inspiring, and we will remember her fondly."

Sister Kiefer was the third youngest of eight children. She grew up on a farm in Oran, MO, raising chickens, pigs, cattle, and horses. In the eighth grade, she knew that the Lord was calling her to ministry but felt it was important for her to learn to make a living for herself before entering the convent.

She graduated from Oran High School and went to work in a garment factory in Chaffee, MO, for about a year. She worked another few years in an office in St. Louis before entering the convent at the age of 20.

Sister Kiefer joined the Franciscan Sisters in Wheaton in November 1948 and worked in Catholic healthcare in Wisconsin, Iowa, and Missouri.

In 1976, she returned to Southeast Missouri to start a medical social work

program at Saint Francis Medical Center. At the time, social work programs did not exist in the area and served as an extraordinary way to advocate for patients. She transferred to Pastoral Care in 1985 and served as a chaplain for 13 years. During this time, she became the sole religious sister remaining at Saint Francis.

After retiring in 1998, Sr. Kiefer continued her service at the Medical Center as a volunteer. She could be seen at the hospital nearly every day until her return to the Motherhouse in November 2019.

Sister Kiefer always felt it was important to lead by example through following the Catholic faith. Her kindness and devotion for others are captured in a small line from her 70th Jubilee celebration in 2018 – "In lieu of gifts, charitable acts toward others would be appreciated."

"We mourn her passing and celebrate her life and legacy," said Davison.

Bishop Edward Rice will celebrate a Memorial Mass on **Sat., June 18, 2022** for Sr. Jane Ann Kiefer, OSF, at St. Mary of the Annunciation Cathedral in Cape Girardeau, at 11 a.m. All are invited to attend to celebrate the life and the longtime ministry of Sr. Jane Ann. ©TM

2022

Diocesan Youth CONFERENCE



**Fr. Agustino
Torres, CFR**

Sat., MARCH 26

Carthage
**Congregation of the
Mother of the
Redeemer Monastery**

**with music leader
Josh Blakesley**



**Sister Josephine
Garrett**

Sat., APRIL 2

Cape Girardeau
St. Vincent de Paul Parish
**with music leader
Mary Kate Westrich**



Mary Kate Westrich

**FOR ALL
YOUTH IN
7TH-12TH
GRADE!**



Chosen



Broken



Forgiven



Decision

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For more info, [scan the QR Code, visit dioscg.org/DYC](http://dioscg.org/DYC),
or contact your parish youth leader.

Brought to you by the Office of Youth Formation
Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau





Salvation: Assurance or Hope? Are you saved?

... So that we might be justified by His grace, and become heirs in hope of eternal life. Titus 3:7

One day while going to Confession, I found a Protestant tract (pamphlet) wedged in the confessional screen. Its basic message was that we can be assured of our salvation as long as we believe in Christ. To paraphrase that tract, it argued that we can be assured of going to heaven, since God loves us (John 3:16). Even though we have sinned and are separated from God (Romans 3:23), Jesus Christ died for our sins (Romans 5:8). By repenting of our sins and receiving Christ into our heart, we are saved from hell (Acts 3:19; Rev. 3:20). That tract expressed several basic Christian truths, but it lacked the fullness of the Christian Faith. A few important points need to be clarified.

Let us begin with John 3:16...

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life [John 3:16, RSV].

This verse is a concise yet beautiful statement of the Gospel message. God so loves us that He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the Cross at the hands of sinful men in order to save us from hell (Romans 5:6-11). Our salvation is a free gift from God purchased by Christ. We cannot earn heaven least we boast (Ephesians 2:8). We are saved through Christ by believing in Christ. But what is “believing”?

Now John 3:16 is not a complete expression of the doctrine of salvation. We must understand it in the context and fullness of revelation. Only 20 verses later, it is also written:

He who believes (pisteuon) in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey (apeithon) the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him [John 3:36].

BELIEF & OBEDIENCE

The RSV, NAB, and NASB Bibles translate the Greek verb, *apeithon*, as “obey.” This verse connects “belief in Christ” with “obedience to Christ.” Elsewhere St. Paul connects faith with

obedience as in “the obedience of faith” [Romans 1:5] and with good works as in “faith working through love” [Galatians 5:6]. Also it is written, “By faith Abraham obeyed...” [Hebrew 11:8]. According to the Bible, “to believe” also means “to obey.” We do not sincerely believe in Christ, if we disobey God’s Commandments—i.e. commit sin (James 2:18-26). Sin is a break in faith (Numbers 5:6-7).

As a result of Adam’s sin (Romans 5:12) and through our serious sins, we reject God and deserve hell—the loss of eternal life. It must be remembered that hell is not punishment from a vengeful God but the natural consequence of rejecting God—the Source of life and goodness. Our sins offend God’s love. There is nothing we can do as finite (limited) creatures to repair this infinite (unlimited) offense. Fortunately due to God’s mercy, Christ redeems us from hell through His Passion and Sacrifice on the Cross. As a free gift (Titus 3:5), God forgives us and offers us the grace to live with Him in friendship forever, beginning in the Sacrament of Baptism (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Acts 2:38). In the washing of Baptism, we receive Sanctifying Grace, which makes us right with God (Acts 22:16; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

Now we are surely redeemed by Christ in Baptism but we can freely choose to reject this gift through serious sin. As St. Paul writes:

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord [Romans 6:23].

In this verse, eternal life is heaven, while death is hell—the opposite of eternal life. Heaven is a free gift from God, but we can still earn hell by committing serious sin (i.e. mortal sin). Obeying God’s Law does not save us, but the Law does point to sins that can damn us (Romans 3:20). As an analogy, my civil liberties are a gift from my forefathers, but if I commit a felony, I may go to jail. Also in the Bible:



Repentance is not a single event in our life, but must be an ongoing, everyday process for us.

Make no mistake about this: no fornicator (those who have sex before marriage), no unclean or lustful person—in effect an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom (heaven) of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with worthless arguments. These are sins that bring God’s wrath down on the disobedient [Ephesians 5:5-6; NAB].

Another sobering verse from St. Paul is:

For if we deliberately sin after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful prospect of judgment [Hebrews 10:26-27; RSV].

Please note that the “we” in this verse also included St. Paul—a faith-filled, baptized Christian! After Baptism, if we sin deliberately and remain unrepentant, then we can lose the gift of salvation. In Baptism, we receive Sanctifying Grace in our souls by no merit of our own, but afterward we must cooperate with this grace or we will lose it (2 Cor 6:1). This cooperation with God’s redeeming grace is the Catholic understanding of merit (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* [CCC] 162; 2025).

