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Newspaper of the Diocese of Jefferson City

Hundreds choose to be bold at Youth Rally



Hundreds of middle school and high school teens from parishes throughout the diocese tune in to two of the presenters at this year's Diocesan Youth Rally in Jefferson City. The theme was "Boldly Chosen: Chosen to Be Bold." — Photo by Jose Funes

By Jay Nies

Bishop Ralph B. O'Donnell invited one of the altar servers forward to display the diocesan Coat of Arms embroidered on the liturgical garment draped over his shoulders.

The bishop pointed out the elements: a cross, a star, a crescent moon and two rivers.

Each element also represents one of the diocese's five deaneries on the banners carried in procession at diocesan celebrations.

"Each of you came from one of these deaneries," the bishop noted, "but we all belong to one family as a diocese and as one Church."

Bishop O'Donnell presided and preached the homily at the Mass for the Diocesan Youth Rally on Nov. 22 at Helias Catholic High School in Jefferson City.

About 550 seventh- through 12th-graders and adult chaperones, all representing about 36 parishes, attended.

It was the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

The theme for the Youth Rally was "Boldly Chosen: Chosen to Be Bold."

Many who attended came as parish

See YOUTH RALLY, page 15

Bishop O'Donnell to ordain Shane Kliethermes a transitional deacon Dec. 5 in the Cathedral

By Jay Nies

Shane Kliethermes felt exhausted and empty.

The priest overseeing his formation urged him to go and make his seminarian rounds at a local hospital anyway.

"Sometimes, when we feel we have nothing left to give, that's when the Lord gives the most," the priest told him.

Mr. Kliethemes went straight to the room of a deeply spiritual cancer patient who had captivated him the previous week with stories of her missionary exploits.

He arrived to find her loved ones gathered around her bed, hugging each other and crying.

The deceased woman's son recognized him and invited him in to meet the rest of the family and pray with them.

"I was blown away," Mr. Kliethermes recalled. "It was so humbling to see how the Lord entered into that moment and turned my weakness into strength."

Mr. Kliethermes contemplates such powerful moments of reassurance as he prepares for Bishop Ralph B. O'Donnell to ordain him a transitional deacon, an important step toward Priesthood, on Saturday, Dec. 5, in the Cathedral of St. Joseph.

The Mass will be at 10 a.m. All are invited to attend or to tune in to the livestream on the Diocese of Jefferson City Facebook page.

Visit ***diojeffcity.org/ordination-2026*** to register for the reception to follow.

See DEACON, page 12

MOVING? If you are moving or changing parishes, please fill out information below. Clip and mail to THE CATHOLIC MISSOURIAN, 2207 West Main Street, Jefferson City, MO 65109-0914. Or complete the online form at **diojeffcity.org/update-information.** Allow two weeks.

NEW ADDRESS

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ADDRESS_____

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NEW PARISH_____

OLD PARISH _____

11/27/26

Pray for deceased priests

Dec. 9 — **Fr. Thomas L. Waickman,** St, Joseph, Louisiana; and Mary Queen of Peace, Clarksville (2010)

Hermann Advent mission

DATE: December 11
TIME: 7 pm

Sister M. Gianna Casino of the Leaven of the Immaculate Heart of Mary community will lead a parish mission on Dec. 11 in Hermann.

It will be at 7 p.m. in St. George Church, 128 W. Fourth St.

Sr. Gianna will bring light to the relationship between the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus and how this relationship relates to the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

All are invited and encouraged to attend.

A Meet and Greet and light refreshments will follow the Mission.

Sr. Gianna is a religious sister, licensed counselor and author.

She has been featured on EWTN's "Women of Grace" and other media outlets, discussing faith, mental health and her unique journey into religious life.

Call 573-486-2723 for information.

Find us online at @diojeffcity



Festival of Lights, 'O Holy Night' at National Shrine in Laurie

The beloved Festival of Lights has returned to the National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church, in Laurie.

Open nightly from 5 to 10 p.m. through Jan. 10, the free Christmas experience invites visitors to enjoy a festive drive-through display or park their vehicles and explore the peaceful grounds on foot.

Whether continuing a family tradition or discovering the Shrine for the first time, guests will find a welcoming place to experience the joy, beauty and hope of the Christmas season.

For generations, families, friends and visitors have made this dazzling Christmas display a cherished holiday tradition. With thousands of twinkling lights illuminating the Shrine grounds, the Festival of Lights offers a beautiful opportunity to slow down, embrace the wonder of the season, and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas.

"Christmas is a time when we are reminded of the incredible gift of God's love through the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ," said Andrew Wright, Executive Director of The National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church. "We hope the Festival of Lights brings families together, creates lasting memories, and reminds everyone who visits of the hope, peace, and joy that Christ brings into our world."

On Saturday evenings throughout December, Shrine volunteers will welcome visitors with complimentary hot chocolate and candy canes from 6 to 8 p.m.

****

The Shrine will host its fourth annual "O Holy Night" celebration, a festive and faith-filled afternoon bringing the Christmas story to life for visitors of all ages, from 4 to 6 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 13.

It will include: Christmas caroling and a community sing-along; delicious cookies and hot cocoa; fun and engaging children's activities; a traditional Christmas bonfire; a live Nativity featuring costumed actors and animals, including a camel from Thorni Ridge Exotics; and a beautiful reading of the Christmas story from the Gospel of St. Luke.

From the excitement of the children to the wonder of the live Nativity, "O Holy Night" offers families a meaningful opportunity to step away from the busyness of the season and experience the miracle and majesty of Christ's birth.

All events are free and open to the public.

The Shrine is located on the grounds of St. Patrick Church, 176 Marian Drive, off of Highway 5 in Laurie.

For information, visit ***www.mothersshrine.com***.

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"A diocesan paper serves as a bond of unity by publishing diocesan happenings and promulgating official regulations and decrees. It also plays a teaching role by reporting notable events of a religious and secular nature, and interpreting them in the light of Christian principles."
— Bishop Joseph M. Marling C.PP.S., July 7, 1957

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'Las Posadas' event outside the Cathedral

DATE: December 16
TIME: 6-7 pm

Cathedral of St. Joseph Parish in Jefferson City will hold "Las Posadas," a traditional Advent celebration reenacting Mary and Joseph's search for shelter before the birth of Jesus, through prayer, procession and song, from 6 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 16, outside the Cathedral, 2215 W. Main St.

Advent concert in J.C.

DATE: December 13
TIME: 2-3 pm

Immaculate Conception Parish in Jefferson City will hold an Advent Concert from 2 to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 13, in Immaculate Conception Church, 1203 E. McCarty St. at Clark Avenue.

It will be a joyful afternoon of music and praise featuring parish choirs, musicians and soloists in Advent hope and anticipation. All are welcome.

MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

Communications and Outreach Manager

The Missouri Catholic Conference, the public policy agency of the Catholic Church in Missouri, is hiring a Communications and Outreach Manager. Responsibilities include developing and implementing communication strategies across multiple platforms, including print, website, social media, podcasts, video and photos; promoting and growing the Missouri Catholic Advocacy Network; and collaborating with dioceses, parishes, news outlets and other partners. The ideal candidate is a practicing Catholic in good standing with experience in Adobe Creative Cloud, website design and maintenance, Google Workspace, and social media management. A bachelor's degree in a related field is preferred but not required. This is a full-time position in Jefferson City. Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications. For more information or to apply, send your cover letter and resume to **mocatholic@mocatholic.org.**

Bishop celebrates Mass with Catholic music association

By Jay Nies

Polyphonal prayers were multiplied by two on a sunny Saturday morning in the Capital City.

Catholic music leaders, singers and accompanists from parishes throughout the diocese joined Bishop Ralph B. O'Donnell in the Cathedral of St. Joseph for the St. Cecilia Mass and Blessing of Parish Musicians.

"St. Cecilia's Day allows us an opportunity to honor the dedicated musicians of the diocese who generously share their time and talent, helping the Church lift its voice in prayer," said Ron Sayer MME, director of the diocesan chapter of the National Association of Catholic Church Musicians (NACCM), formerly known as the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, and a member of St. Peter Parish in Marshall.

"We reflect on the talents God has given us, the role of music in the Church, and we express our gratitude to the directors, cantors, organists, instrumentalists, choir members, clergy, volunteers, teachers, students and families who support the musician prayer of our parishes," he said.





Singers and instrumentalists from parishes in the Jefferson City lead the music during a diocesan St. Cecilia Mass on Nov. 14 in the Cathedral of St. Joseph. Bishop Ralph B. O'Donnell presided at the Mass, preached the homily and imparted a special blessing on all liturgical musicians and singers present.

— Photos by Jay Nies

About 110 people attended.

The celebration began with a series of preludes offered by:

•members of the Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Contemporary Group from Columbia, directed by Christian and Kate Basi;

•the St. Francis Xavier SFXpressions Youth Choir from Taos, directed by Laura Kempker;

•violinist Bryan Orozco from St. Peter Parish in Marshall;

•the Women's Ensemble of St. Patrick Parish in Laurie, directed by Sue Purdon; and

•organist Andrew Meagher DMA, music director of the Cathedral.

The pieces reflected a wide range from classic to contemporary, joyful to contemplative.

All were sacred and centered on God.

The assembled voices became one for the entrance hymn, "When in Our Music God is Glorified" by Fred Pratt Green, which includes the verse:

"How often making music, we have found ... a new dimension in the world of sound ... as worship moved to a more profound ... Alleluia!"





A song in her heart

St. Cecilia, a third-century Roman virgin and martyr, is the patron saint of music and musicians.

Her feastday is usually celebrated on Nov. 22, but this year, that day was the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. So, the diocese held its observance the previous weekend.

Bishop O'Donnell spoke in his homily of how St. Cecilia had consecrated herself to Jesus but was nonetheless compelled by her wealthy and influential family to marry.

She was not happy at her wedding, and the joyful music sounded like a racket to her.

"But she sang in her heart," Bishop O'Donnell noted. "And what she sang — 'Praise to God' — filled her with a sense of continence. That day, she knew peace."

In the years that followed, Cecilia gave all who she was to God.

She convinced her husband to go and visit the Pope. He did so and was converted and subsequently martyred during the Roman persecution of Christians.

Cecilia continued serving God and his people, distributing wealth, burying the dead, sharing the Gospel and leading people to Christ.

Her own witness and holy death has been noted through the ages.

"She stands as an icon, a woman who holds up the sacredness of music — the potential and power of the liturgical expression to engage the human person, to ennoble the disciple and to invigorate action on behalf of the Gospel," said Bishop O'Donnell.

She remained serene and trusted fully that God would not abandon her, even at the time of her death.

"Let us pray in this Holy Eucharist that we, too, will have the courage, the strength, to take the Lord at his word, to trust that even in challenging times, he WILL be with us," said Bishop O'Donnell.

Joining the bishop at the alter were Father Francis Doyle, pastor of St. Peter Parish in Marshall and St. Joseph Parish in Slater, and Father Kelechi Uzuegbu, pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish in Taos.

Singers and accompanists from several parishes led the music.

The setting for the parts of the Mass was the bilingual *"Misa del Pueblo Inmigrante,"* by Catholic composer Bob Hurd. It is one of the four standard settings identified in the 2025 music decree for use at diocesan events.

"It was chosen because it reflects what Pope Leo was addressing when he recent-

See ST. CECILIA, page 14

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Communal Reconciliation services for Advent 2026

Advent (which begins Nov. 29) is a good time for an examination of conscience and to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in preparation for the celebration of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. Here is a partial list of Advent communal Reconciliation Services in the Jefferson City diocese. Most services will include a short prayer service followed by individual Confessions. Extra priests from neighboring parishes are typically present to help. Additional services will be added to updated online versions of this article as they are publicized.

Boonville — Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 6:30 pm, Ss. Peter & Paul Church

Columbia —
- Thursday, Dec. 3 at 7 pm, Our Lady of Lourdes Church
- Tuesday, Dec. 15 at 6:30 pm, St. John Henry Newman Church

Fayette — Thursday, Dec. 10 at 6:30 pm, St. Joseph Church

Fulton — Thursday, Dec. 10 at 6 pm, St. Peter Church

Glasgow — Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 6:30 pm, St. Mary Church

Holts Summit — Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 6 pm, St. Andrew Church

Jefferson City — (combined parishes) Thursday, Dec. 10 from 4-6 pm, Cathedral of St. Joseph

Marshall — Thursday, Dec. 3 at 6:30 pm, St. Peter Church

Meta — Thursday, Dec. 17 at 7 pm, St. Cecilia Church

Mokane — Thursday, Dec. 3 at 6 pm, St. Jude Thaddeus Church

Montgomery City — Thursday, Dec. 17 at 6 pm, Immaculate Conception Church

Osage Bend — Monday, Dec. 7 from 5-6 pm, St. Margaret of Antioch Church

Pilot Grove — Monday, Dec. 14 at 6:30 pm, St. Joseph Church

St. Martins — Thursday, Dec. 3 at 6 pm, St. Martin Church

Salisbury — Tuesday, Dec. 15 at 6:30 pm, St. Joseph Church

Taos — Wednesday, Dec. 2 at 6 pm, St. Francis Xavier Church

Wardsville — Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 6 pm, St. Stanislaus Church

Wien — Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 6:30 pm, St. Mary of the Angels Church

Rite of Admission for Gerry and Susan Thompson of Kirksville into the Secular Franciscan Order

By Deacon Dave Ream, O.F.S.

On Sunday, Sept. 20, 2026, the brothers and sisters of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Secular Franciscan Fraternity joyfully celebrated the Rite of Admission to the Secular Franciscan Order (O.F.S.) with Gerry and Susan Thompson O.F.S. of Kirksville.

The couple are members of Mary Immaculate Parish in Kirksville and have been regularly attending the Gatherings of St. Clare Cell of the fraternity for almost two years.

They were officially welcomed as Inquirers on March 14 of this year.

A Holy Hour with fraternity member Deacon Dwayne Goodwin O.F.S. presiding preceded the Rite of Admission. It was a special time of prayer marked by Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the praying of the Franciscan Crown Rosary, and Benediction.

Mr. and Mrs. Thompson were received into the Order by Jim Smith O.F.S., the Minister of the Fraternity.

In the absence of a local Spiritual Assistant, Deacon Dave Ream, O.F.S. presided at the ceremony, confirming their intention in the name of the Church and the Franciscan family.

All the active members of the Fraternity participated in the celebration, which took place in the Friars' Chapel of St. Francis Solanus Church in Quincy, Illinois.









CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Deacon Dave Ream, O.F.S. presides at the Rite of Admission for Gerry and Susan Thompson of Kirksville into the Secular Franciscan Order on Sept. 20 in Quincy, Illinois. Jim Smith O.F.S., the Minister of the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Secular Franciscan Fraternity, receives the Thompsons into the Order. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson are received into the Order. The Tau Crosses the Thompsons received, which are the external sign of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States.