Fortunately, God has given us the Sacrament of Confession (Penance or Reconciliation), so we can receive His continuing forgiveness for our sins committed after Baptism. Since we continue to sin after receiving Baptism (1 John 1:8-9), we must continually repent,

confess our sins, and turn our heart (will) back to Christ. Repentance is not a single event in our life, but must be an ongoing, everyday process for us. Yesterday we may have sincerely repented and been forgiven, but tomorrow through our weakness, we may stumble back into sin (2 Peter 2:20-22). We can be assured that Jesus will forgive us as often as we forgive others (Luke 6:36-37; Matt 6:14-15). Through the Sacrament of Penance, we receive Sanctifying Grace and Actual Graces which can help us resist future sins.

SINFUL WEAKNESS

Jesus understands our weakness even after Baptism. This is the reason that He gave His Apostles the authority to forgive sins:

...He breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” [John 20:22-23].

Through the centuries, this authority has been handed on to the bishops and priests as the Sacrament of Penance. Christians today need forgiveness for their sins as much as those in the first century AD. In addition, the authority to either forgive or retain implies oral confession (disclosure) of our sins since the priest needs to know the nature of the sins (Acts 19:18; Leviticus 5:5-6).

Continued next page...



By
Nick
Zummo

Holy Land Pilgrimage: LORD, I GIVE YOU THANKS

To the Lord, I must say: "I don't know how I received so many blessings but seeing the changes they have made in my life, and I give you thanks. I never expected to have the privilege of spending so much time in the Holy Land. It certainly wasn't possible on my own. You have blessed me in ways I never expected. Throughout this pilgrimage, you have moved my heart, drawing me closer to you. Lord, your movements are secret, but looking back, they are clear. You have changed me for the better."

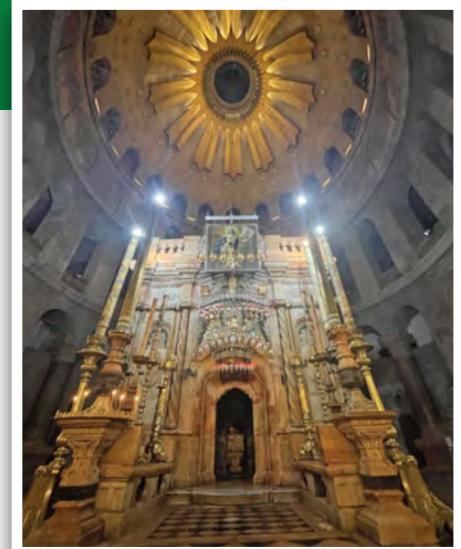
"I've stood with awe at the place you

were born, walked the paths of Galilee where you preached, and kept vigil through the night at the tomb where you were laid. I can't help but feel a part of my soul has risen to you and returned anew. I know my frailty, so thank you for sharing your strength. My dearest hope is to retain these gifts and share them in my ministry. On this journey, I felt joy and excitement for my upcoming ordination. You showed me the beauty and breadth of the Church in a new way. Worshiping in Jerusalem together with people all around the world was something special. Thank you for

continuing to guide and keep me on this pilgrimage.

"You have moved me to gratitude through this journey, recalling my friends and family. It has been a special privilege to bring their intentions here to the holy land. Not everyone gets to share in this opportunity. Keep me mindful of that. Perhaps this is why so many shared my excitement when I told them I was coming to the Holy Land. In a way, I have tried to carry them with me and ask for your graces upon them. Those have been important prayers for me. Never let me grow bitter or stubborn, as I have much to be thankful for. Thank you for the reminders of the love and support back home."

"Finally, dear Lord, never leave me to my abilities. Keep my heart and soul focused on you as we return from your home. The more I place you at the center, the more I see your blessings. I know you will sustain me throughout my life and ministry. You've shown me how you sustained Jesus through his ministry. We walked the same path Jesus did through his life. From Bethlehem, Galilee, and Jerusalem, I've seen what Jesus did in



your name and what impact he had. May I recognize that same Spirit present in my own life. What a blessing this life and vocation truly is and will be. Thank you, Lord, for your grace, the people in my life, and the opportunity to meet you here in the Holy Land."

God bless you all and see you back in the States. ©TM

Zummo is a seminarian for the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau in Mundelein Seminary. He will be ordained to the Diaconate on Fri., May 20, in St. Agnes Cathedral, Springfield.



Continued from previous page...

Even though our personal salvation is not assured, we still must hope in it. In the Bible, St. Paul uses the phrases: "the hope of salvation" [1 Thess 5:8], or "hope of eternal life" [Titus 1:2; 3:7]. If we were assured of heaven, then there would be no need for hope. Hope is not the same as assurance (Romans 8:24). According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC):

Hope is the confident expectation of divine blessing and the beatific vision of God; it is also the fear of offending God's love and incurring punishment [CCC 2090].

The two sins against hope are despair and presumption (CCC 2091). The sin of despair is losing hope in our salvation by failing to trust God. The sin of presumption is losing hope by either relying on ourselves for our salvation instead of God or taking God's mercy for granted without fear. Denying our sinfulness or believing "once saved, always saved" can lead us into the sin of presumption. However, we must not go to the other extreme and fall into the sin of despair. Hope is a delicate balance between confidence

in God's promise and fear of the Lord (Proverbs 1:7).

God wants all of us to be saved from hell and come to know the truth (1 Tim 2:4). Through Christ's Church—the Catholic Church, we can come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 3:15; Matt 16:18). Through the Sacraments, we receive God's saving grace as a free gift. But afterward, we must cooperate with that grace, since we have the free will (choice) to reject God at any time through serious disobedience, i.e. mortal sin. After receiving God's redeeming grace in Baptism, we must continue to "work out (our) own salvation with fear and trembling" [Philip 2:12]. Through Confession, we can ask God for His continuing

merciful forgiveness and more graces to help us resist sins in the future. As sinners we are not assured of our salvation. But Christians, who faithfully use the Sacraments, which are Channels of God's saving grace—without giving up, can certainly hope for salvation.

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25TH

ANNIVERSARY

CONGRATULATIONS

Fr. Francis Theetla



Fr. Francis Theetla will celebrate the 25th anniversary of his priesthood ordination on April 25th. He is pastor of Holy Trinity in Marshfield, MO.