It was the first time the 2024 revised Ritual of the O.F.S. was used for the Rite of Admission, with the readings being proclaimed by various members of the Council.

During the ceremony, Mr. and Mrs. Thompson received copies of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order and were invested with the Tau Cross, the external sign of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States.

The Tau Crosses they received were a gift from fraternity Vice Minister Lynn Carter, O.F.S. who touched them to the exposed remains of our Seraphic Father St. Francis during her pilgrimage to Assisi this past February.

The new Candidates will continue attending the Fraternity (or Cell) monthly Gatherings along with initial formation sessions for at least 18 months, after which time they will become eligible to make their public Profession-Commitment, through which their incorporation into the Secular Franciscan Order will be made permanent.

Throughout all phases of initial formation, vocational discernment is a key element. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson and the Fraternity will continue to prayerfully discern if God is calling them to live as Secular Franciscans for the rest of their lives.

Formation is an ongoing process for all Secular Franciscans through involvement with monthly Fraternity (or Cell) Gatherings, the daily living of the O.F.S. Rule and finding ways to enrich their Catholic faith in the Secular Franciscan tradition.

The Secular Franciscan Order is the secular branch of the Franciscan Family comprised of lay women and men and diocesan clerics. Its members live by a Rule of life, the latest being The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order promulgated by Pope St. Paul VI on June 24, 1978.

Deacon Ream assists the pastor of Mary Immaculate Parish in Kirksville and the Mission of St. Rose of Lima in Novinger.

Helias Catholic H.S.'s new performing arts center to be named in honor of Ron Vossen's family

By Jay Nies

Ron Vossen used to lead freshman football practice where Helias Catholic High School's nearly completed new Performing Arts Center now stands.

He found out Nov. 11 that the facility, which includes a classroom space, 1,000-seat auditorium, a spacious lobby and a fully equipped stage, will be named in honor of his family.

"It totally took me off my guard, really big!" said Mr. Vossen, a Helias Catholic graduate, 48-year faculty member and current president of the school.

"It was a shock, really," he said. "But I'm very honored. I can just imagine my Mom and Dad looking down, very proud."

The Helias Catholic Vossen Center for the Performing Arts is part of the final phase of the school's master plan for campus development.

Other projects nearing completion include a regulation baseball/softball complex, additional parking, and an outdoor prayer garden.

An over 21,000-square-foot annex to the Rackers Fieldhouse, including updates to its athletic and strength and conditioning facilities, was completed last fall.

"These are things we could only dream of when I was a student here," said Mr. Vossen, a member of the Class of 1974.

Bishop Ralph B. O'Donnell is scheduled to bless and dedicate the new facilities on Sunday, Jan. 31, the beginning of Catholic Schools Week.

Contributors to the school's Spirit of Excellence Campaign, along with a 2014 capital campaign and a large gift from the Foundation for the Benefit of Helias Catholic High School, are paying for the new facilities.

An imposing statue of Pope St. John Paul II was recently installed near the school's main entrance, while one of St. Michael the Archangel now adorns the entrance to the baseball/softball complex, and another of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a focal point of the prayer garden.

All three were designed and carved in Italy and shipped to the school.

A stone memorial containing a bronze image of the Blessed Mother holding her Son after he was taken down from the cross has been moved to a prominent place near the entrance of the Helias Athletic Complex.

Mr. Vossen has had a bird's-eye view of the construction from his office since ground was broken in June of 2024.

"It's been a long time coming," he said. "We'll get in there right after the first of the year, and everything will be great."



Helias Catholic High School President Ron Vossen, left, becomes emotional on Nov. 11 after learning the school's new auditorium will be named in honor of his family. A number of people — including Bishop Ralph B. O'Donnell, right, and Helias Principal Spencer Allen, background left — were on hand for the surprise announcement. — Photo by Julie Smith, courtesy of the *Jefferson City News Tribune*

"Vision and grit"

On Nov. 11, Mr. Vossen led members of the advisory committee for the project, the Foundation board and the Spirit of Excellence committee on a tour of the facility.

At the end of the tour, he was met by Principal Spencer Allen Ed.D., Bishop O'Donnell and members of the Vossen family, who pulled back the cover on architectural renderings featuring a mock-up sign reading, "The Helias Catholic Vossen Center for the Performing Arts."

The name will be inscribed inside and outside the building.

Mary Winter, vice chair of the Helias Board of Directors, said organizers worked carefully to keep the plan under wraps.

"Ron is so humble," Mrs. Winter noted. "He's been very focused on this project and not seeking any attention for himself. It's all about the project for him."

Peter Lyskowski, a 1995 Helias Catholic graduate who serves as chair of the Spirit of Excellence committee, said the decision to honor Mr. Vossen was immediate once plans for the facility began taking shape.

"Performing arts and Ron were synonymous," said Mr. Lyskowski, who had Mr. Vossen as a teacher.

"It was an easy sell for everyone we talked to in the chain of approval to celebrate the Vossen family," said Mr. Lyskowski, adding that Mr. Vossen is a leader with "a unique combo of vision and grit."

Final piece

Mr. Vossen is convinced the new center will be a source of pride and camaraderie, not just for the Helias Catholic community, but for all of Jefferson City.

"I'm honored to have been a part of it from the very beginning after getting the assignment from (Archbishop Shawn McKnight) and his help with it," he said.

Archbishop McKnight, who led the diocese from 2018-2025, appointed Mr. Vossen president of Helias Catholic in 2023.

Bishop O'Donnell has been a gracious supporter of the project since arriving here last fall.

"I couldn't have asked for better leadership from there, as well as from Dr. Vader," said Mr. Vossen.

Erin Vader Ed.D. is the former diocesan superintendent of Catholic schools.

This final piece of the master plan will bring all the school's facilities onto its centrally located campus.

Previous improvements under the plan included a building addition containing a chapel, science center and administrative office, renovations to the school's Crucifix Entrance, and the construction of the impressive Crusader Athletic Complex.

In the wings

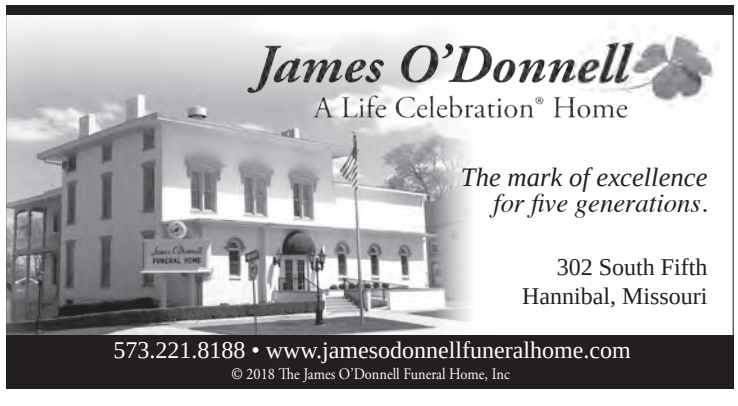
Mr. Vossen joined the Helias Catholic faculty as a teacher and coach in 1979.

After his father, the late John "Bud" Vossen, retired, he came on board to help with maintenance at Helias Catholic.

"He could fix almost anything," Ron Vossen recalled. "And anything he couldn't, he could find someone who could."

Ron Vossen started helping with the school's legendary an-

See VOSSEN, page 23



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Jefferson City parish feeds the hungry in observance of 10th World Day of the Poor

By Jay Nies

Twentieth-century author Margaret Mead famously declared: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Abbie Bredeman MSN RN said that's the mentality behind St. Peter Parish's World Day of the Poor observance in Jefferson City.

"Nobody can do everything, but everybody can do something," said Mrs. Bredeman, St. Peter's parish nurse.

She stood in the midst of a large room with tables filled with boxes of ready-to-prepare meals.

Hundreds of parishioners — including St. Peter School students and their families, Scouts, members of the Ladies Sodality and the Holy Name Society, staff and clients of El Puente-Hispanic Ministry, and other faithful Catholics — had donated cans and boxes of specific nonperishable food items.

Volunteers sealed the cans and boxes into plastic bags with a recipe for preparing a tasty, nutritious hot meal.

Four separate meal kits — ham and bean soup and cornbread; taco rice skillet; chicken, gravy and potatoes with green beans; and sweet potato and black bean chili — were placed into 200 boxes to be distributed at four locations in the Capital City on Nov. 15.

It was the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time, which the Church has been observing for the past decade as World Day of the Poor.

Parishioners also prepared 200 hot meals consisting of a pulled pork sandwich, side dishes and a cookie, to distribute to people who are homebound or have no permanent residence.

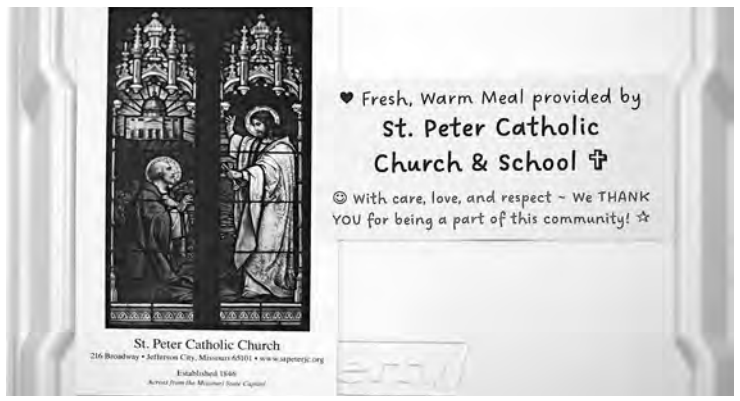
Knights of Columbus Fr. Helias Council 1054 in Jefferson City paid for the pork.

Volunteers transported the meal kits to four locations and distributed them that afternoon, while another group prepared the hot meals and delivered them to individuals along the route of the Missouri Cares Mobile Soup Kitchen.

They also presented transportation passes, new socks, first-aid kits and hygiene products to people along the route who needed them.







TOP LEFT: Members of St. Peter Parish in Jefferson City pack up meal kits to be distributed at four locations on the World Day of the Poor. TOP RIGHT: Parishioners prepare hot meals for distribution to people who are homebound who or have no home. RIGHT: A prayer card and a greeting adorned each hot meal.

— Photos by Jay Nies

"We're serving God by serving those who are having difficulty making ends meet this time of year," one of the volunteers stated.

Moments of encounter

This was St. Peter Parish's 10th World Day of the Poor observance, including a scaled-back offering during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Pope Francis (+2013-2025) called for World Day of the Poor to be observed each year on the Sunday before the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Christ the King.

He visualized Christian communities seizing the occasion to "make every effort to create moments of encounter and friendship, solidarity and concrete assistance."

Rallied by the late Father Charles Pardee, who was pastor at that time, St. Peter parishioners responded to the pope's request by hosting a hot meal for people in need throughout the Capital City.

The approach has evolved over the years in response to where the needs are.

The late Diane Struemph helped get the tradition started as a volunteer with Building Community Bridges.

Her husband, Mark, and her sister, Kathy Hillen, helped distribute meal kits at that location in her honor.

"She liked to help others as much as she could," said Ms. Hillen. "I know Diane is here with us. She's smiling. She's happy."

St. Peter parishioners Kathy and Dale Gerstner helped put the meal kits together the previous Friday.

"We need to take care of our neighbors and treat them how we'd want to be treated," said Mrs. Gerstner.

She pointed out that feeding the hungry is one of the Corporal Works of Mercy.

"Another thing is, as a group effort, it's actually fun!" said fellow parishioner Lisa Rackers. "And to do know you're doing something good for people in the community who really need it."

She acknowledged that the day's activities are only "a small part of a big picture of need."

"But it is very satisfying to work together and know we're accomplishing something for somebody else," she said.

Never forget

Father Thomas Alber, associate pastor of St. Peter Parish, pointed out that in Biblical days, people in need were known as *"Anawim,"* "the Forgotten Ones."

"But God always remembers them, and when they pray, their cries are heard," the priest noted. "And it's good for us as Church to be mindful of the poor, both within and outside of our congregation. It's a good thing whenever we do that because in serving them, we serve our Lord."

Helping people on a day like the World Day of the Poor helps to shape one's thoughts and actions on the other days of the year, he said.

Mrs. Gerstner noted that churches and organizations all over the city are trying to help people in need.

"We're not trying to compete," she said. "We're joining in the effort."

She considered it a privilege to be able to help people as a member of a church family.

"Thank you, Lord, for blessing me with the opportunity," she said.

Sign of hope

Mrs. Bredeman is confident that the people of St. Peter Parish and the surrounding parishes would be willing to carry out a similar effort more frequently throughout the year.

"I believe there's plenty of volunteer and financial assistance here to support that," she said.

She said she sees all around her a tremendous desire to give and to help.

"A lot of times, all people really need are the outlets or the organized efforts in which to give," she said.

Mrs. Bredeman pointed out that St. Peter Church is located near the heart of downtown, close to people who are in need.

"We can't fix all the problems with homelessness or the lack of access to low-income housing, but we can do something to help," she noted. "So, we do this because every person is important to the city, and we want them to know that they're valued and that if there's something we can help with, we'll do what we can."

She acknowledged that day-to-day life can be difficult for people who have a strong support network, let alone for those who are dealing with a sudden job loss, a chronic illness, a toxic relationship or absent parents.

"So, those of us who are in a position to help in some way, we need to do that," she said. "Ideally all of us have the same goal of getting to heaven. So down here, where life can be really hard, we should do our best to help each other get there."

She encouraged fellow Catholics in her own parish and beyond to get involved with their parish's outreach to people in need.

Doing so has a domino effect: people who have been helped are often able and eager to help others as a result.

"People also take it as a sign of hope and God's love," said Mrs. Rackers.

Columbia Seasons of Hope facilitators offer tips for dealing with grief at this emotional time of year

By Jay Nies

It was in the middle of the Month of Remembrance, a few weeks before Thanksgiving Day and the beginning of preparations for one of the most joyful seasons of the year.

A tight group of people gathered in Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Columbia to listen to each other, encourage one another and share advice for weathering grief during Advent and Christmastime.

"There are reminders every day of your life of what you used to have and what you don't have now," said Susan Reddin, an Our Lady of Lourdes parishioner and a facilitator for the parish's Seasons of Hope grief support group.

"There are hopefully also some marvelous memories," said Ms. Reddin. "And of course, God is always walking beside us."

She emphasized that everyone grieves differently, and there are no rules except "don't give up!"

"Holidays are emotional times," she said. "Give yourself the grace for whatever comes up."

Ms. Reddin recommended being honest and up-front about "what you want and what you don't want."

"It's okay to enjoy yourself," she said, "and it's okay to say, 'I'm done right now.'"

And yes, it's okay to grieve openly.

She mentioned the often-cited stages of grieving and noted that everyone experiences them differently.

"People will dive in and out, swim through and maybe even drown for a while in them," she said. "You think you're going from Point A to Point B, and you may go through all of it in reverse order in one day and start over the next."

"There with you"

Ms. Reddin emphasized the importance of recognizing God's grace in every emotion.

"Some of these may feel very raw," she noted, "but there are also wonderful, tender, loving moments that don't die because someone you love has died."

Those memories are part of the gift people leave behind for the people they love.

"And know that God is there with you, that he created you and your loved one, and that he grieves our sins and grieves our loss and loves us," said Ms. Reddin.

She offered some practical advice for maintaining health and balance through the holidays and beyond.

"It's important that you eat," she said. "It can be hard to sleep, but you need to do it. Go to bed at the same time, and get up at the same time."

Standing up, stretching and moving is also important.

So is regular social contact.

"Share your feelings with someone supportive," Ms. Reddin suggested, adding that doing so in-person is better than using technology.

"There's a big difference when you can look someone in the eye and read them," she said.

Spiritual care — "regular prayer, regular Mass attendance, regular Sacraments, talking to your priest" — remains essential, she continued.

"We who are still living are on a journey," Ms. Reddin noted. "And your loved one gave you part of the ability you have to move forward."

"No rules"

Holidays are laden with traditions, expectations and some strong and often unexpected emotions.

"You can stick with a tradition, or you can do something completely different," Ms. Reddin emphasized.

"You need to do what your heart tells you to do and what feels right to honor your loved one and to honor your loss," she said.

"Surround yourself with those who love you," she advised, "including God, family and friends."

It's okay to remove yourself from the bustle if it gets to be too much.

"And beware of overdoing things such as alcohol, spending, food or any other way we try to make ourselves feel better that can end up being dangerous for us," said Ms. Reddin.



This stained-glass image of Jesus and Mary with St. Joseph at the time of his death adorns a window in St. Joseph Church in Salisbury. "Jesus and Mary know what grief is, and they walk with us. We are not alone," said Susan Reddin, an Our Lady of Lourdes parishioner in Columbia and a facilitator for the parish's Seasons of Hope grief support group. — Photo by Jay Nies

Unexpected joy can be found in sharing memories and hearing stories that honor a loved one's memory.

"There are memories we laugh about, that are fun to think about," she said.

Fellow Our Lady of Lourdes parishioner and Seasons of Hope facilitator Marianne Meyer recommended staying in regular contact with brothers and sisters and enjoy their company.

"Maintain your relationships," she urged. "Share stories with your siblings. Share good memories and help each other laugh."

Doing so "hits a nerve sometimes, but that's all part of it," she said.

Ms. Reddin suggested also looking for opportunities to volunteer or help other people.

She cautioned against grieving without awareness of God's presence.

"I've tried it," she stated. "It doesn't work."

"A very healing thing"

One participant recommended a book titled, *Grieving the Loss of Somone You Love*, by Raymond R. Mitch and Lynn Brookside.

Another participant shared an exercise for honoring a loved one's memory while acknowledging the loss.

"It was a very healing thing for me to do," she said.

Adapted from a book titled *Winter of the Heart: Finding Your Way Through the Mystery of Grief* by Paula D'Arcy, it encourages someone who's grieving to write a letter of gratitude to the person who has died.

"Express your honest feelings," the book suggests. "Write about the sadness you feel and the ways in which you are trying to move on.

"Tell your loved one what you are learning about yourself and how you are meeting your fears," the book continues. "Include what you miss most about your loved one and the ways you are keeping their memory alive.

"... Express your deepest gratitude that this person was in your life."

"Out of nowhere"

Some people are grieving the death of a loved one. Others are going through a divorce, the loss of a job or having children or close friends move away.

Ms. Reddin noted that any of these things can feel like a death.

She recommended turning to Jesus's Mother, who is Our Lady of Sorrows, for powerful intercession.

"Jesus and Mary lost Joseph," Ms. Reddin noted. "They know what grief is, and they walk with us. We are not alone."

For people who want to help others who are grieving, Ms. Reddin recommended calling or visiting, especially on days that hold little or no further significance.

"Out of nowhere, like on some random Tuesday, just be like, 'I was thinking about you, so here I am,'" she suggested.

The gathering concluded with a prayer: "Our Father, in this season of sorrow, we turn to you, weakened with sadness. We've shed tears beyond number. May those you send to help us bring your love and consolation.

"We lift up our broken hearts to you. Help us with your tender mercy and make this a season of hope."

Our Lady of Lourdes is one of several parishes in the diocese that have a Seasons of Hope grief support group.

The group in Columbia has six weeks of weekly sessions, four times per year, beginning in March.

Contact Ms. Reddin at *Susan.Reddin19@gmail.com* for information about the Columbia Seasons of Hope group.



Papal Audience

November 25, 2026

Dear brothers and sisters,

In our continuing catechesis on the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes,* today we focus on Chapter 5, which is dedicated to the promotion of peace. This project, filled with hope, embraces all of humanity and creation. In the name of the Lord, we are called to work for peace throughout the world. Indeed, true peace comes from the cross of Christ, and is offered to everyone as the fruit of our redemption, which is a gift of grace to which we must respond. The Council Fathers combine their firm condemnation of war with a solemn appeal to convert minds and hearts to the King of Peace, encouraging us to break the ideological chains and economic interests that fuel conflicts. Moreover, the right to legitimate self-defense is always linked to the promotion of international institutions that promote peace between peoples and integral human development.

I extend a warm welcome to all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's audience, especially those from England, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Korea and the United States of America. As we prepare to embark upon our Advent journey, may the light of Christ illumine our paths and dispel all darkness from our hearts. Upon each of you and your families, I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you all!

Edina pastor praises Christian unity, collaboration during ecumenical Thanksgiving prayer service

Monroe City pastor offers prayers of gratitude

By Jay Nies

The 6 o'clock "Angelus" bells rang out over all of Edina as the Knox County Ministerial Alliance's annual Thanksgiving Service got under way in St. Joseph Church in Edina.

It was the Sunday before Thanksgiving Day.

"It is good that we have come together as the Body of Christ in Knox County to give thanks with a grateful heart," said Deacon Kenneth Berry, who assists the pastor of St. Joseph Parish.

Joining them under the ornate, acoustically resilient arches were representatives of 19 congregations throughout the county.

"We rejoice that you have come to St. Joseph Church to rejoice and to celebrate for the blessings that God has given us this past year," Deacon Berry told the assembly.

Acknowledging that some who were present are having hard times, the deacon offered a passage from St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians:

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you

See THANKSGIVING, page 18





TOP: Father Boniface Kasiita Nzabonimpa, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Edina, joins fellow Christian clergy of Knox County in the sanctuary of St. Joseph Church Nov. 22 during the Ministerial Alliance's Thanksgiving Prayer Service. BOTTOM: Members of the Clark family of St. Joseph Parish lead and accompany the singing.

QUESTION CORNER

Can persons with mild intellectual disabilities be married in the Catholic Church?

By Jenna Marie Cooper
OSV News



Q: I have a question about the rules and teachings around Catholic marriage for persons with some mild intellectual disability and English language abilities: Can they be married in the Catholic Church? I'm sure you could answer by saying it depends on the individual case, but are there any general rules and advice? (Limerick, Ireland)

A: I hope it's not too anticlimactic to begin by agreeing with you! Yes, at the end of the day, a person's capacity for marriage really can only be determined on a case-by-case basis.

But one important general principle is that the Church does see the vast majority of adults as being capable of marriage. Or, in other words, the capacity for marriage is a fundamental part of being human, and does not require any exceptional degree of ability or talent. So, the Church sets a fairly low bar in terms of the "skills" needed to marry validly.

Although as a caveat, it's good to keep in mind that the standard for a simply valid marriage is different from that of a prudent, happy or spiritually fruitful marriage. With respect to matrimony, for validity the Church is concerned with whether an individual is capable of making a choice at all in the first place — and, that being established, the Church respects our freedom enough to allow us to make potentially ill-advised choices.

Building upon this principle, the Church acknowledges that people have a fundamental right to marry. Consequently, while a priest or deacon might try to pastorally dissuade a couple from marrying if it seems they are badly matched or otherwise making a rash decision, he can really only refuse to witness a marriage if he knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that there is an invalidating impediment present.

For example, a priest can and should refuse to celebrate a wedding if one of the parties already has a prior marital bond or if the couple are close blood relatives. He can do this because these things are very clear-cut and simple to verify.

However, when we're considering impediments that often manifest in more ambiguous ways, like a mental or psychological inability to consent, in all but the most extreme cases such an impediment would not be so obvious and indisputable.

That is, a priest could legitimately cancel the wedding if the bride or groom was visibly under the influence of a mind-altering drug. But determining whether or not a condition such as, for example, an anxiety disorder would prevent a given individual from being able to rationally evaluate the prospect of marriage and apply it to themselves with sufficient inner freedom is much more nuanced and requires a judgement call.

Since the Church's law always errs on the side of allowing the faithful their full rights, a person who is only questionably impaired is given the benefit of the doubt when they seek to marry.

Looking at some of the specifics you mentioned, speaking English or even the common language of the region is certainly not a requirement for a valid marriage. The Church routinely seeks to make the sacraments accessible to the faithful even in the face of language barriers.

On the other hand, some intellectual disabilities could potentially be of a nature or severity so as to prevent an individual from marrying validly. For instance, if a person had a disability which left them with the intellectual capacity of a young child,

See QUESTION, page 19

Embracing simple traditions during Advent

By Colleen Pressprich
OSV News



When I was a young mom, I badly wanted my children to grow up in a devout home. I wanted them to experience the richness and beauty of the Church, and so I threw myself into liturgical living.

I read voraciously (this was back in the days of the OG mom bloggers). I baked the themed treats, did the craft projects, created the Montessori materials, decorated our home. And yes, it was beautiful, but it wasn't sustainable.

I'm grateful for that season of trying everything. Experimenting with all the different ways to incorporate more of the liturgical life of the Church at home helped me to figure out what would work for my family, and what wouldn't.

But the most valuable lesson I learned while attempting to do it all was this: Traditions aren't meaningful because they're elaborate; they become meaningful when they stick around.

In my home, at least, the practices that became habit, the traditions that we find ourselves repeating year after year are the ones that are simple enough to slide into daily life year after year after year.

We are heading into the holiday season, arguably the busiest time of year for families of all stages. Perfectly styled photos of meals, crafts and kids in matching outfits are already flooding social media. Calendar invites are being sent for school parties, holiday concerts and cookie swaps. While we can't always control how busy a season is going to be, we can choose ways to infuse the season with meaning in a way that doesn't exhaust us.

Let simple traditions be the anchor that grounds your family this season, so that you aren't tossed about in the waves of expectations and to-do lists. Now don't misunderstand me: When I say simple, I do not mean lacking depth. Our traditions can be steeped in meaning and full of context while remaining easy to complete.

Simple traditions work for me, and they might work for you too, because they let me be present.

During Advent, our family has two traditions: the Advent wreath and the Jesse tree. The first we light during dinner; the second happens right before bedtime. I get out the Advent wreath and the box with our copy of "The Jesse Tree for Families" and ornaments at the beginning of Advent, but neither requires any extra work after that. I'm not scrambling to find what we need; we just sit down and pray. I'm not overwhelmed by prep work or stressed about logistics, which helps me to be fully present to my kids during the tra-

See PRESSPRICH, page 19

Blaming Autumn:

Unjust cranks in this excellent season of wonder

By Elizabeth Scalia
OSV News



Lately, instead of greeting the day with "thank you, Lord, that I get to have another one!" I rise with a cranky growl, mentally grousing at God and giving the saints a bit of Irish lip, too.

Autumn, my favorite season, is partly to blame. I tell myself that I'm cranky because what delights me in October — sharp air, warm sweaters and breathtaking foliage — will disappear so swiftly into dreary November.

But the truth is I also like November, which author Rumer Godden called a month of "howling winds and holy souls." I look forward to the apocalyptic Mass readings that close the liturgical year with such a bang. It warms me that we begin the month with an obligation to prayerfully remember our spiritual ancestors while the world just spins on in its worldly way.

I love exiting that Mass to a world of falling leaves; they crunch under our feet and ride delightfully on the breezes, bringing to mind both Winnie the Pooh, who celebrated a "rather blustery day," and St. Hildegard of Bingen, who described herself as "a feather on the breath of God."

Those are two terrific analogies for what we should aspire to, as Christians: to see (like the Pooh-bear) something wonderful in the brown time, when trees are going bare, their exposed branches resembling arms raised in supplication against the fading light; to blow (like the saint) swiftly to wherever God wishes us to be, and to settle there — lightly — trusting (as St. Teresa of Avila wrote) "that you are exactly where you are meant to be."

Trust is hard, sometimes. We look at the state of the world, or at difficult circumstances in our lives, or the lives of those we love, and it feels easy to give in to discontent — to kvetch at God (which is a kind of prayer) and to cast a wary eye at the saints with a flippant, "and what have you done for me, lately?"

We feel sorry for our stressed-out selves, ignored, impotent and abandoned, and linger at these lines from Psalm 102: "I have become like a lonely pelican in the wilderness, like an owl in desolate places. I lie awake and I moan like some lonely bird on a roof."

Hildegard lived and died long before Teresa and yet both of those monastic Doctors of the Church breathed the same spiritual sentiment against stress and irritability; rather than banging on about circumstances we rarely can do much to change (although it cannot be said too often that prayer is real action), we do best when we settle in — trusting that our lives are moving in God's direction, in God's time — and enjoying the blustery or serene seasons as they come, because they are all meant for us, for everyone, for all creation.

Psalm 102 ends brilliantly: "Long ago you founded the earth and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish but you will remain. They will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like clothes that are changed. But you neither change, nor have an end."

That's an instructive reminder of the

See SCALIA, page 19

REFLECTION

Inescapable gratitude

By Mark Saucier

How was your Thanksgiving?

I hope your meal was long and lingering, filled with laughter and memories.

I hope the food prep was fun, the clean-up quick and the kids congenial.

I hope you took a moment to give thanks.

You probably did. Studies show that 91% of Americans celebrate Thanksgiving.

Of those, 69% mention things for which they are grateful. 65% offer some prayer of gratitude. More than half do both.

Not bad for a secular feast in a country where only 47% of adults consider themselves religious.

But that shouldn't be surprising. There is so much to be grateful for. The sheer weight of grace in the world might even bend an atheist's knee.

You can imagine the litanies of thanksgiving shared around those festive tables.