**Happy Anniversary,
Fr. Theetla!**



Good News

Bringing the Light of Christ to Missouri



The second regular session of the 101st General Assembly convened on Jan. 5 in Jefferson City. Governor Parson has proposed a budget that is approximately 30 percent greater for Fiscal Year 2023 than the budget for Fiscal Year 2022. His recommended budget includes proposed spending on increased pay for government workers, investments in the state's computer systems, as well as infrastructure such as broadband Internet. The increased spending proposals included in his budget are the result of federal dollars sent to the state from COVID relief bills passed by Congress over the last two years. Meanwhile, legislators are grappling with the issue of redistricting following the 2020 census. Every 10 years, congressional and state maps must be redrawn to create new legislative districts at the state and federal level based upon shifts in population. The Missouri House passed a congressional map which would likely result in six Republicans and two Democrats representing Missouri in the US House. However, bitter divisions among Republicans in the Missouri Senate has led to a battle over the House-passed map. It is uncertain whether a compromise can be reached, or how the division will be resolved. The division in the Senate does not bode well for other legislation that must be passed.

Please keep Missouri lawmakers in your prayers as they work through these issues. For a

brief update on legislation the MCC is working on this session, please check out our first legislative roundtable Podcast of 2022 available at mocatholic.org, Spotify, and Apple and Google podcasts.

PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

In faithfulness to the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC) seeks through education and advocacy to create a culture that respects the sanctity and dignity of all human life, especially the most vulnerable among us. In the light of the moral teaching of the Catholic Church, the MCC and the Missouri bishops call government officials, legislators, and all citizens to a respectful discourse about the challenges facing our state and nation. This agenda does not reflect all of the MCC's concerns, but those calling for action at this time.

Protect Human Life

*"It is impossible to further the common good without acknowledging and defending the right to life, upon which all the other inalienable rights of individuals are founded and from which they develop" (Pope St. John Paul II, *Gospel of Life*, par. 101).*

Recognizing the right to life is the foundation for all other human

MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE



MCC LEGISLATIVE TOOLBOX

The Missouri Catholic Conference seeks to inform, educate, and mobilize citizens on the major issues confronting our state and nation. You can learn about the MCC's legislative priorities at www.mocatholic.org and also access the

legislative toolbox, a set of guides and graphics that can help you understand how the legislature functions and how you can get involved. You can take a look inside the toolbox here.

MISSOURI LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

Stay up to date on important legislative dates with this helpful calendar.

STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE LINKS

Find your state and federal legislators by using these directories, and also learn more about the legislative processes in Missouri and at the federal level.

LEGISLATIVE GLOSSARY

You're not the only one who gets lost in legislative jargon—this glossary will help you learn legislative terms.

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

It's probably been a few years since you've seen Schoolhouse Rock, so we've provided a graphic that explains the path a bill must take to become a law in Missouri.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR Want to send a letter or meet in person with your legislator? Find out how in this guide.

the common good, between various particular interests; but it should make accessible to each what is needed to lead a truly human life:

food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC]*, par. 1908).

Pope Francis calls for all people to hear the cry of the poor and to reform "unjust social structures" that deny basic necessities and opportunities for social and economic advancement. The MCC will support adequate funding for Medicaid and mental health services, protection of social programs that benefit the poor, care for creation and the environment, and stronger consumer



"Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age" (Pope Francis, 2017 Message for World Day of Migrants and Refugees).

The MCC will bear witness to the God-given human dignity of all immigrants and refugees, including the undocumented and those displaced by war, persecution, and natural disasters, reminding lawmakers of the right of people to migrate to other countries. The MCC will urge Congress to enact the DREAM Act, immigration reform, and provision and funding for refugee resettlement.

Advance Social and Economic Justice for All

"Certainly, it is the proper function of authority to arbitrate, in the name of



protections, including payday lending reform. The MCC will also support the healing of racial and cultural divisions while working to build vibrant communities that serve the common good.

Uphold and Strengthen Marriage and Family

"The importance of the family for the life and well-being of society entails a particular responsibility for society to support and strengthen marriage and the family" (CCC, par. 2210).

The family is the basic cell of human society and the foundation of civilized life.

Presently, the institutions of marriage and family are threatened by a culture that no longer values authentic marriage and stable families. The MCC will support legislation and funding for programs that encourage two-parent families and provide assistance to single parents and their children; promote responsible parenthood; assist victims of domestic violence; and, help families who are poor or have children with health problems or disabilities.



Defend Religious Liberty

"[T]he right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself." (Declaration on Religious Freedom, par. 2).

At the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church proclaimed that the freedom to exercise one's religious faith without threat of coercion is grounded in the dignity of the human person and that no person should be forced to act in a manner "contrary to his conscience," (Dignitas Humanae, par. 3). The MCC will oppose unjust discrimination against people of faith, including the targeting or registering of any particular faith, and will support religious liberty protections in all human rights laws.



Support Educational Opportunities

"As those first responsible for the education of their children, parents have the right to choose a school for them which corresponds to their own convictions" (CCC, par. 2229).

All parents have the right, and should have opportunities to receive assistance when necessary, to choose the schooling most beneficial for their



children and which stands in accord with their moral and religious convictions. The MCC will support educational opportunities for all children in all school settings, be they public, private, or religious. The MCC will support financial assistance so families can meet their children's educational needs, and the repeal of Constitutional provisions, such as Missouri's Blaine Amendments, that discriminate against children who attend private and religious schools.

Reform Criminal Justice

"We believe that both victims and offender[s] are children of God. Despite their very different claims on society, their lives and dignity should be protected and respected. We seek justice, not vengeance" (US Bishops, "A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice").

The Catholic Church supports a criminal justice system in which the offender is held accountable, the victim receives support, and the community assists the offender in successfully re-entering society. The MCC will support meaningful reforms, such as allowing greater judicial discretion in criminal sentencing, along with reasonable possibilities for parole, and ensuring offenders have realistic opportunities for employment upon their release.



Promote Civility & Faith in the Democratic Process

"[R]esponsible authority also means authority exercised with those virtues that make it possible to put power into practice as service (patience, modesty, moderation, charity, efforts to share), an authority exercised by persons who are able to accept the common good, and not prestige or the gaining of personal advantages, as the true goal of their work" (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, par. 410).