For newfound loves and old ones that have survived the decades.
For golden sunsets that fill us with awe.
For strong friends that carry us through the raging waters.
For a child's hand holding tight in trust.
For the smile of a stranger in an unfamiliar place.
For all these we give thanks.
For music that accompanies our every mood.
For those who cherish us even when we are far from lovable.
For the sweetness of a newborn and the scent of coming rain.
For children who pause their busy lives to check on us.
For those who bring us into this world and those who see us out.
For all these we give thanks.
For all the reunions, renewals and reconciliations on which we depend.
For the poetry of a burbling stream.
For the embrace after anger, fear or loss.
For the stars, mountains and seas serving as the sentinels of history.
For parents, siblings, cousins, uncles, aunts and all we call family.
For all these we give thanks.
For the hope and imagination that welcome each day.
For that cart full of groceries that will sustain us.
For the weightless strides of a running deer and the wobble of a newborn foal.
For all those who protect and all those who heal.
For yesterday and tomorrow.
For all these we give thanks.

We've confessed our gratitude, and Thanksgiving has passed. But we might keep in mind the urging of Irish author Niall Williams:

"... Stop for one heartbeat and, no matter what the state of your head or heart, say 'This is happiness,' because of the simple truth that you were alive to say it."

Pain and grief notwithstanding, it's all gift.

Encounter AT CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Generosity that creates hope

By Tim Rickabaugh,
Interim Executive Director



Recently, we celebrated the Solemnity of Christ the King, pondering not only all that the King has done for us as our Shepherd and Savior, but also how we are called to respond, enter his kingdom, and help others enter it.

Jesus described his kingdom as one of good Samaritans, where we follow him in giving of ourselves to those in need: those who, like he was on the Cross, are hungry, thirsty, naked, estranged, ill or incarcerated.

His kingdom is one in which people become poor in spirit in order to inherit the kingdom, because we must empty ourselves of worldliness to be filled with true wealth.

In the Gospel of Luke (21:1-4), we meet a widow who, upon placing two small coins in the temple treasury, demonstrated what it means to give everything to God.

Jesus observed those contributing to the treasury, continuing to instruct his apostles on how to put his teachings into action.

People placed their coins into the temple treasury, a trumpet-shaped receptacle.

The coins would resonate as they rolled down into the collection box.

Many were contributing large sums, but then a poor widow came and put in two small coins that together were worth less than a penny and likely barely made a sound.

Jesus praised the poor widow rather than the rest, saying that she had contributed more than all of them: "For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Because of her poverty, this widow could have been excused for giving nothing.

She could have dropped only one coin in the treasury and kept the other for herself, but she didn't.

She gave it all. Jesus praised her generosity, and her example still speaks to us today.

What moved this widow to give so generously, despite having so little?

There is only one reason: her deep faith.

She believed not simply that God exists or that he had worked miracles in the past to help the Israelites.

She believed so deeply in him and in the importance of what was happening in God's house that she was willing to dedicate her life and all she had to his work of salvation.

The point is not simply how much we contribute, but how much we sacrifice; not how much we give, but how much we have left over.

This woman sacrificed her entire livelihood, entrusting her life to God.

Many of us give something to God; we may even give a lot.

Yet we often hold on to more than we need as an insurance policy, placing greater faith in the security that money provides than in God's providence.

That is why the widow's example is so important.

She entrusted her entire life to God.

In every act of love and service, we reflect God's grace.

For Catholics, generosity isn't merely a virtue; it is a calling.

The Church teaches that all we possess is ultimately a gift from God, entrusted to us not for personal gain alone, but to build a more just, compassionate world.

This vision is at the heart of Catholic Social Teaching and shapes our call to stewardship.

Stewardship is one of the cornerstones of Catholic life.



The Sacred Heart of Jesus, depicted in a stained-glass window in the chapel at the Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri office in Jefferson City, reminds us to trust in God's love and generosity.

It invites each of us to recognize that our time, talent and treasure are not truly ours, but gifts to be shared in service to others.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us that "the goods of creation are destined for the whole human race" (CCC 2402, 2403).

Catholic Social Teaching is clear: we are called to care for the poor, to uphold the dignity of every person and to work toward the common good.

These teachings compel us to see our financial decisions as moral choices.

How we use our resources reflects our priorities and our faith.

As we enter Advent, the widow's example invites us to reflect on how we prepare our hearts for Christ's coming and share the gifts entrusted to us.

At Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri, we see how generosity helps neighbors through our client-choice Food Pantry, Family Immigration Services, Predatory Loan Relief Program and other programs throughout our diocese.

Our Advent Appeal, Mercy Made Visible, is one opportunity to put our faith into action.

Like the widow's offering, each gift carries meaning beyond its monetary value.

It expresses faith, compassion and a willingness to share what God has entrusted to us.

As we prepare to welcome Christ this Christmas, consider how we can give more fully of ourselves through prayer, service and generosity.

In doing so, we help build the kingdom of love and mercy that Christ calls us to share with one another.



The Well Clinic, newly renamed, targeting wider audience, offering more services

Formerly known as the Pregnancy Help Center of Central Missouri

By Jay Nies

Jesus asked the Woman at the Well for a drink, and her life changed completely for the better.

That encounter in John 4:4-42 is the inspiration for The Well Clinic ***(TheWellClinic.org)*** in Jefferson City, formerly known as the Pregnancy Help Center of Central Missouri.

"Jesus didn't go to the well because he was thirsty. We went there to help, heal and restore the woman," said Stephanie Rademan, The Well Clinic's chief executive officer.

The name change and rebranding, including two new websites, coincides with ongoing expansion of services for the clinic, which was founded to give pregnant women in crisis in Jefferson City and six surrounding counties what they need to say yes to life.

"It wasn't a quick decision," Ms. Rademan emphasized. "It was a research-based decision with lots of prayerful guidance and seeking the Lord for answers."

"We're staying true to our mission," she noted. "But we're also trying to reach more women and men who are facing crisis pregnancies, to be able to intervene and give them education and support and to advocate for life so that those babies actually make it to term and get to grow up with stable, loving parents."

Although established largely by the Knights of Columbus and other pro-life Catholic entities in the area, The Well Clinic is nondenominational and has volunteers and staff from many backgrounds and faith traditions.

Ms. Rademan became the clinic's CEO last November, after longtime CEO Leslie Kerns retired.

"She had been with us since nearly the beginning," said Ms. Rademan. "She did a phenomenal job of being a good steward of the clinic and a rock star in the pro-life movement."

Although Ms. Rademan brought years of executive leadership, business and community development, and marketing experience to the role and had been pro-life for many years, "I hadn't been active in the pro-life movement until I came here," she said.

While she was getting acquainted with how the clinic operates and the communities that support it, she learned about the Board of Directors' concerns that the clinic's name was turning some potential clients away.

"They found that a lot of women weren't calling us because they weren't looking for help being pregnant," said Ms. Rademan. "They were looking for answers."

She wrote "a new name" on the white board in her office.

"Every time we have a problem, I write it on my prayer board and simply give it to God," she said. "And I keep telling people, 'This is what we're seeking' — things on our prayer board."

They prayed for over a year, asked the staff and board members for suggestions and hosted focus groups with high school students.

One day after praying together, Ms. Rademan and the staff had an open discussion about names that the marketing team was proposing.

"'Wellness' kept coming up," said Ms. Rademan. "But we didn't want to be called a wellness clinic. That's sounds like a gym or a spa. But we do want people to be well."

Further brainstorming brought to light several meanings and understandings of "well" — good health, a place to draw water, and the site of Jesus's intentional encounter with a woman who needed his grace and mercy and would eventually lead an entire town to him.

"We all looked at each other, and it was like, 'The well ... and feel well ... and BE well,'" she said. "We wrote it down and sent it to the board."

Before doing so, she asked God for her words to be his, and for him to confirm the new name before she sent it to the board.

"I want this to be totally you, not me," she prayed.

Then she saw a Facebook post from a friend in Macon, talking about Jesus leading his friends through Samaria and going to Jacob's well not because he was thirsty, but because he wanted to help the woman there.

"That was the assurance I was looking for," Ms. Rademan stated. "I knew this was from God. So, we have the name with both the biblical connotation and the secular connotation of what we do."

Help and healing

What does The Well Clinic do?

"We save babies and we share Christ with men and women in crisis situations," said Ms. Rademan. "And we help people realize that a baby is not a choice but is chosen."

The Well Clinic is as much for the parents as for the baby.

"We're here to save that girl, too," she said. "We want women to thrive, and we want men who are scared to learn that being a dad is a great thing."

The clinic offers free, confidential, lab-quality pregnancy testing; free, confidential testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections; and free, limited ultrasound imaging of the baby in the womb, to determine his or her viability and length of gestation.

The Well Clinic also offers abortion-pill reversal services, personalized consultations, a multitude of online and in-person classes, counseling with licensed professional counselors, referrals for insurance, housing and other needs, and items for new mothers and their babies.

"We do classes for young moms and young dads, and we have over 2,000 classes they can take online if they are our clients," Ms. Rademan noted. "We even have an abortion-pill reversal program that gets them to the right caregiver if they're in the middle of the process."

A recently received grant helped pay to renovate the kitchen in the ground floor of the clinic.

The staff and volunteers hope to create a weekly class called "Food, Fellowship and Support" to help new mothers learn to prepare healthy meals for their families.

The clinic recently expanded its services for men, including parenting classes.

"We don't just help the women," said Ms. Rademan. "We've had a fatherhood program for prospective dads and current dads for over a year now.

"We have a core group of dads who work alongside dads and meet with them in the clinic and talk life with them and serve as sort of a life-support system as the man goes through the process of pregnancy," she said.

When a mother has an abortion, members of the staff help her and the father process the decision and find healing. The clinic's staff plans to start a support group at the beginning of the year for mothers and fathers who have been wounded by abortion.

"We want to focus on redemption, grace and support, so that women are able to forgive themselves," said Ms. Rademan.

"Here for you"

Surveys and medical data show that about 1 in 4 women in this country have had an abortion. Many were coerced. Many thought they had no other choice.

"We see women who have been sex-trafficked, who have been prostituted, who have been abused," said Ms. Rademan. "We don't judge them. We help them."

Many carry the burden of a past abortion for years, often alone, before seeking healing and reconciliation.

"Just this fall, we had four young girls call us who had taken the abortion pill at home," she stated. "They were alone. The overwhelming comment was, 'They didn't tell me this was a baby. What do I do with it now?'"

As traumatic as an abortion in a clinic can be, the site of that trauma is some building they can avoid. With chemical abortions, that trauma takes place at home, where they're supposed to feel safe.

"Whenever they go there, they remember," said Ms. Rademan. "They need to know to call us. We will be here to support them."

That's what clients are looking for: clear answers, safety and support.

"We want young women and men to know that we're safe space, regardless of what part of the journey you are on," said Ms. Rademan. "We are here for you if you have had an abortion, if you are thinking of having an abortion, if you want to carry the baby, if you're in an abusive situation, we're here for you."

There is no cost, no insurance information going back and forth.

There's no preaching or scolding. Only Christ-centered love.

"Everything we do starts with a Christ-centered objective," said Ms. Rademan. "Our nurses are trained for preserving, nurturing life even with the most abortion-determined person."

She spoke of a client who had been raised in a solidly pro-life, Catholic household with a strong support network and loving parents. She had even been to Washington, D.C., for the March for Life.

"She still chose abortion out of fear," said Ms. Rademan. "And she told no one."

Another client had an abortion in college, became suicidal and had to withdraw from her classes. She ended up disclosing that she had been sexually assaulted, which is how she got pregnant.

"And because of the PTSD from everything that happened to her, she battled mental health

See THE WELL CLINIC, page 15

DEACON

From page 1

Mr. Kliethermes hopes to be ordained a priest of the diocese in 2027.

"In ministry, I'm being called to give myself totally and rely on God to lead me," said Mr. Kliethermes. "He wants me to keep moving forward and seeing Christ right there in front of me, and not feel discouraged by my weakness."

Fraternal direction

A son of Jerry and Jill Kliethermes, the soon-to-be deacon grew up on his family's farm near "the Metropolis of Loose Creek."

He and his two brothers attended Immaculate Conception School in Jefferson City, then Helias Catholic High School.

His first inkling toward the Priesthood came near his First Holy Communion and with him acquiring an illustrated biography of St. Padre Pio, a heroically virtuous 20th-century priest and mystic.

"He was a saint friend at a young age for me," said Mr. Kliethermes. "With all the amazing things he did, I came to think of him as a superhero. But he was a real person."

Mr. Kliethermes's interest in the Priesthood surged and ebbed throughout grade school.

During high school, the chaplain at Helias Catholic was newly-ordained Father Joshua Duncan. He helped Mr. Kliethermes and several other young men form the Frassati Fraternity, named in honor of a courageous and devout Catholic layman, St. Pier Giorgio Frassati.



Shane Kliethermes and two faithful friends take in the view from the summit of Mount Sherman in Colorado.

"While growing in fellowship and strong Catholic fraternity with these brothers, and with us encouraging each other to grow in our faith and in our prayer, I became comfortable sharing the desires of my heart," Mr. Kliethermes recalled.

He took part in spiritual retreats and service trips.

His friends and Fr. Duncan helped him recognize some important things about himself.

"They saw my heart in ways I was struggling to see," Mr. Kliethermes recalled. "They saw how my heart cares. They recognized my desire to reach out and give of myself."

That, he noted, is the essence of Priesthood — "a total giving of self for the Church, for the Gospel, for the people of God."

Fr. Duncan encouraged him to pray and actively consider whether God was calling him to be a priest.

His parents agreed with the idea, recognizing many of the same gifts and understanding that he'd find happiness in doing whatever God wants him to do.

Letting go

Mr. Kliethermes visited a college seminary his senior year but didn't feel quite ready to enter.

Instead, he went to Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas, to study psychology and theology.

He made great friends who helped him stay on track spiritually.

Dating helped him learn more about himself and focus more on other people.

He thought about becoming a faith-based counselor or therapist but came to realize he was enjoying his theology and philosophy classes far more than psychology.

"I was trying to do a little bit of everything to grow more in my relationship with the Lord, to fall in love more with Jesus, to see how the Holy Spirit is leading me and to trust what the Father has in store," he said.

That summer, Mr. Kliethermes served as a local missionary for *Totus Tuus*, a Catholic summer experience for grade school and high school students in parishes throughout

See KLIETHERMES, page 17

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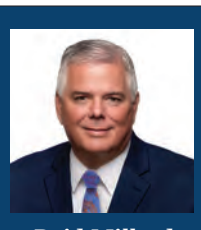
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Where there's smoke ...





Father Gregory Clever, associate pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Columbia, blesses grills, smokers and grilling utensils on the Our Lady of Lourdes Church parking lot this fall prior to a football tailgate party.

— Photos by Lisa Geger

Catholic experts inform bishops on how a new generation of young adults is seeking faith

OSV News

Baltimore

The U.S. The Conference of Catholic Bishops considered a resurgence of faith among the young and what they are seeking as part of a presentation Nov. 18 on how young people today seek faith during their fall meeting in Baltimore.

It featured the results of a survey on young people's beliefs and relationship to religion, an exploration of identity in society and firsthand accounts from a Gen Z campus minister.

Brandon Vaidyanathan, a professor of sociology at The Catholic University of America, opened the discussion with findings from The 2026 Beauty and Belief Survey, which Catholic University and Gallup conducted in March and April of 2026.

The organizations surveyed nearly 5,000 U.S. adults total, including 1,165 young adults ages 18 to 29.

He highlighted that young adults, and especially young Catholics, say religion has grown in importance for them, as 64% of Catholic young adults say religion is more important to them now than it was five years ago, compared to 41% of Catholic adults over 30.

For 82% of young Catholics who said their faith grew, they reported that encountering beauty in religious spaces or rituals was important to that change.

Angela Franks, associate professor of theology at Catholic University, spoke about the desire for identity among the young and what evangelization opportunities and pitfalls that presents the Church.

In her analysis, she employed sociologist Zygmunt Bauman's term "liquid modernity" and his thinking that "in our contemporary moment, we privilege things such as fluidity, flexibility and change" in contrast to "pre-modern societies that valued stability, solidity."

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AGE	ANNUAL PAYOUT RATE
55–59	4.8–5.1%
60–64	5.2–5.6%
65–69	5.7–6.2%
70–74	6.3–6.8%
75–79	7.0–7.8%
80–84	8.1–8.9%
85–89	9.1–9.9%
90+	10.1%

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ST. CECILIA

From page 3

ly spoke about sacred music uniting diverse people into a single voice of praise," said Mr. Sayer.

After Holy Communion, Bishop O'Donnell imparted a special blessing on all in the assembly who are purveyors of liturgical music.

"Look with favor upon these servants who offer their talents to the service of your Holy Liturgy," he prayed. "Bless them and grant that they sing and play your praises on earth, and that they may grow closer to you every day."



Bishop Ralph B. O'Donnell, concelebrating priests, assisting deacons and all participants in the St. Cecilia Mass gather for a group photo in the Cathedral of St. Joseph. — Photo by Jay Nies

A unified body

Since 1683, across many Christian traditions, St. Cecilia's Day has been marked by special church services, concerts and gatherings for the singing of hymns, illustrating an ageless dictum attributed to St. Augustine: "he who sings prays twice."

Mr. Sayer noted that the feastday has also inspired poetry and musical compositions by John Dryden, Alexander Pope, G.F. Handel, Henry Purcell, Joseph Haydn and Benjamin Britten.

In recent years, the Jefferson City diocese's chapter of the NACCM has held a yearly event to mark the feastday, usually a concert and reflection in the Cathedral.

"This year, we chose to celebrate our musical ministry and those involved in it in our diocese in the best way possible," said Mr. Sayer, "by ministering to the music ministers at Holy Mass."

He thanked Bishop O'Donnell "for taking the time out of your very busy schedule to say Mass for us, to inspire us with your words and bless our ministry."

"I don't know how others feel right now," Mr. Sayer stated, "but there is joy within me after sharing all of this this morning that I'm taking home to my community."

He also thanked everyone for coming and lending their voices to the assembly, "but more importantly, for taking on the challenge of leading and contributing to the voice of your parish, helping to turn individual worshipers into a unified body of Christ."

A reception in Cana Hall followed the Mass.

"Support the singers"

Liz Kehl, a member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish of Pettis County, is secretary for the diocesan NACCM chapter.

She's been involved with parish music ministry since she was in seventh grade. Her pastor encouraged her to attend a NACCM workshop in the diocese about five years ago.

"I think before I joined in, I didn't know what I didn't know," she said. "I didn't understand that certain things are more important than others. I didn't understand that I needed to the learn more about the Liturgy in order to understand my role as a musician in the Liturgy."

NACCM has helped her acquire important techniques for leading people in singing at Mass.

"You have to be loud enough to lead, but you have to be able to back off and let them sing," she said. "And learning how to do that as an accompanist, whether it's organ or piano and guitar, is a really big challenge, especially when every single church is set up differently."

As a guitarist and violinist, she also picked up some guitar skills and learned how to accompany singing with other instruments as part of an ensemble.

"As an accompanist, your ultimate goal is to support the singers," she said. "It doesn't matter what instrument you play. It matters that you support the singers so that the congregation can sing, because Mass is important and you want them to be active participants in Mass."

The focus must always be on Christ.

"I don't want people paying attention to me, I want people paying attention to Christ," said Mrs. Kehl. "And if I can learn to 'decrease so that he can increase,' then I'm bringing more people to Christ, which then benefits our whole parish."

Promoting active participation from among the entire assembly is important.

"They're not just showing up, watching everything and going home," said Mrs. Kehl. "They need us to help draw them in so they can actively worship God."

Being drawn into that sacred assembly on Sunday and giving God the best worship carries with people for the rest of the week.

"You're going to live differently, you're going to pray differently, and your daily prayer is going to become stronger and more abundant, because you have that anchor at the Sunday Mass that carries you through your week," she said.

Since Mrs. Kehl started taking part in NACCM workshops and national gatherings, several parishioners have come forward to join her parish's choir and learn how to lead and accompany singing at Mass.

That's a large part of the association's purpose: passing the skills and appreciation for leading and accompanying sacred music on to the next generation.

"So, I have to make sure I know my skills and know my purpose, so I can then put myself below so Christ can come up through me and teach through the Holy Spirit, so other people can learn through me," said Mrs. Kehl.

"Here to serve God"

Christopher St. Clair and his wife, Laura, helped reestablish the diocese's NACCM chapter.

"I'm sad that more people haven't taken advantage of the presence of NACCM in our diocese," said Mr. St. Clair, a member of Immaculate Conception Parish in Jefferson City. "It's really helped me."

Having become immersed in the Liturgy as a graduate student at Marquette University in Milwaukee, he talked about the importance of everyone with a role at Mass understanding other people's roles.

"Everybody who is involved in actually serving at the Liturgy, from the presider and homilist to the people who set up the environment ahead of time — all of that is connected," he noted.

Music ministers needn't be experts in every aspect of the Liturgy, but familiarity is essential.

"It helps you to avoid getting in each other's way," he said. "It helps you be sure to keep things flowing smoothly, so the whole assembly is able to truly worship."

That unto itself is the purpose of the Liturgy.

"We're here to serve, to serve God, to serve our community," Mr. St. Clair noted. "You do the best you can, but you don't do things that call attention to yourself. You never get in the way of your community being able to worship as they should."

"That's really what all these great people in worship and Liturgy have been teaching us for all these years," he said.





LEFT: Ron Sayer MME, director of the diocesan chapter of the National Association of Catholic Church Musicians (NACCM), formerly known as the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, addresses the assembly at the end of the St. Cecilia Mass in the Cathedral of St. Joseph. RIGHT: Laura St. Clair, former chapter director, proclaims a reading at the Mass. — Photos by Jay Nies

YOUTH RALLY

From page 1

groups and families. Some arrived as groups of friends who made the trip together.

The day began with an upbeat musical performance by the Scally Brothers ***(thescallybrothers.com)*** a high-energy Catholic pop duo from Toledo, Ohio, made up of brothers Jake and Zach Scally.

Starting with music got the young people excited, filled them with joy and helped them let go of any anxiety or stress they brought with them.

A planning committee made up of high schoolers, college students and a couple of parents helped organize the rally.

Committee members led the crowd in standing up, moving forward and enjoying the concert, which set the tone for the day.

Four young members of the planning committee gave personal witnesses throughout the day.

"We wanted the young people not only to hear a message but to SEE others who are close to their age who have been moved by their experiences and be invited to be open to how God might move in their lives," said Maureen Quinn, diocesan director of Religious Education and Youth/Young Adult Ministry.

Nationally acclaimed Catholic speaker Meg Hunter-Kilmer ***(piercedhands.com)*** gave two keynote presentations on the theme for the day.

She zeroed in on God's fiercely tender and unconditional love and on how knowledge of that love empowers people for heroic discipleship.

After lunch, young people in the assembly played several energetic rounds of "Family Feud," competing to give the most popular answers to such questions as "Name a reason you love Christmas."



Hundreds take part in the Diocesan Youth Rally on Nov. 22 at Helias Catholic High School in Jefferson City.

— Photo by Jose Funes

In his homily at Mass, Bishop O'Donnell spoke of Christ's eternal kingship and his urgent call to everyone to serve him by serving other people.

Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament was unexpectedly powerful.

Organizers turned down the lights and focused a spotlight on the Eucharist.

The worship leaders were Jack Callahan, a graduate of St. Joseph Cathedral School and of Helias Catholic who now attends Kansas State University, and Liam Quinn, his friend and roommate and K-State.

"They led the worship in a manner that the young people could really focus on Christ," said Mrs. Quinn.

The young people remained responsive and engaged throughout Adoration.

A deacon processed the Most Blessed Sacrament through the assembly. The young people were then invited forward.

"And at least 100 kids immediately walked forward so they could be as closer to Jesus," said Mrs. Quinn. "It was very powerful."

About 10 priests throughout the day stayed busy hearing Confessions.

The young people were invited and given tools to make Christmas cards for clients of Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri's client-choice food pantry in Jefferson City.

Many who attended also brought canned goods to donate to the food pantry.

"Many thanks to everyone who made this great event possible, especially the leaders who organized to bring their youth and allow them to be a part of this unique experience," said Jose Funes, the diocese's assistant director of pastoral ministry.

Mrs. Quinn lauded the planning committee, the priests who came to help, and all who assisted with organizing the rally.

"It was an incredible day," she said. "There was grandness to it."



THE WELL CLINIC

From page 11

issues," said Ms. Rademan. "She couldn't work for 3 months. She didn't sleep, and it drove her to psychotic behavior."

"We want to be there so that kind of thing doesn't happen," she said.

Everyone can help

The Well Center has developed two new websites.

TheWellClinic.org is designed to appeal to pregnant women in need or in crisis who are considering abortion.

"Though we never encourage that option, our site speaks about abortion in several ways simply to make sure they can find us as an alternative," said Ms. Rademan. "So, when they're out searching for information, we come up as a safe place for a girl to go."

People needing help from The Well Clinic can visit that website for information and to contact the clinic — including a number for calls or text messages.

SupportTheWell.org is for people who want to donate to the center, volunteer or attend one of the clinic's events.

Ms. Rademan said The Well Clinic's biggest needs right now are prayers, volunteers and financial support.

"We need two new ultrasound machines," she stated. "We need staff to take that mobile unit on the road and go where the girls are and help us be more present in the community."



A baby sports a T-shirt with the new logo for The Well Clinic.

— Photo by Stephanie Rademan

People with specialized talents are also needed.

"There are so many people in the community with the skills I need who can help us with our goals and objectives," she said.

For example, a room in The Well Clinic is currently being used for storage.

Ms. Rademan is looking for someone who can build a wall with a door inside the room.

On one side of the wall will be a room for a second ultrasound unit.

On the other will be a "war room" — a chapel where people from local churches will spend time in supplication for women and their babies during ultrasound appointments in the next room.

Prayer warriors will be needed, along with volunteers to help mentor the new mothers and fathers.

The plans are ambitious, but The Well Clinic's motto for 2026 has been "Pace with Peace."

"If God didn't give us a way, we didn't make a move," Ms. Rademan noted.

She asks for continued prayers for people who are leaning toward abortion to be sent Godly people to provide support and education for them.

"And pray that we become known as a safe space with no judgment, no cost, and that were here for them regardless of the decision they make," she said.

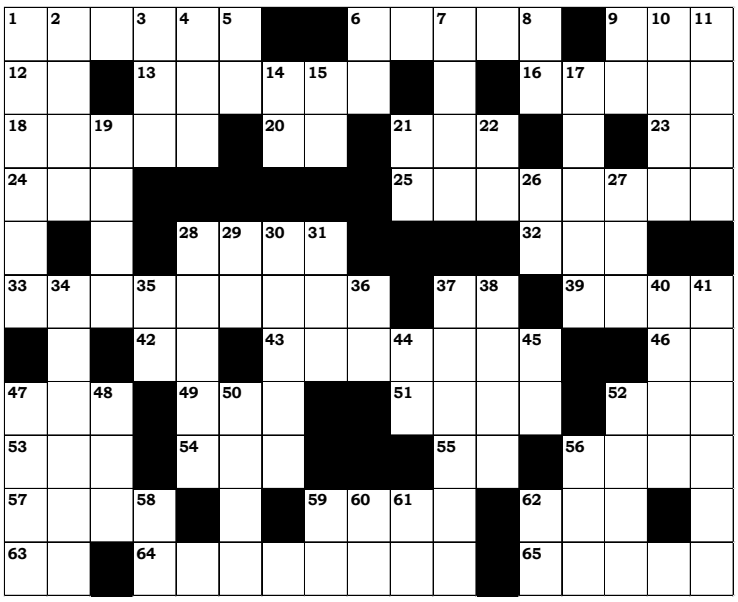


ACROSS the Diocese

By Father Donald Antweiler

ACROSS

1. This crossword offers clues to help identify by name the ____ apostles, and possibly help to get to know them better.
6. An apostle who was one of the "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17) and the first apostle martyred (in 44 A.D.) (Acts 12:1-2).
9. Farm co-op company.
12. Moon around Jupiter.
13. "You cannot wrestle with God. He is too large an adversary. You cannot manage his universe ____, only the small garden He has given you. Enjoy it while you can," —*The Clowns of God,* by Morris West.
16. The sad, infamous apostle who betrayed Jesus.
18. Jesus gave to this apostle the keys to the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:18-19); head of the apostles; only apostle we know by name who had a mother-in-law, therefore a wife.
20. Bone.
21. "It is often easier to ____ for forgiveness than to get permission," —Grace Hopper.
23. Seventh musical note.
24. Mao ____-Tung; former Chinese Communist leader.
25. The apostle selected after Jesus's ascension to heaven to replace the betrayer-apostle (Acts 1:21-22); he qualified as one who was with them from the Baptism to the Resurrection.
28. "The ____ man is distinguished by habitual right thinking and the uprightness of his conduct toward his neighbor," —*Catechism of the Catholic Church,* #1807.
32. Suffix for auction, musket, or mountain.
33. Though he first said "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" (John 1:46), this apostle quickly declared Jesus to be the "Son of God" (John 1:49); he is called Bartholomew in the synoptic gospels.
37. The Volunteer State (abbr.).
39. French abbr. often found in an invitation, meaning "please respond."
42. Dorothy's Auntie.
43. Apostle that was a former tax collector (Matthew 9:9-10, 10:3); has a gospel in his name that was one of the most structured teaching manuals of the early Church.
46. "'____, what's up, doc?" said Bugs to Elmer.
47. Summer drink suffix for lemon or orange.
49. Prefix meaning "environmentally friendly."
51. The other "son of thunder" apostle (Mark 3:17); the only apostle at the foot of the cross; has a gospel in his name wherein he is called "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23); the only apostle not martyred.
52. Mai-____; a cocktail.
53. Bikini top.
54. ____ Antonio, Tx.
55. Third musical note.
56. ____ road; pay-as-you-go highway.
57. 2nd letter of the Greek alphabet.
59. NT prophetess (Luke 2:36).
62. A type of cereal grain.
63. __&__; a brand of root beer.
64. This apostle is in the list of apostles (Matthew 10:3; Mark 3:18) but is also known as Jude, or Judas, (Luke 6:16; John 14:22); he is the patron saint of impossible cases.
65. This sums up our brief survey of the early ____ of followers of Jesus called to be apostles.