Pope Saint John Paul II said that Democracy needs wisdom and virtue if it is to flourish. Pope Francis told Congress that the chief aim of politics is the common good. The MCC will encourage civility and bipartisan cooperation among elected officials, strong ethical standards for those in public office, respect for the rule of law, and measures that allow citizens to more fully participate in their government. ©MCC



THE MISSOURI CATHOLIC ADVOCACY NETWORK

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WELCOME TO MCC FROM THE CAPITOL, a podcast produced by the Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC), focuses on public policy issues from a Catholic perspective. Leaders and experts in different areas of policy and/or church teaching join the show as guests.

Check it out at MOCATHOLIC.ORG/NEWS-AND-EVENTS/MCC-PODCAST



St. Ambrose School receives grant for technology

Chaffee, MO

Teresa Jansen, a parishioner at St. Joseph Church in Advance, MO, recently applied for a grant through Bayer's "America's Farmers Grow Communities." St. Ambrose Catholic School in Chaffee, MO, will receive the \$2,500 award. Principal Laura Enderle accepted the check in late winter 2021, which will go toward technology programs for early childhood grades.

Helping rural hometowns: Grow communities

Bayer's America's Farmers Grow Communities program is a singular effort that seeks to give

◀ **GRANT FOR TECHNOLOGY**—St. Ambrose Catholic School Principal Laura Enderle recently accepted a check from the Bayer's "America's Farmers Grow Community" fund, thanks to Teresa Jansen. Enderle is pictured with Ambrose Jansen, Teresa Jansen, and their granddaughter, Emorie Jansen, during Catholic Schools Week. (Submitted photo)

\$5,000 grants to a variety of rural nonprofits, education efforts, and rural initiatives in a streamlined way. Bayer partners with farmers to know best which institutions and programs in their communities deserve funding.

Since 2010, the America's Farmers program has awarded over \$60 million to nonprofits, schools, and agricultural youth organizations across rural America. From 3D printers and STEM education for small schools, to funding food banks in underserved areas, the America's Farmers programs help lift up and support rural communities, one grant at a time. ©TM



FAITH & FLOATS in CAPE GIRARDEAU



ICE CREAM & FAITH—Sister Janine Tran, CMR, was the featured speaker at the March 13 "Faith & Floats" event in St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Cape Girardeau. Two sessions were held: one for approximately 33 junior high students and another for around 20 high schoolers. While the youth ate ice cream floats, Sr. Tran shared her vocation story and spoke about growing closer to Jesus through prayer. Associate Pastor Fr. Alex Sutachan popped in to greet the youth. Father Sutachan is one of three diocesan Regional Vocation Promoters.

(Photo by Tiff Brey/The Mirror)

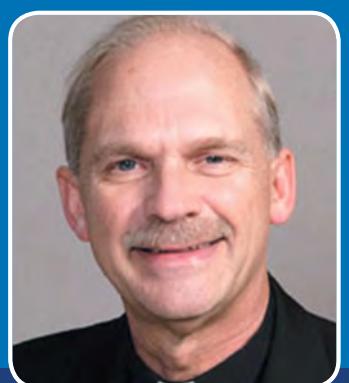
CONGRATULATIONS



Fr. David Hulshof

Fr. David Hulshof will celebrate the 40th anniversary of his priesthood ordination on April 18th.
 Fr. Hulshof is currently on temporary assignment in Rome.

Happy Anniversary, Fr. Hulshof!

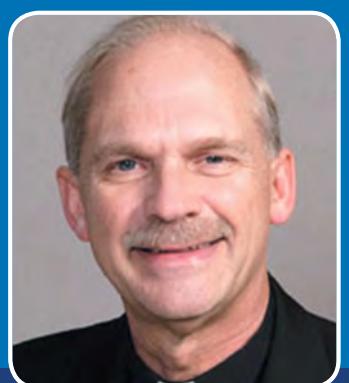


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MEN'S CONFERENCE // Continued from page 1



▲ JENNIFER CHAN of Her Honor His Glory at the 2022 Catholic Men's Conference. (The Mirror)

involve fellowship and accountability.

Many attendees anonymously sent their "one thing" commitments to conference organizers, including:

- [Invite more people to Mass](#)
- [Join the Knights of Columbus](#)
- [Attend a weekend retreat](#)
- [Read my Bible every day](#)

- [Pray the Rosary or Divine Mercy Chaplet daily](#)
- [Lead my family in prayer every day](#)
- [Devote more time volunteering at the church](#)
- [Be more involved in the Church and join the men's group](#)
- [Start a ministry in the diocese for bereaved parents](#)
- [Develop a better relationship with my oldest son](#)

After lunch, three laymen volunteered to give testimonials about one thing they had each done to grow in holiness and how it changed their lives for the better.

Initial feedback overwhelmingly positive

In a follow-up survey, all respondents agreed with the statement, "At least one of the talks had a great impact on my life." Most also said the conference helped them commit to taking the faith more seriously and getting more involved in parish life.

Most attendees said they were not previously aware of Deacon Burke-Sivers's popular books and videos but registered for the conference anyway. All respondents said they would attend next year even if they are unfamiliar with the speakers.

This year's conference was the first not to feature a guest speaker from professional sports. The first 2020 conference welcomed Lamar Hunt, Jr., a faithful



▲ THE TOP ROW during Mass at the 2022 Catholic Men's Conference. (The Mirror)

Catholic and a member of the founding family of the Kansas City Chiefs. The second conference in 2021 showcased Super Bowl champion Harrison Butker's first public speech about his Catholic faith.

The event is organized by a committee of laymen from Immaculate Conception Parish in Springfield and supported by the diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis. The free event is funded entirely by local donors, and Springfield Catholic High School made the campus available at no charge.

Plans for next year's conference are well underway. Attendees can still send feedback and make donations by visiting www.CatholicConference.men. ©TM

SECOND COLLECTION for CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES



March 27

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES carries out the commitment of the Bishops of the United States to assist the poor and vulnerable overseas. We are motivated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ to cherish, preserve and uphold the sacredness and dignity of all human life, foster charity and justice, and embody Catholic social and moral teaching as we act to:

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THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

We can see ourselves in the Prodigal Son

*Joshua 5:9a, 10-12;
Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7;
2 Corinthians 5:17-21;
Luke 15:18*

Whether a second grader or an adult, one of the steps I often take with an individual in preparing them for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, is showing them the inside of the confessional. It may not seem like much, but I consider it an important step. The intention behind this is simple: I want a penitent to be as "at ease" as possible when receiving the Sacrament. They need not fear the Sacrament, the minister, and even the space itself, as any of those three things can be rather daunting when they are approached for the first time. What is my simple hope in all of this? That they will not be afraid of receiving the Father's forgiveness, and that they actually come to appreciate and anticipate the joy of being reconciled.