DOWN

1. Small city in Moniteau Co. in our diocese; home of St. Andrew Parish and school; home of a landmark water tower painted like "an eight ball" in honor of the former famous Fischer Manufacturing Company, that built pool tables.
2. "Oh how miserable it is when your heart is heavy, to have no soul to whom you can pour out your ____," —Frederic Chopin.
3. A brand of jeans.
4. Latin for "man" or "husband."
5. Bicycle-riding alien.
6. Son of Sr.
7. Flat-topped mountain.
8. Letters after the name of a member of the Society of Jesus (i.e., a Jesuit).
9. Letters after a doctor's name.
10. Letters for Financial Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001; aimed at curbing money-laundering and terrorism financing.
11. "Nothing behind me, everything ahead of me, __ __ ever so on the road," —*On the Road,* by Jack Kerouac (2 wds.).
14. "____-hum"; expression meaning boring, dull or routine.
15. Prefix for "cape," or "crow."
17. One who escorts people to their seats, as in church or at a theater.
19. A-frame or pup.
21. Not FM.
22. The Katy (__ __) Trail, named after the (M)KT railroad on whose rail bed the trail runs (2 ltrs.).
26. *Adoro ____ devote.*
27. Tax agency.
28. The second apostle with this name, he is called son of Alphaeus, or the Less/Younger/Little; he is listed as an apostle in all the synoptics and Acts.
29. Letters for the United Nations: 1903 countries, plus the Holy See as an observer state.
30. This apostle is called the Zealot (a former member of this violent anti-Roman group?) (Luke 6:15); also called the Canaanite (Matthew 10:4; Mark 3:18).
31. Earl Grey, Oolong, Black or Green.
34. This apostle was initially a disciple of John the Baptist; he introduced his brother, the head of the apostles, to Jesus (John 1:40-42).
35. "After completing his BA in mathematics from Philadelphia's Augustinian Villanova Univ. in 1977, Robert Prevost entered the Order of St. Augustine in St. Louis. ____ was ordained a priest in 1982," —*When the White Smoke Clears,* by Ascension Press.
36. Abbr. for Lieutenant.
37. Apostle also called Didymus (John 20:24); called a doubter (John 20:25) though later he gave us the iconic statement of faith and adoration, "My Lord and my God," (John 20:28).
38. A brand of soda.
40. Tender meat from a young calf.
41. After being called to follow Jesus, this apostle (John1:43) recruited another apostle (John 1:45); at the last supper he asked Jesus to show them the Father (John 14:8).
44. Initials of our third President; our capital city is named for him; his large statue graces the south lawn of the capitol.
45. Letters of Washington, D.C.'s Washington Nationals baseball team.
47. How Jesus addressed his Father.
48. "In the course of my life, I have often had to ____ my words, and I must confess that I have always found it a wholesome diet," —Winston Churchill.
50. House, in Mexico.
52. Dorothy's dog.
56. Cigarettes have tobacco ____ which has harmful chemicals when lit.
58. "We reject prophets because they make us look ____ the way things really are; they don't allow us to deny our pain," —*The Cloister Walk,* by Kathleen Norris.
59. ____ hoc committee.
60. Cornhusker State (abbr.).
61. Letters for National Univ.; a veteran-founded nonprofit school, based in San Diego, providing achievable higher ed. for busy learners.
62. King of Bashon (Numbers 21:33).

See ANSWERS, page 19

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KLIETHERMES

From page 12

the diocese.

"That's when I really fell in love with diocesan ministry — ministry in our parishes," he recalled.

Then, he joined his mother, grandmother and cousins on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the Blessed Mother is widely believed to be appearing and speaking to a group of visionaries.

There, he experienced several "powerful, beautiful moments and prayer and desire for deeper surrender to the Lord and his will."

He knew what he had to do. That summer, he contacted Father Christopher Aubuchon, who at that time was diocesan vocation director, and applied to become a seminarian.

Returning to Benedictine while waiting for his application to be processed, he found out that his then-roommate and good friend had also applied for seminary.

"So, we really helped support each other and were intentional about praying and discerning whether this was the right time or not," Mr. Kliethermes recalled.

Concluding that yes, it was time, he resolved to spend his second semester enjoying his friends and telling them about his decision.

Then came the COVID-19 pandemic and an abrupt halt to social interaction on campus.

"I took that to mean it was time for me to just let go and move on and find out what God had in store for me," he said.

Mr. Kliethermes spent the next two years at Holy Trinity Seminary at the University of Dallas, then continued his studies, discernment and formation at Mundelein Seminary in Chicago.

In learning and living in community with other seminarians from all over the country, he is allowing himself to be conformed to the heart of Christ, the High Priest, in whose place he hopes one day to stand at the altar.

"A good priest is fully alive," said Mr. Kliethermes. "He knows who he is. He is in touch with his humanity and is aware of his strengths and weakness, so he can give himself in his greatest capacity and leave the rest to God."

He emphasized that a man does not become a priest for his own sake.

"He is a priest for others, for the Church, for the world," he said.

"He needs to bring the light of Christ into the midst of all the chaos around him," he continued. "He takes on the image of Christ, the head of the body, the head of the Church."



Herald of the Gospel

Mr. Kliethermes is excited about ministering as a deacon — an order he will carry with him into Priesthood and for the rest of his life.

"Deacons are configured to Christ, the servant, best illustrated by Jesus washing the feet of his Apostles at the Last Supper," he said.

He referred to the words the bishop says while presenting the Book of Gospels during the Ordination of a Deacon:

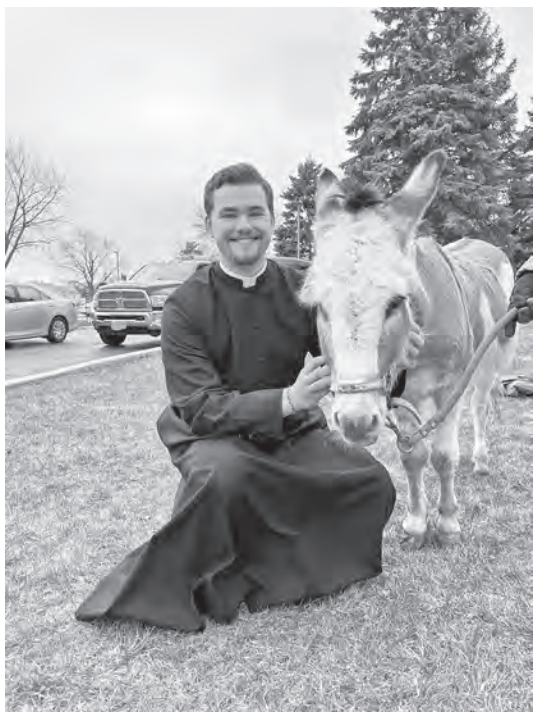
"Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, practice what you teach."

"It's a call for me to be willing to lay my life down as a herald of the Good News," he said.

As a deacon, he will be able to proclaim the Gospel reading during Mass, preach homilies, baptize new Catholics, witness Catholic marriages, preside at funeral rites and Catholic burials, give formal blessings and otherwise minister as a member of the clergy.

"Bringing more people into the fold!" said Mr. Kliethermes. "Welcoming more people into being adopted sons and daughters in Christ!"





What comes next

Following his diaconal ordination, Mr. Kliethermes will return to Mundelein for his final exams, then to report to whichever parish Bishop O'Donnell assigns him to assist the pastor full-time.

This last stage of seminary formation is known as Vocation Synthesis.

"It's meant to help assimilate us and help us grow in this new state of life of being ordained ministers, and to allow us to be mentored by the pastor," he noted.

He asks for prayers to be an effective servant and to be "consumed with zeal for the House of the Lord" — his people, his Church.

For anyone considering a possible call to Priesthood, Mr. Kliethermes offers advice from St. Padre Pio: "Pray, hope and don't worry."

"Pray about it. Have hope in what the Lord has in store for you. Trust in God, and follow wherever the Lord is leading you," Mr. Kliethermes suggested.





TOP LEFT: Shane Kliethermes and his parents, Jerry and Jill Kliethermes, stand in the chapel at Mundelein Seminary in Chicago. TOP RIGHT: A cute donky agrees to be in a photo with Shane Kliethermes. RIGHT: Shane Kliethermes and his classmates present a Mundelein Seminary baseball jersey to Pope Leo XIV, a Chicago native. BOTTOM: Shane Kliethermes carries the incense in procession at Mass.

To get your event listed here and the diocesan calendar AND/OR to request advertising, go to:
DIOJEFFCITY.ORG/EVENT-LISTING

Fundraisers & Social Events

Nov. 26 thru Jan. 10
Laurie, "Festival of Lights" drive-thru Christmas light display, 5-10 pm; with Saturdays in December offering hot chocolate & candy canes, National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church, for info visit ***mothersshrine.com***

Nov. 28
Starkenburg, Sounds of Starkenburg Concerts, noon & 2:30 pm, St. Martin Church Museum

Dec. 5
Shelbina, K of C Farm Toy Show, 9 am-2 pm, Fr. Buhman Center

Dec. 5-6
Columbia, Sacred Heart Parish Christmas Bazaar, Sat. 8 am-3 pm, Sun. 9 am-1 pm

Dec. 10
Jefferson City, Christmas Celebration for Divorced and Separated, 6:30-8 pm, Immaculate Conception Parish, for info call 573-338-4028

Dec. 12
Columbia, Breakfast With Santa, 9-11 am, Sacred Heart Parish

Dec. 13
Jefferson City, Advent Concert, 2-3 pm, Immaculate Conception Church; **Laurie,** O Holy Night event with bonfire, cookies & cocoa, caroling, fun activities and reading of the Christmas Story, 4-6 pm, National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church, for info visit ***mothersshrine.com***

Meetings & Conferences

Every Wednesday & Saturday
Jefferson City, 12-Step Meetings, 7-8 pm, Immaculate Conception Parish's Emmaus Room

Dec. 3
Columbia, Mid-Missouri Ultreya for Cursillo, 5:30-7 pm, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish's Flanagan Hall, for info visit ***jccursillo.org***

Dec. 16
Jefferson City, Men of Signum Crucis monthly gathering, 6:30-8 pm, Helias Catholic High School, for info visit ***menofsignumcrucis.com***

Jan. 14
Jefferson City, 10 Keys to Divorce: Jefferson City, 6:30-8 pm, Immaculate Conception Parish's Emmaus Room

Jan. 20
Jefferson City, Men of Signum Crucis monthly gathering, 6:30-8 pm, Helias Catholic High School, for info visit ***menofsignumcrucis.com***

Jan. 27
Boonville, Divorced Catholic Support Group, 13-week program, 6:30-8 pm, Immaculate Conception Parish's Emmaus Room

Faith Formation & Spiritual Renewal

Every Monday
Jefferson City, Centering Prayer, 12:10-12:40 pm, Cathedral of St. Joseph Parish's Sacred Heart Center

Every Tuesday
Jefferson City, "Tuesday With Faith," small group discussions, 6:30-8 pm, Immaculate Conception Parish's Pleus Hall, for info, call 573-645-2478 or email *jimkemna@gmail.com*

Every Friday
Jefferson City, Centering Prayer Group, 2-3 pm, Emmaus Room, Immaculate Conception Parish

Every other Tuesday thru Oct. 5, 2027
Columbia, "The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation," 6:30-7:30 pm, in-person or online, St. John Henry Newman Parish, for info or to register email *Laura@comonewman.org*

Dec. 5
Laurie, First Saturday Tour and Devotions, 1:30-5:30 pm, National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church, for info visit ***mothersshrine.com***

Dec. 11
Hermann, St. George Parish Mission with Sr. M. Gianna Casino, a sister of the Leaven of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, 7-9 pm

Liturgical

Dec. 12
Sedalia, Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration, 4 am-10 pm, with Las Mañanitas, Mass, presentations, and Adoration at St. Patrick Chapel; procession from Sacred Heart Chapel to St. Patrick Chapel, traditional songs, dances, presentation and dinner, for info visit ***svdpparish.diojeffcity.org***

Dec. 14
Jefferson City, Monthly community prayer hour for support of our diocesan priests, 5:30-6:30 pm, Immaculate Conception Church

Dec. 16
Jefferson City, Las Posadas Advent celebration, featuring prayer, procession, song and light refreshments, 6-7 pm, outside the Cathedral of St. Joseph

Dec. 19
Salisbury, Rorate Mass, 6 am, St. Joseph Church

Youth & Young Adults

Dec. 3
Columbia, CoMo LifeTeen's First Thursday XLT, 6:45-7:45 pm, St. John Henry Newman Parish, for info visit ***comonewman.org***

Health & Wellness

Dec. 3
Columbia, Blood drive, 9 am-3 pm, Fr. Tolton Regional Catholic High School

Dec. 7
Boonville, Blood drive, 1-5 pm, Ss. Peter & Paul Parish

THANKSGIVING

From page 8

need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus," (4:6-7).

Father Boniface Kasiita Nzabonimpa, pastor of the Edina parish and of St. Joseph Parish in Canton and Queen of Peace Parish in Ewing, delivered the Thanksgiving message.

Members of the Clark family of the parish led and accompanied the singing.

Fr. Nzabonimpa welcomed everyone, thanking and congratulating his fellow Christians on a year of fruitful ministry.

"Thank you for the collaboration that exists among our churches, our coming together in faith, sharing blessings and promoting a spirit of unity and support within our community," he said.

The priest pointed out that the Good News of Jesus Christ emphasizes unity in the Church as a vital aspect of Christian life, "encouraging all believers to work together in harmony and love, reflecting the teaching of Jesus."

"This unity serves as a powerful witness to the world about the truth of the Gospel," said Fr. Nzabonimpa.

"Our strength is in diversity. Let us keep this unity in service of our people," he stated pointing to St. Paul's reminder that "we are one body in Jesus Christ," (1 Corinthians 12:27).

He noted that unity is not the same as uniformity.

"Rather, it celebrates diverse gifts and backgrounds of our churches working together for a common purpose," he said. "We give thanks to God, who continues to sustain us in this unity as we continue to work together toward oneness in heart and in spirit for the Knox County Ministerial Alliance."

He further thanked God for having allowed the churches to work together to feed people who are hungry and help people in need.

"We come together this evening to give thanks and celebrate together as a community of faith, working things out together toward oneness for the best common good for each and every one," said Fr. Nzabonimpa.

He thanked his fellow pastors for their service.

"I know how much time, energy and love you put into different ministries to benefit our people in Knox County," he said. "God Bless you all."

"Grace and blessings"

Ecumenical Thanksgiving services are a long-standing tradition in many communities in this diocese, sponsored by local ministerial alliances as a chance to pray as one faith community and take up an offering for local people in need.

They offer a rare opportunity to gather and pray united with members of other Christian congregations.

In Monroe City, Father Christopher Hoffmann, pastor of Holy Rosary Parish and of St. Stephen Parish in Indian Creek, led the Opening Prayer at the ecumenical Thanksgiving service on Nov. 23 in the Family Church of Monroe City.

"Father in Heaven, Creator of all and source of all goodness, mercy and love," Fr. Hoffmann prayed, "please look kindly upon us and receive our heartfelt gratitude in this time of giving thanks.

"Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for enduring your Passion for love of us; please help us to endure suffering for love of you," he continued. "O Holy Spirit, thank you for all of creation, which shows the brilliance of your design, and which includes a part for each one of us."

He thanked the Most Holy Trinity for every spiritual and temporal blessing: "our faith and heritage, our food and shelter, our health and well-being, the love we have for one another, our family and friends."

He further asked God to "grant us continued graces and blessings throughout the coming year ... in the Name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen."

To submit items for the PEOPLE PAGE, including **Baptisms, Birthdays** for ages 90 and older, **Anniversaries** of 10+ years in increments of 5 ONLY (e.g., 15, 25, 45 years, etc.), **Marriages, Deaths, Elections, Honors and Appointments,** please go to:

diojeffcity.org/update-information

Marriages

Palmyra, St. Joseph — **Audrey P. Summers & Lane M. Feeney**

Wardsville, St. Stanislaus — **Griffin L. Buschjost & Gracie R. Bernskoetter**

Westphalia, St. Joseph — **Benjamin J. Eisterhold & Rebecca M. Garro; Kendra S. Winkelman & Cole T. Mertens**

Baptisms

Argyle, St. Aloysius — **Drew Anthony Schwartze,** son of Derek & Haley Schwartze

Mary's Home, Our Lady of Snows — **Jonah Alan Kempker,** son of Chad & Jennifer Kempker

Birthdays

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **Mary Ann Link,** her 94th on Dec. 3

Wardsville, St. Stanislaus — **Bernie Otke,** his 92nd on Dec. 15

Deaths

Deacon Robert L. Dulle, 88 — a retired deacon of the diocese who was in the first group of men ordained to the Permanent Diaconate in the diocese, and who assisted the pastor at St. Peter Parish in Jefferson City for many years — on Nov. 20. Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated on Nov. 30 at St. Andrew Parish in Holts Summit with burial at Resurrection Cemetery in Jefferson City.

Boonville, Ss. Peter & Paul — **Doris Kempf; Donna King; Mary Klenklen; Deborah Zoeller**

Brookfield, Immaculate Conception — **Sybil Schreiner**

Mary's Home, Our Lady of Snows — **David A. Koetting**

Rhineland, Church of the Risen Savior — **Margaret Bahr**

Taos, St. Francis Xavier — **Loretta J. Kerperin**

When the Tipton church got clocks

The following report was published 120 years ago, in the Nov. 8, 1906, issue of the Tipton Times newspaper and was republished earlier this month:

Already a superb and handsome house of worship in which the entire community as well as member of the church may take great pride, St. Andrew Catholic Church in this city will soon receive still further additions by the installation of a great clock in the tower.

Ever since Father Kueper has resided in this city, he has earnestly wished for such a clock and at last sees the achievement of that wish.

By Thanksgiving, at the latest, it is thought the big timepiece will be in place and the community will enjoy the privilege of uniformity in watches and clocks.

Another pleasing feature will be the quarter-hour chimes, there being three tones at the quarter, four at the half, six at the three-quarter and eight at the hour.

At midday or midnight, then, the clock strikes 12 and the chimes sound the eight tones, for a total of twenty.

This last addition will leave little else whereby the grandeur of the present structure may be improved. Erected 29 years ago at a cost of $18,000, there have been buildings erected and interior decorations all representing a grand total of $34,700, in addition to the value of the land, and such minor improvements necessary to maintain the exterior appearances.

Prayer for Vocations

O Lord, Jesus Christ, we pray you to prompt more of our young men and women with the desire to serve you as priests, brothers, and sisters. Grant to more of our young people a spirit of willing sacrifice that will lead them to dedicate their lives to your service. Give to fathers and mothers a deep faith and an apostolic spirit, that by their example they may inspire their children to serve you in the Priesthood or in the Religious Life. Give us all the strength and courage to do your holy will. Amen.

—By Bishop Joseph M. Marling C.PP.S. (+1956-1969)
founding bishop of Jefferson City

PRESSPRICH

From page 9

dition.

Simplicity breeds consistency, and consistency allows for lower expectations.

Part of why I love our simple Advent traditions is because they are daily rituals. If that sounds counterintuitive to you, hear me out: If our family does an activity daily, the pressure is lower. It's not such a big deal if the kids misbehave, have a meltdown or we just cannot make it happen with the schedule. We can try again tomorrow. No one is stuck feeling guilty.

Simplicity allows us to go deeper. The simplicity of our Advent traditions means that we do actually do them (almost) every night. Our kids become used to them quickly, which means they settle in more easily and can follow along more easily. This frees up time and bandwidth. We can dive into the meat of the meditations of "The Jesse Tree for Families" and spend more time with the conversation starters as a result.

If you're looking ahead to December and already feeling overwhelmed, consider simplifying your Advent practices. I think that you'll find, as I have, that you're able to be more present to your family, your practice more consistent and your experience of the season richer.

Colleen Pressprich is a homeschooling mom of five and the author of 10 books for Catholic children, families and adults, including two about Mary: "Marian Consecration for Families with Young Children" and "OSV Kids Discover: Mary."

QUESTION

From page 8

that person would likely be incapable of marriage.

Similarly, if the disability was profound to the extent that the person was unable to understand the very basics of what marriage is (a permanent and exclusive union ordered towards sexual intimacy and the bearing and raising of children), that would likewise probably render the marriage invalid.

However, some intellectual disabilities, like dyslexia, would have no bearing on one's ability to marry. And for the most part people with only "mild" disabilities, such as slightly below-average intelligence, are still presumed to be capable of marriage.

Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News. Send your questions to CatholicQA@osv.com.

SCALIA

From page 9

futility of our daily anxieties and that (again from St. Teresa), "all things are passing" as the world (and you and I) and all creation do constantly renew: Once Autumn has reached absolute fullness and becomes incapable of being more of itself, the season wanes.

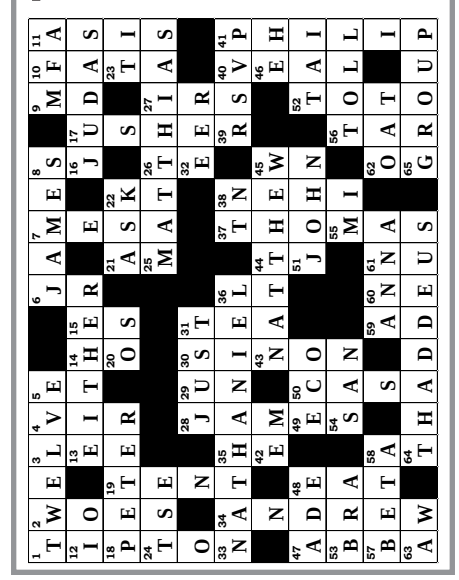
Then, inexorable winter comes, eventually reaching its own culmination, too — becoming wholly and fully winter, until it can be winter, no more, and splendid spring must follow. There is such hope in fitting ourselves to that reality as God arrays himself in the grandeur of all of it, wears it, and wears it out, like garments needing changing.

And that is us, as well. If we are to be Christ to each other, a presence of God that is love, mercy and justice, then our whole lives are, like autumn, then winter, then spring, a quest to become wholly and fully ourselves, until we cannot be more of what we are, and must evolve, so that God may array himself in us, and then wear us, until — if we are true saints — we are worn out.

If we can remember and trust in that (and remember, too, that prayer is powerful, genuine action in co-operation with God), we should be able to get through things without too much grousing, after all.

Elizabeth Scalia is editor-at-large for OSV. Follow her on X @theanchoress.

Crossword puzzle answers


TWELVE IOTA PETER TSE ONE NATHAN EMIT ADE BRA BETA AWOL
ASIA TIA ASS TIA DAM SUE JUT THE ERA ELITE THE ORS MET JUST NANI ECO SAN S

Boxing up for Christmas






Parish School of Religion students at St. Joseph Parish in Palmyra, with the support from their parents who provided materials, filled shoeboxes to send to children in the Operation Christmas Child Program through Samaritan's Purse.

— Photos from the St. Joseph Catholic Church - Palmyra, MO Facebook page




God bless America!

Members of the St. George Student Council in Hermann take part in Hermann High School's Homecoming Parade.

— Photos submitted by Amy Schebaum, principal

Hannibal youth group Day of Service




Members of the Holy Family Youth Group in Hannibal's annual Day of Service help seven parishioners with trimming bushes, organizing garages, cleaning up gardens, splitting wood and stacking it, and other tasks.

— Photos from the Holy Family Catholic Church - Hannibal Facebook page

Bible Accent

In Matthew 13, Jesus told a parable about judgment.

Beginning in verse 24, Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.

"While everyone was asleep, his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off," Jesus said. "When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well."

The man's slaves saw the weeds and went to speak with him.

"Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where have the weeds come from?" they asked.

"An enemy has done this," the man replied.

The slaves offered to go and pull up the weeds.

"No, if you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them," the man said. "Let them grow together until harvest; then at harvest time I will say to the harvesters, 'First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles for burning; but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

St. John of Kanty



St. John of Kanty was born around 1390 in Poland. He studied at the University of Krakow, was ordained a priest soon after completing his education and spent most of his life teaching sacred Scripture at his alma mater. He urged his students to have good manners during controversies and impressed upon them the need for moderation. John was very generous to the poor people of Krakow. He earned a reputation for holiness, in part because he led a very strict life. He did not eat meat, and he slept on the floor. He even traveled to Rome on foot, carrying his luggage on his back. John died in 1473, and we remember him on Dec. 23.

Jesus explains how the nations will be separated and judged

By Jennifer Ficcaglia
Catholic Courier



Illustration by Linda Rivers

One day, Jesus and the apostles were on the Mount of Olives, talking about the signs of Jesus' coming and the end of the age.

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats," Jesus explained.

He said that he will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

"Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,'" Jesus said."For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me."

The righteous people on the right will ask Jesus a question.

"Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?" they will want to know.

"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me," Jesus will answer them.

Jesus said he will then turn to those on his left.

"Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me," he said.

Those on his left will ask Jesus a question.

"Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?" they will wonder.

"Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me," Jesus will answer.

"And," Jesus told his friends, "these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

Read more about it...
Matthew 25

1. How will Jesus separate the nations?

2. Where will the righteous people go?

Puzzle

Using the hints provided, put a T next to the sentences about judgment that are true and an F next to the ones that are false.

1. ___ Jesus said we should not judge others lest we be judged. (Matthew 7:1)

2. ___ On the day of judgment, people will answer for the careless words they spoke. (Matthew 12:36)

3. ___ Only some people must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:10)

4. ___God will bring to judgment every work, with all its hidden qualities, whether good or bad. (Ecclesiastes 12:14)

Answers: 1. T; 2. T; 3. F; 4. T.

Trivia

What Jewish festival was celebrated just days after Jesus talked about judging the nations?
(Hint: Matthew 26:1-2)

Answer: Passover.

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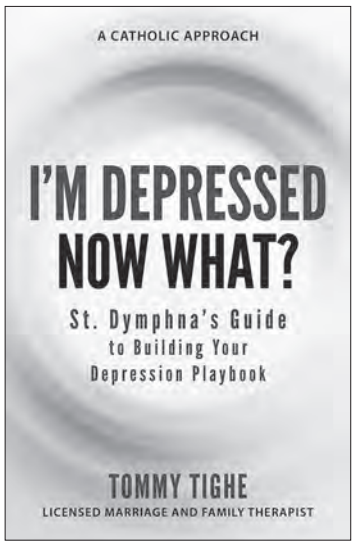
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New release offers a practical guide for Catholics living with depression

I'm Depressed — Now What?: St. Dymphna's Guide to Building Your Depression Playbook, by Tommy Tighe, Ave Maria Press (2026), 160 pages, $16.95

Rviewed by Cecilia Cicone
OSV News



St. Dymphna was not known to have suffered from depression herself, but she was no stranger to the pain and suffering of mental illness. Her own life was taken by her father, who descended into madness while grieving the death of her mother.

In the centuries following her death, crowds made pilgrimages to her tomb, begging for St. Dymphna's prayers for their loved ones who suffered from mental illness after hearing of the miracles people reported after asking for her intercession.

She is now well-known as the patron saint of those suffering from mental illness and psychological distress.

Tommy Tighe, a Catholic father and licensed marriage and family therapist, began speaking about understanding and coping with mental illness from a Catholic perspective under the patronage of St. Dymphna in 2019 with his podcast, "St. Dymphna's Playbook."

In 2021, he authored a book under the same name, exploring different diagnoses and symptoms, offering suggestions for remaining rooted in the truth of God's love, and introducing prayers and stories of saints that may be helpful.

Tighe's latest book, *I'm Depressed — Now What?: St. Dymphna's Guide to Building Your Depression Playbook* is a deep dive into the experience of clinical depression and depressive episodes, looking at the science and psychology of the experiences from a Catholic perspective.

Even more than just providing information or perspective, the book is a practical manual for addressing different symptoms and obstacles, giving the reader concrete reasons for hope.

I'm Depressed — Now What? is meant to be used as a guide to create an action plan to cope with depression.

The author highlights that being in the midst of a depressive episode is not the time to figure out what coping skills work, who to call when you can't get out of bed, and what you can do if you are no longer capable of keeping yourself safe.

Depression can cloud judgment, motivation and energy, so creating an easy-to-follow, straightforward plan ahead of time is crucial and can be a real gamechanger.

Each section of the book explores a painful spiritual question that someone with depression may be wrestling with, providing an outline that explores the experience with honesty and understanding.

Some of the questions Tighe explores are, "Lord, do I not trust you enough?" and "Lord, if you love me, why do you let me feel like this?"