The parable of the Prodigal Son, which is the Gospel for the Fourth Week of Lent, is a memorable one, not simply because of the story itself, but because of the sheer magnitude of what happens: a son, who is presumed to be totally unworthy



**SCRIPTURE
WISDOM**
Fr. Daniel Belken

of forgiveness, is reconciled with his father. The parable opens with a son approaching his father with a rather jarring request: to receive his portion of his father's inheritance. This was not common practice at the time for a son to receive the inheritance this early, as it would traditionally be distributed after the father had died, as in our day and age. The implication of his request, then, is harsh: he is indifferent to the fact that his father is still with him. The request would be utterly insulting to the father to have been asked! Nonetheless, the father, in his humility, gives over to the son his portion of the inheritance, and the son departs.

The son, we are told, lives a life of dissipation and squanders his inheritance with relative haste. He lives in disregard to the value of his inheritance, and this catches up with him. The point comes when he seems to be enslaved to his vice and his sin that has now swallowed up all he had

once valued. He who once devalued his own father's life has become the one who is "dead" himself because sin and weakness have swallowed him whole. He arrives at a point of utter destruction, and then, out of sheer desperation, hires himself out to work with swine: something an Israelite would never do, since these animals were considered unclean. Worse still, he is cut off from his native land, and is in a land far removed from the Israelite nation, and away from his father. As the son realizes his plight, he decides that he must go and return to his father, to ask for the place of a servant. He goes back to that native place, and confesses his sin to his father. What results is tremendously unexpected: the father, in the midst of his son's confession, is so overjoyed at his return, that he restores him back to the place of honor he once enjoyed, and, as the Scripture tells us, restores his son back to life as well. Even his older brother is shocked at the goodwill and generosity of the father, and comes to struggle with this radical forgiveness.

One reason that this parable is so thought-provoking is that we are the ones who enjoy this father's forgiveness as often as we like. Every time we cross the threshold of the confessional

and enter, we make that very same return to the Father. We decide a life of dissipation is not worth it, and renounce what has taken up our inheritance of the kingdom of Heaven. We are not proud of where we have been, what we have done, or even what we have seen, and yet, a powerful admission of having "sinned against heaven and against you," brings us a powerful restoration back to the place where we once were before. What is the simple invitation from this parable? We need not be afraid of the Father, who is present in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. We need not be afraid of the minister, nor the confessional. We may have many things for which to ask forgiveness, and many things that have made us "dead" in sin. Nonetheless, our Father promises us the same restoration as the prodigal son received. We need only to return and humbly ask forgiveness in the sacrament to enjoy the restoration of life that it provides! ©TM

Father Belken is the Parochial Vicar of Immaculate Conception Church in Springfield and Associate Director of Worship & Liturgy. He is also a Regional Vocation Promoter and Chaplain at Springfield Catholic High School.

ATTENTION: ADULT CATHOLIC MEN

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'SEMO Catholic Man Night' on Facebook or text to 573-275-5214

Saint Francis Accepting 2022 Healthcare Scholarship Applications

Cape Girardeau

Applications for the 2022 Saint Francis Healthcare Scholarship Program funded by Saint Francis Foundation and Auxiliary are now available. The program awards more than 20 scholarships of up to \$2,000 annually to students pursuing a healthcare-related career.

The Steven C. Bjelich Executive Scholarship is available for students pursuing a Master's degree in Healthcare Administration and is awarded to one recipient every other year. Additionally, the scholarship pays the recipient's institution \$5,000 per year for two years, equaling a \$10,000 total reward.

Applicants must have completed one year as a student in an accredited healthcare program and be currently enrolled. Students must have a minimum 3.0-grade point average on a 4.0 scale. As defined in the application, they must also reside within Saint Francis Healthcare System's service area.



Applicants must submit a fully completed Online application and all required documentation to the Foundation by 5 p.m. Thu., June 30, 2022. Students may receive one scholarship per year for a maximum of two years.

Since its inception in 1980, the scholarship program has provided nearly \$800,000 in education scholarships to college students to encourage professional healthcare careers.

All applicants are considered regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, handicap, or veteran status. Applications are available at foundation.sfmc.net/scholarship-program/. For more information, please call the Foundation at (573) 331-5177. ©TM

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

God doodles in the dust of time

*Isaiah 43:16-21;
Psalm 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6;
Philippians 3:8-14;
John 8:1-11*

The question that always arises when we hear the Gospel for the Fifth Sunday of Lent this liturgical year is: What was Jesus writing on the ground with his finger? The Gospel itself does not tell us. This has given rise to numerous interpretations throughout the centuries.

One suggestion is that Jesus was writing the sins of those in the crowd who were about to stone the woman. Another possibility is that Jesus was writing some notes for himself, getting together the argument by which he proposed to set the woman free. But, there is another possibility we should consider. The Greek word that we translate "to write," literally means "to draw," or "to make lines." So maybe, instead of Jesus forming letters of the alphabet in the ground, he was simply drawing lines or figures. In other words, perhaps Jesus was doodling. If this was the case, then Jesus' action is not about writing but about waiting: waiting for those in the crowd to see the truth.

Now, Jesus was certainly capable of mounting an argument to answer the questions of the Scribes and the Pharisees. He could have used the



SCRIPTURE WISDOM

Fr. Vincent Bertrand

Mosaic Law itself to make the case that stoning did not apply to this woman. He could have drawn on the long tradition of mercy, which is found in the Hebrew Scriptures to assert that mercy should be extended to the woman that stood in their midst. But Jesus did not adopt any of these strategies. He did not offer an argument. He instead gave the crowd time to think. He bent down and occupied himself in silence, providing a space in which those in the crowd could examine what was in their own hearts and determine whether it was right to carry out the action of violence which they were contemplating. Giving time to the crowd was a way of Jesus expressing his belief that there was a basic goodness in their hearts. Jesus believed that with enough time, that goodness would emerge and would lead them to the right conclusion. And, Jesus' strategy worked. After a time, one by one, the violent mob dropped their stones and went away.