Then, each chapter drills down deeper into specific topics related to depression including symptoms like suicidal ideation and feelings of worthlessness, whether or not Catholics should only go to Catholic therapists, and how to build a social support system.

The chapters of the book are easy-to-read, with the author primarily writing words of encouragement to readers, making an effort to dispel any feelings of shame, speaking from professional experience to provide some context for why they may be experiencing certain symptoms or thought patterns, and encouraging them to reach out for help so they do not have to carry the burden of depression alone.

Several of the chapters then end with exercises to help the reader design their personal "playbook" for depressive episodes, offering checklists to select coping skills that are most helpful for them personally, lists to fill-in of contacts or support people, and reflections and journaling prompts to correct cognitive distortions and invite God into the experience.

The author's compassion in the book's pages is palpable. Tighe refers to "finding well-being through the horizontal and the vertical," meaning respecting both the fact that humans are beings within time, in a particular place, with bodies and minds that need healing now, along with the reality that humans are made for heaven and a relationship with God.

This balance gives the reader permission to explore any thought patterns or feelings that may be rooted in lies about their worth or purpose, along with acknowledging that clinical depression causes real, existential pain and is not a sign of personal failure.

Public conversations about depression and mental illness have become more common in

See BOOK, page 23

On air

Mustard Seed
Sunday Scripture readings and reflections
Sundays, 10:06 am, KWIX-AM 1230, Moberly
Sundays, 8 am, KRLL-AM 1420, California

EWTN and other Catholic programming
Covenant Radio Network broadcasts
KHJR 88.1 FM, Jefferson City
KBKC 90.1 FM, Moberly
KEFL 91.5 FM, Kirksville
94.7 FM, Columbia
103.3 FM, Fulton
K216GM 91.1 FM, Canton

Movie Ratings

A-II Adults and Adolescents	The Cat in the Hat (PG) Ebenezer (PG-13) Jimmy (PG-13) Sense and Sensibility (PG)
A-III Adults	Godzilla Minus Zero (R) I Play Rocky (PG-13) Klara and the Sun (PG-13) Other Mommy (R) Street Fighter (PG-13) Whalefall (PG-13) Wicker (R) You Can See Everything (R)
L Limited Adult Audience	How to Rob a Bank (R) Wild Horse Nine (R)
O Morally Offensive	Clayface (R) Ghost Soldier (PG-13) The Mongoose (R)

Ratings are supplied by OSV News Service.

Use the Libby library app? Here are 10 Catholic saints to read

OSV News

If you have a library card, you might already have on-the-go access to some great spiritual classics written by saints.

Many public libraries partner with the Libby app to provide access to a digital collection of e-books and audiobooks that you can borrow for free to your phone, tablet or computer, and there are several Catholic saints whose works are listed in the app.

Because libraries curate their own catalog of available books, not every title will be available everywhere or may have a waitlist. If that's the case, most libraries allow patrons to recommend titles for purchase — so if one of the books below catches your eye, it may be worth requesting.

Here are 10 saints whose works you can search for on the Libby app, ***libbyapp.com***:

- **St. Benedict of Nursia —** *The Rule of St. Benedict*
- **St. Bernard of Clairvaux —** *Life of St. Malachy of Armagh* and *On Loving God*
- **St. Bonaventure —** *Holiness of Life, The Nightingale, Expositio Missae,* and *The Life of Saint Francis of Assisi*
- **St. Catherine of Siena —** *The Dialogue of Saint Catherine of Siena*
- **St. Francis de Sales —** *Maxims and Counsels of St. Francis de Sales, Introduction to the Devout Life,* and *Treatise on the Love of God*
- **St. Ignatius of Loyola —** *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* and *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius*
- **Blessed Raymond of Capua —** *The Life of St. Catherine of Siena*
- **St. Justin Martyr —** *The First Apology of St. Justin Martyr*
- **St. Teresa of Avila —** *Interior Castle*
- **St. Thomas More —** *Utopia,* and *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*

Pope Leo XIV welcomes 1,300 people at lunch for the poor at the Vatican

OSV News

Vatican City

Pope Leo XIV shared lunch with 1,300 people experiencing poverty at the Vatican Nov. 22, continuing a tradition first started by Pope Francis for the World Day of the Poor.

After praying the Angelus in St. Peter's Square, the pope joined guests in the Paul VI Audience Hall, where people invited by Rome-based charities gathered for a meal and fellowship.

At the start of lunch, Pope Leo prayed that families may live in peace and that no one be deprived of life's necessities.

Organized by the Vatican Dicastery for the Service of Charity and supported by more than 400 Italian Red Cross volunteers, the event featured a three-course meal of cannelloni, beef stew with peas, and ice cream.

Children greeted the pope enthusiastically as he thanked volunteers and organizers, stressing the spirit of unity at the gathering.

"We are all family today," he told guests, encouraging them to recognize that "we are never alone" and to share solidarity and friendship with others.

Archbishop Luis Marín de San Martín described the lunch as "a true experience of fraternity" and a sign of a welcoming Church.

As guests departed, each received a bag containing wool hats, toiletries and other essential items.

Pope Leo recognizes miraculous healing

OSV News

Vatican City

Pope Leo XIV has cleared the way for a new saint and dozens of new blesseds, approving a decree recognizing miracles, martyrdoms, and heroic virtue.

The pope authorized the canonization of Blessed Cecília Schelingová, a Slovak religious sister also known as Sister Zdenka, who died in 1955 after suffering imprisonment, torture and illness under the communist regime in former Czechoslovakia.

Her canonization follows approval of a miracle involving the unexplained recovery of a terminally ill American man with advanced cancer in 2008 after her intercession was invoked.

VOSSEN

From page 5

nual student productions the year he arrived and has been involved in each production since then.

"I built the sets, helped design them with the kids, helped paint them and helped move them," he recalled.

As a student, he had been in the cast for Helias Catholic productions of "Camelot" and "Fiddler on the Roof," and he "helped backstage a bit."

He's been serving for the past 15 to 20 years as production manager.

"We've been working on these things for years and years," he said. "It's been a pleasure, it's been fun."

"Right now, we're gearing up for 'Cinderella,'" he said of what will be the first production in the Vossen Center.

Mr. Vossen started out working with legendary Helias Catholic director the late Joyce Weber and continued with several other great directors, currently Amy Pringer.

"We work very well together doing these things for the kids," he stated.

With thanksgiving

Mr. Vossen describes the new performing arts center as "the real deal."

"A thousand seats," he said. "A large, beautiful stage with all the bells and whistles for sound and lighting."

"But, what it really does is give our kids the opportunities to explore things we've only been able to do off-campus, outside of our facilities," he said.

It will be home to plays, concerts, school Masses and other activities — "things we want our kids to be involved in that will be able to be built up into good memories for all of them."

He lauded the alumni, the Foundation and other benefactors whose generous pledges are making these things possible.

"We're in really good shape with pledges," he noted. "But there are always last minute things we didn't figure in, so we'd never say 'no' to donations toward the performing arts center."

He praised all the people who have been working in unseen ways to bring the project to completion.

"When I think of this whole process and the magnitude of the buildings and what we've been blessed with in this performing arts center, I can't say 'thank you' enough," he said.

All the while, Mr. Vossen, who's accustomed to working behind the scenes, is getting used to the idea of seeing his family name on the Performing Arts Center.

"I'm trying to embrace it a little every day," he said.

He's also looking forward to whatever comes next for him and Helias Catholic.

"It's been a great 48 years. It's been a great for my family and myself," he noted. "But we've still got some things to finish up, and I plan on still being here for a bit."

Contributing to this report was Maddie Madison, education reporter for the Jefferson City News Tribune ***(newstribune.com).***

Daily Readings

Sunday, Nov 29
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Is. 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7
Ps. 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
1 Cor. 1:3-9
Mk. 13:33-37

Monday, Nov 30
St. Andrew, Apostle
Rom. 10:9-18
Ps. 19:8-11
Mt. 4:18-22

Tuesday, Dec 1
Is. 11:1-10
Ps. 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17
Lk. 10:21-24

Wednesday, Dec 2
Is. 25:6-10a
Ps. 23:1-6
Mt. 15:29-37

Thursday, Dec 3
St. Francis Xavier, priest
Is. 26:1-6
Ps. 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a
Mt. 7:21, 24-27

Friday, Dec 4
St. John Damascene, priest and doctor of the Church
Is. 29:17-24
Ps. 27:1, 4, 13-14
Mt. 9:27-31

Saturday, Dec 5
Is. 30:19-21, 23-26
Ps. 147:1-6
Mt. 9:35–10:1, 5a, 6-8

The Holy Father's prayer intentions for December:
Let us pray for families experiencing the absence of a mother or father, that they may find support and accompaniment in the Church, and help and strength in the Faith during difficult times.

Sunday, Dec 6
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Is. 40:1-5, 9-11
Ps. 85:9-14
2 Pt. 3:8-14
Mk. 1:1-8

Monday, Dec 7
St. Ambrose, bishop and doctor of the Church
Is. 35:1-10
Ps. 85:9ab, 10-14
Lk. 5:17-26

Tuesday, Dec 8
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
(Patronal Feastday of the United States of America)
[Holyday of Obligation]
Gn. 3:9-15, 20
Ps. 98:1-4
Eph. 1:3-6, 11-12
Lk. 1:26-38

Wednesday, Dec 9
St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin
Is. 40:25-31
Ps. 103:1-4, 8, 10
Mt. 11:28-30

Thursday, Dec 10
Our Lady of Loreto
Is. 41:13-20
Ps. 145:1, 9-13ab
Mt. 11:11-15

Friday, Dec 11
St. Damasus I, Pope
Is. 48:17-19
Ps. 1:1-4, 6
Mt. 11:16-19

Saturday, Dec 12
USA: Our Lady of Guadalupe
Zec. 2:14-17 or Rv. 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab
(Ps.) Jdt. 13:18bcde, 19
Lk. 1:26-38 or 1:39-47

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BOOK

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communities and online, creating an abundance of alleged resources and claims of quick cures.

Being able to wade through resources that are in line with the truths of Catholic teaching on the human person and the reality of God's loving plan for hope and salvation can be difficult.

I'm Depressed — Now What? is a trustworthy and much-needed resource for Catholics experiencing depression to grow closer to the Lord, even in the darkness, and experience hope and healing.

Cecilia Cicone is an author and communicator who works in diocesan ministry in northwest Indiana.

Nativity at the Capitol event

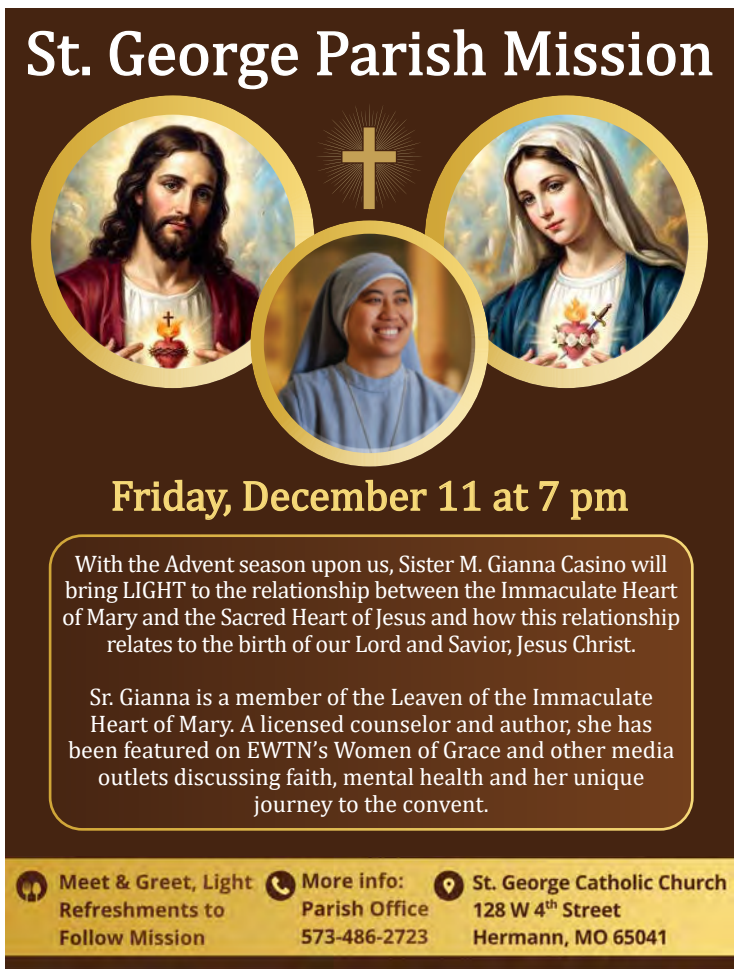
DATE: December 3
TIME: 10 am-2 pm

Father Paul Clark will be the emcee for this year's Nativity at the Capitol, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 3, at the Missouri State Capitol.

Thirteen parish schools will participate in the program in front of the full-size Nativity scene at both the Capitol South Lawn Steps and inside the Capitol Rotunda.

All are welcome to attend the celebration of the birth of Jesus, sponsored by MidWest March for Life, Columbia 40 Days for Life through St. Andrew Prolife Committee of Holts Summit and Thomas More Society.

Call 573-619-6322 for information.



Guadalupe novena, celebration in Sedalia

St. Vincent de Paul Parish of Pettis County will host a novena and celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Sedalia.

Novena prayers will be prayed from Dec. 3-11 in St. Patrick Chapel, 415 W. Fourth St.

The novena will be at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturday at 6:30 p.m.; after the 6:30 p.m. Mass in Spanish on Tuesday and Wednesday; and after the 11:30 a.m. Mass in Spanish on Sunday.

An elaborate celebration for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is planned for Saturday, Dec. 12.

The doors to St. Patrick Chapel will open at 4:30 a.m. *"Las Mañanitas,"* the traditional serenading of the Blessed Mother, will begin at 5 a.m.

Mass will be celebrated at 7 a.m., followed by a dramatic presentation of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe and traditional dances. Breakfast will follow in the church basement.

Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in St. Patrick Chapel.

People will gather at 3 p.m. in Sacred Heart Chapel, 421 W. Third St., for a 4 p.m. procession to St. Patrick Chapel with traditional dance.

At 5:15 p.m., traditional songs, a dramatic presentation of the apparitions will be held in St. Patrick Chapel, followed by dinner downstairs.

Visit ***svdpparish.diojefferson city.org*** for information.

Rorate Mass in Salisbury

DATE: December 19
TIME: 6 am

Father Jeremy Secrist will celebrate a Rorate Mass by candlelight at 6 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 19, in St. Joseph Church, 301 W. Williams St. in Salisbury.

The Rorate Mass is an ancient Catholic tradition for the longest night of the year and preceding the celebration of Christmas, the coming of God's Light into the world.

A reception will follow the Mass.

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