The gospel suggests that God deals with us in the same way that Jesus dealt with the crowd. God understands how

often we hold tight to stones that can harm ourselves and others. They can be stones of prejudice. We know that God has created all people equal and that every person has value. Yet, we can cling tightly to the personal conviction that some people are better than others and that some people do not deserve our respect and care. The stones might be our

resentment and anger over a past hurt or slight. We know that

Jesus asks us to forgive, to forgive even our enemies.

Every day we pray that God would forgive us as we forgive those who trespass against us. However, at times, we cannot let go of the hurt that has been leveled against us. We cannot forgive our brother or our sister from our heart. Our stones might be a habit of sins that do us no good, habits of pride, impatience, impurity, or criticism. Sometimes, we have the strength to put those stones down. But before we know it, they are in our hands again, impeding our motion and weighing us down.

God knows the stones to which we cling, and yet God does not attack us because of our foolishness. God does not shake us trying to move us out of our stubbornness. God gives us time to think. God stoops down and writes

God is doodling, providing the time by which we can recognize that the sins that we cling to only lessen our lives.

with his finger in the dust of time, watching and waiting as people love us, as blessings come to us, as we grow in faith and thankfulness. God believes that there is goodness in each of us. God believes that with the right amount of time, that goodness can emerge and reveal the foolishness of our prejudice, convincing us that the

sins to which we cling do not belong in our hands. God is waiting,

waiting for us to see. God is doodling, providing the time by which we can recognize that the sins that we cling to only lessen our lives. The time that God gives us is a sign of the trust that God has in us.

So, should not today be the day that we trust God in return?

Should not today be the day when we let the stones fall from our hands?

Should not today be the day we walk away from anger and sin so that we can enter into the new life that only God's grace can give? ©TM

Fr. Vincent Bertrand, MA, MDiv, JCL, serves in the diocesan Office of Tribunal as Adjutant Judicial Vicar and Judge.

SATURDAY
APRIL 9,
2022
10 A.M.

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TUE., MARCH 22
6:00 pm Holy Trinity Parish – Springfield

THU., MARCH 24
6:00 pm St. Joseph Parish – Advance

SAT., MARCH 26
5:00 pm St. Joseph Parish – Springfield

SUN., MARCH 27
9:00 am St. Joseph Parish – Springfield
11:30 am St. Joseph Parish – Springfield

MON., MARCH 28
11:00 am Sacred Heart Parish – Dexter

THU., MARCH 31
6:00 pm Sts. Peter and Paul Parish – Pulaskifield

SAT., APRIL 2
9:30 am St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish – Springfield
10:00 am St. Francis de Sales Parish – Lebanon
1:00 pm St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish – Springfield

TUE., APRIL 5
6:30 pm St. Francis de Sales Parish – Lebanon

SAT., APRIL 9
6:30 pm St. John Parish – Leopold
6:30 pm St. Anthony Parish – Glennon

WED., APRIL 20
10:00 am Sacred Heart Parish – Conway
6:30 pm St. Ann Parish – Malden

THU., APRIL 21
6:30 pm St. Ann Parish – Malden

SAT., APRIL 23
5:30 pm Sacred Heart Parish – Conway

SUN., APRIL 24
9:00 am St. Agnes Cathedral – Springfield

TUE., APRIL 26
5:00 pm St. William Parish – Buffalo
6:30 pm Sacred Heart Parish – Dexter

WED., APRIL 27
6:00 pm Holy Trinity Parish – Aurora
6:30 pm St. Teresa Parish – Glennonville

THU., APRIL 28
6:30 pm St. Teresa Parish – Glennonville

SAT., APRIL 30
10:00 am St. William Parish – Buffalo

TUE., MAY 3
6:30 pm St. Mary Parish - Joplin

THU., MAY 5
6:30 pm St. Peter the Apostle Parish - Joplin

SAT., MAY 14
11:00 am St. Canera Parish – Neosho

SUN., MAY 15
6:00 pm St. Canera Parish – Neosho

#ListeningChurch

Our Holy Father Pope Francis has invited the Catholic Church to embark on a journey together. Through listening and discernment rooted in the Holy Spirit, the entire people of God will be called to contribute to a process by which the Church deepens in understanding of Her mission and looks toward the future.

YOU ARE INVITED!

Pope Francis and Bishop Edward Rice invite YOU to join the conversation in your community!

In May of 2021, Pope Francis introduced the Synod on Synodality which is a journey of dialogue and discernment, in which **ALL THE PEOPLE OF GOD** are called to pray and reflect upon the Holy Spirit's will for the Church. This synod is not just a convening of Bishops reflecting on a particular topic and advising the Pope. Through our listening and sharing, together we will seek to understand the Holy Spirit's will.

Our dialogue will focus on how your parish is currently journeying with people in their walk of faith and how the Holy Spirit may be challenging us to grow. Please come and share your experiences, insights, and concerns!

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LENTEN FASTING & ABSTINENCE



How do we fast?
When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal.

Am I excused from fasting and abstinence?
Those that are excused from fast and abstinence outside the age limits include the physically or mentally ill including individuals suffering from chronic illnesses such as diabetes. Also excluded are pregnant or nursing women.

For more information on fasting and abstinence, visit usccb.org.

Fasting
Ash Wednesday
Good Friday
Ages 18-59

Abstinence
Every Friday during Lent
Ages 14+



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JOIN THE TROOPS!



GUARDIAN ANGEL PARISH, ORAN

Troops of St. George Troop 102 is an outdoor apostolate for fathers and sons, ages 6-18. Camping, hiking, canoeing, and other outdoor activities. **Now is an excellent time to join the troops.** For information or to join, contact Anthony Riley, Troop Captain, at TSGtroop@gmail.com or call (573) 837-2556.





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

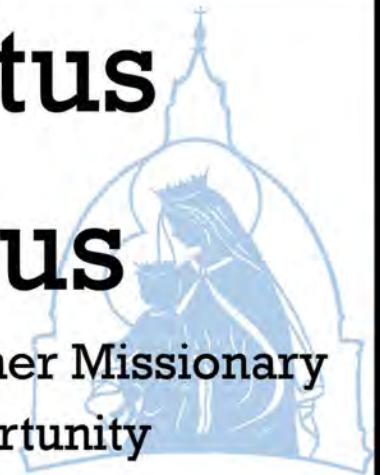
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Training sessions are for adults only. The link to updated schedules may be found at www.dioscg.org just above the events calendar.

Along with the VIRTUS "Protecting God's Children" training for adults, before regularly engaging in activities involving minors and/or vulnerable adults, new volunteer or employees are also required to submit a current Background Disclosure and Authorization Form and the annual Code of Conduct, which are available on the VIRTUS Website and the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau Child and Youth Protection Webpage: www.dioscg.org/child-youth-protection/

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

Totus Tuus



Summer Missionary Opportunity

June 1 - July 29, 2022

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We welcome applications from dynamic Catholics ages 18 to 24. Applicants must have an authentic faith and be actively living the teachings of the Catholic Church. We prefer one year of college or work experience, but are willing to consider mature graduating high school seniors. No major or area of study is required. This is a great summer job experience for anyone who wants to work in ministry, education or with children in any setting.




What is Totus Tuus?

Totus Tuus (Totally Yours) is a summer Catholic youth program dedicated to sharing the Gospel and promoting the Catholic Faith through evangelization, catechesis, Christian witness and Eucharistic worship. Our week-long parish youth program assists parents and parishes in evangelizing and catechizing their youth by supplementing the work they are currently doing.

For more information, or to apply to be a Missionary, visit the Totus Tuus page at:

dioscg.org/totustuus/
or contact the Office of Evangelization, Catechesis, and Youth Formation

Lynn Melendez, Director
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For the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau



PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Cross Catholic Outreach's 'Wells of Salvation' Project Ensures Poor Have Safe Water

It's a scientific fact — no one can survive without water.

Fortunately, as Americans, we have sophisticated water systems that ensure we can easily obtain safe water in our homes, in our schools and in our hospitals. For most of us, a satisfying drink is as close as the nearest water fountain or tap in our house.

But how is water obtained by the rest of the world — particularly poor families in developing countries?

"It is a very different situation for them," said Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach. "For them, just finding water is a challenge, and even when it is located, it is often unsafe."

Cavnar and the ministry team are very familiar with these problems. He and his team specialize in international development missions, and they have been helping solve water scarcity problems around the globe for years.

They do this through a network of Catholic dioceses and parishes. This approach is more cost-effective and ensures that help reaches the poorest of the poor. With funding from Cross Catholic Outreach, local leaders manage the construction of the wells and the installation of other water systems. This partnership has already blessed many families and communities, but Cavnar believes much more could be done to provide help, particularly in Africa.

"It is shocking to see how much water scarcity impacts families in developing countries like Ghana, Malawi and Zambia. The challenges begin with finding water and the dangers involved in collecting it, but there are many other hardships too. For example, because poor families must often rely on rivers and other sources contaminated with animal waste and parasites, there is a good chance that even when a family can find water, they will become ill when they drink it." (See related story on the opposite page.)

Fortunately, solving these water problems does not require scarce technology or complex processes. The solution typically begins with the installation of a standard well and a simple system to deliver the water to a community distribution point. The hardware works on simple mechanics and is easy to maintain once local families are trained to care for it.

"If we have the will to help, there is a way to achieve our goals," Cavnar said. "The only real hurdle is getting funding to cover the drilling process, the equipment and the labor involved. That is why we recently launched our Wells of Salvation campaign. We are trying to inspire U.S. Catholics to donate to several of our diocese-based water projects in Africa."

The Wells of Salvation water project that Cross Catholic Outreach has planned will certainly have a major, transformative impact on poor communities in Africa if Cavnar can secure its funding. It will install 65 new well systems in three different Catholic dioceses, delivering safe water to thousands of families.

In at least one of these dioceses, the project will also provide improved sanitation with the construction of eight free-standing community sanitation blocks.

"Five of those sanitation blocks will be built at school sites so we can also address the needs of students," Cavnar said. "We Americans are used to our schools being equipped with restrooms, but facilities like those are actually rare in many remote parts of Africa. There, children often resort to open defecation or using unsanitary latrines that can transmit diseases. We want to end that kind of suffering."

These are goals Cavnar believes other Catholics will want to support, and he is confident the ministry's Wells of Salvation campaign will be one of its most successful missions of mercy.



"Everyone understands how essential water is to life. We have been blessed with an abundant supply of it, and we should want to see others have safe sources of water," he said. "This is our chance to give something back in recognition of the blessings God has given to us."

Readers interested in supporting Cross Catholic Outreach water programs and other outreaches to the poor can contribute through the ministry

brochure inserted in this issue, or send tax-deductible gifts to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC01952, PO Box 97168, Washington, DC 20090-7168. The ministry has a special need for partners willing to make gifts on a monthly basis. Use the inserted brochure to become a Mission Partner or write "Monthly Mission Partner" on mailed checks to be contacted about setting up those arrangements.

Cross Catholic Outreach Endorsed by More Than 100 Bishops, Archbishops

Cross Catholic Outreach's range of relief work to help the poor overseas continues to be recognized by a growing number of Catholic leaders in the U.S. and abroad.

"We've received more than 100 endorsements from bishops and archbishops," explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach. "They're moved by the fact that we've launched outreaches in almost 40 countries and have undertaken a variety of projects — everything from feeding the hungry and housing the homeless to supplying

safe water and supporting educational opportunities for the poorest of the poor. The bishops have also been impressed by Cross Catholic Outreach's direct and meaningful response to emergency situations, most recently by providing food, medicines and other resources to partners in Haiti, El Salvador and areas of Belize impacted by natural disasters."

Archbishop Thomas Rodi of Mobile, Alabama, supports this mission, writing, "It is a privilege for me to support Cross Catholic Outreach. This organization funds ministries to our neighbors in need in

Africa, Asia, Central and South America, and the Pacific. Through the generosity of so many, the love of God is made visible to many who are coping with the most difficult of daily living conditions."

In addition to praising Cross Catholic Outreach's accomplishments, many of the bishops and archbishops are encouraged by the fact that Pontifical canonical status was conferred on the charity in September 2015, granting it approval as an official Catholic organization. This allows Cross Catholic Outreach to participate in the mission of the Church and to give a

concrete witness to Gospel charity, in collaboration with the Holy Father.

"Your work with the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development is a strong endorsement of your partnership with the work of the Universal Church," Archbishop Cordileone of San Francisco said. "By providing hope to the faithful overseas by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, delivering medical relief to the sick and shelter to the homeless, and through self-help projects, you are embodying the Papal Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est.*"

American Catholics Have Opportunity to Bless African Families Facing Life-Threatening Water Scarcity

Agnes Mwanja is a hardworking mother of five in northern Malawi. As a subsistence farmer and homemaker, she carries out many responsibilities each day — including helping her husband with the crops, seeing the children off to school, cooking meals and cleaning the family home — but before she can tend to any of these tasks, she must begin by collecting water from the Wibogholo River.

The idea of drawing water from anything but a household tap may seem strange to most Americans' ears, but it is an all-too-common task for the poor of Malawi. Their simple homes typically lack electricity, sanitation and running water, so to survive, they resort to this challenging chore to meet their daily needs.

"There is nothing idyllic or romantic about it either," explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, a major Catholic ministry serving the poor in Africa. "Water collection usually means a long, hard trek through difficult terrain. The sources they must rely on are terrible, and the women face a backbreaking return home with those heavy containers of muddy water."

To Cavnar's point, Agnes Mwanja's closest source is the Wibogholo River, a small, polluted body of water that Agnes must often visit six times in a single day to meet her family's needs. Often, her daughters accompany her to help carry the water.

"When it rains, we draw muddy water. We are drinking together with animals, and you can even see the animal droppings all around," Agnes lamented.

Still, this poor woman counts her blessings when she can find water at all. During seasons of drought, for example, this river dries up, and Agnes must walk even farther to collect water from the Upiwo River (a tributary of the Songwe River). A single trip to that distant body of water takes at least four hours, and Agnes will need to go there at least twice in a day.

"During the dry season, water collection can consume Agnes' entire day, leaving little time for her to take on any other important tasks," Cavnar said. "When we think about water scarcity problems overseas, I don't think many of us consider all of the repercussions poor families face. This loss of valuable time is an example, and it isn't even the greatest of the hardships involved."

Some of these challenges are seen. Others are unseen.

"When Agnes and her daughters make their way to the river, they may encounter wild animals, including snakes and leopards, so they must tread carefully and try to move quickly," Cavnar explained. "Imagine the stress of that — taking these daily trips in fear; never knowing whether the next turn you make might mean facing



Agnes (front) collects water from the Wibogholo River — really little more than a murky stream. During the dry season, this source will dry up, and she and her neighbors will be forced to take an even longer and more dangerous trek to find water.

a hostile person or animal."

Then there is the unseen threat, which Cavnar believes is an even greater danger. Because the water they collect is often contaminated and contains parasites, a family is never certain if what they are drinking to survive might actually make them terribly sick. Children are particularly susceptible to such illnesses and some die as a result.

"At Cross Catholic Outreach, we make solving water scarcity challenges a priority for all of these reasons," Cavnar said. He described a current effort his charity has undertaken to supply safe water to three African locations — the Diocese of Wa in Ghana, the Diocese of Karonga in Malawi and the Diocese of Chipata in Zambia. If its fundraising efforts in the U.S. are successful, Cross Catholic Outreach will be able to install 65 safe water wells to serve families in more than 50 communities. (See story on opposite page.)

"I know Agnes dreams of the day when she, her husband and her children will have enough clean water to quench their

thirst, cook, wash and take care of their other sanitary needs. I know she longs for the day her community no longer suffers from waterborne diseases or faces the risk of wild animal attacks," Cavnar said. "If American Catholics will stand with me and join our effort to provide water solutions in Africa, I believe we will end those challenges and dangers for Agnes, her family and thousands of others like them. The technology is there to solve the problem. We just need to join together and help the Catholic leaders in Wa, Karonga

and Chipata fund this important work."

Cavnar's expectations are that American Catholics will want to help and will give generously to supply safe water to these struggling areas of Africa.

"We Catholics are very sensitive to the needs of families, and we value life dearly," he said. "We have a global perspective of our Church — and its mission too. When we see an extreme need like this, we do everything we can to end suffering, support families and save lives."

How to Help

To fund Cross Catholic Outreach's effort to help the poor worldwide, use the postage-paid brochure inserted in this newspaper or mail your gift to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC01952, PO Box 97168, Washington, DC 20090-7168. The brochure also includes instructions on becoming a Mission Partner and making a regular monthly donation to this cause.

If you identify an aid project, 100% of the donation will be restricted to be used for that specific project. However, if more is raised for the project than needed, funds will be redirected to other urgent needs in the ministry.





Darrell Hinkebein,
LUTCF, FICF
MDRT
Cell: 417-827-4949
darrell.hinkebein@kofc.org
Nixa, Bolivar, Verona-Aurora,
Marshfield, Mt. Vernon,
Monett, Springfield - Holy Trinity
and I.C., Holy Family
Campus Ministry



Scott Hinkebein,
FIC
MDRT, Court of the Table
Cell: 417-827-0303
scott.hinkebein@kofc.org
Kimberling City, Forsythe,
Shell Knob, Pulaskifield-Cassville,
Pierce City, Branson, Ozark,
Houston, Willow Springs, Ava,
West Plains, Billings,
Springfield-St. Agnes Cathedral,
Montrose, Butler



Jim LePage
Cell: 417-827-9659
jim.lepage@kofc.org
St. Anne-Springfield,
Fr. Benedict-Joplin, St. Mary's,
Neosho, Webb City, Carthage,
Lamar, Nevada, Stockton

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Vance Todt,
FICF
Cell: 573-475-0969
vance.todt@kofc.org
Oran, Dexter, Glennonville,
Advance, Poplar Bluff
and Scott City



Loy Shrum,
FICF
Cell: 573-382-0952
loy.shrum@kofc.org
Leopold, Jackson
and Fredericktown



Luke Henry,
FSCP, FICF
Assistant General Agent
Mahon Agency
Cell: 913-568-6518
luke.henry@kofc.org



Joe Pehar
Assistant General Agent
Spinelli Agency
Cell: 314-220-9146
joe.pehar@kofc.org



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Career Opportunities



MAHON AGENCY
John A. Mahon, FICF, LUTCF, FSCP
Office: 855-356-4849
john.mahon@kofc.org
1275 S.W. Topeka Blvd.
Topeka, KS 66612



SPINELLI AGENCY

George Spinelli, FICF, LUTCF, CLU
Office: 636-390-2525
george.spinelli@kofc.org
102 Lurhaven Circle
Camdenton, MO 65020
Serving Central and South East Missouri



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