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New director begins work in diocese's Office of Advancement

By **Hannah Heil**
Catholic Times Reporter

Jim Jackson joined the Diocese of Columbus on May 28 as senior director of the new diocesan Office of Advancement.

Jackson comes to the diocese from Cincinnati, where he acquired approximately 40 years of experience working in the private and nonprofit sectors. Most those years were spent in advancement, development and philanthropy.

Jackson previously served as director of advancement at Xavier University in Cincinnati. He also led advancement efforts at the Athenaeum of Ohio, a Catholic seminary in Cincinnati for men studying for the priesthood, and then at The Summit Country Day School, a private Catholic independent school in Cincinnati.

"I have known Jim for many years," Bishop Earl Fernandes said. "He is trustworthy, hardworking and professional. He loves the Church and its mission. I'm excited to have him in our beloved and

vibrant diocese and to work with him again in the Lord's vineyard."

It was at the Athenaeum that Jackson met the then-Father Fernandes, who would later become Bishop of Columbus. Bishop Fernandes previously served as dean of academics at the seminary.

Jackson said the now-Bishop of Columbus was helpful and supportive, and the two developed a friendship. He said it was a joy to be part of his operations then, and when he recently was given an opportunity to work with the bishop, he was excited about the possibility.

"He's a tremendous spiritual leader and helps make, certainly, me and our family better but also has vision and passion and love of the Lord that helps me see that in my day-to-day life, and it's someone who I could easily get excited to be a part of their journey in evangelizing," he said.

Jackson retired in July 2023 but returned to lead the Columbus diocese's new office in what he described as a "holy moment."

"When I received that outreach, it makes you stop and reflect, and I felt like



Jim Jackson

it might be what God's calling me to do in this chapter of my life," Jackson said.

As senior director of advancement, Jackson will collaborate with diocesan offices, clergy and parishes. He will build, direct and coordinate stewardship and advancement programs as well as create a deeper awareness of fiscal stewardship in the diocese.

The office's efforts include growing

the financial resources necessary to meet the needs of people in the Diocese of Columbus, and, Jackson said, to carry out the diocese's mission in four pillars: evangelization, education, vocations and social needs. He said this will involve matching the desires of people and corporations with the diocese's mission points.

Jackson said he is eager to partner with diocesan parishes and spiritual institutions. He looks forward to helping support, guide and offer partnerships as well as secure the sustainable resources necessary, he said, to support their strategic plans.

"One of the biggest things that I'd hope is to have strong engagement, relationship building and better outreach and involvement, communications with all of our diocese and the people of the diocese," he said.

A Cincinnati native, Jackson and his wife, Mary, have four children and nine grandchildren. Three of their children and six grandchildren live in Cincinnati. They also have a son, daughter-in-law and three grandchildren in Cleveland.

Clergy assignments announced

The Diocese of Columbus announced the latest clergy assignments on the weekend of June 8-9:

Confirming the appointment of the Superior of the Sons of the Immaculate Conception, **Reverend Sudhakar Reddy Thirumalareddy, CFIC**, from Hospital and Pastoral Ministry, in residence at Our Lady of Victory Church, Columbus, to continuing in Hospital and Pastoral Ministry, in residence at St. Francis of

Assisi, Columbus, effective July 9, 2024.

Reverend Fritzner Valcin, from Administrator, St. Francis of Assisi Church, Columbus, to Pastor, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Buckeye Lake, effective July 9, 2024.

Reverend William Hritsko, from Pastor, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Buckeye Lake, and St. Leonard Church, Heath, to Leave of Absence, effective May 13, 2024.



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Front page photos

EUCCHARISTIC PROCESSIONS

Pictured are Eucharistic processions on Corpus Christi Sunday and the following day at Columbus St. Patrick, Somerset Holy Trinity, Gahanna St. Matthew, Columbus Immaculate Conception, New Albany Church of the Resurrection, Johnstown Church of the Ascension, Westerville St. Paul the Apostle and Columbus St. Andrew as the diocese prepares for the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage's Seton Route to come through later this month. Submitted photos

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Bishop Earl K. Fernandes: President & Publisher
Doug Bean: Editor (dbean@columbuscatholic.org)
Hannah Heil: Reporter (hheil@columbuscatholic.org)
Emma Noel: Layout/Design (enoel@columbuscatholic.org)
Mailing Address: 197 E. Gay St., Columbus OH 43215
Editorial/Advertising: (614) 224-5195
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Altar servers, essay winners receive awards

Ninety-seven eighth-grade students from diocesan parishes were honored at the annual Altar Server Awards on Sunday, May 26 at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral.

Also recognized during the presentation on Trinity Sunday were 10 eighth-grade boys who were \$1,000 scholarship winners of the Priestly Vocation Essay Award sponsored by the Columbus Serra Club.

Before the presentation of the awards, there was a reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Galatians followed by a reflection from Bishop Earl Fernandes. The ceremony concluded with a prayer.

Bishop Fernandes presented altar server medals to the following:

Joey Bair, Nolan Beyer, Laura and Grace Sese, Hilliard St. Brendan the Navigator Church; Joseph Barb and Benjamin Orsini, Johnstown Church of the Ascension; Landon Barbarits, Christopher Piccolo II, Carter Ingles and Aaryn Bradford, Ports-



mouth Scioto Catholic; Jesse Bell, Danville St. Luke Church; Joseph Bogue and Ellie Pillivant, Worthington St. Michael Church; Maire Boulanger, Marysville Our Lady of Lourdes Church; Siena Rose Boyd and Emma Jean Gerken, Columbus St. Margaret of Cortona Church; Mia Chatman and Ricardo Martinez, Marion St. Mary Church; Eunyuul Cho, Columbus St. Andrew Korean; Keilyn Dayana Colindres Tabora and Yeili Kristal Martinez Sanchez, Columbus St. Agnes Church; Michael Alan Cormican and James Gulledege, Newark St. Francis de Sales Church; Daniel Cruz and Mathias Hohn, Columbus St. Peter Church; Jack Curtis and Nora Leonard, Columbus Our Lady of Peace Church; Paul Daniel and Mack Marlette, Ada Our Lady of Lourdes Church; Gavin Deller, Nicholas Lee, Noah Smith and Ryan Gross, Westerville St. Paul the Apostle Church.



Bishop Earl Fernandes honored altar servers and Priestly Vocation Essay Award winners on Sunday, May 26 at St. Joseph Cathedral.
CT photos by Ken Snow

Caleb Delp and Daniel Schaner, Buckeye Lake Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church; Andrew Doll, Samuel Hollis, Caroline Jonesco, Jaxon White and Gus

Graf, Dublin St. Brigid of Kildare Church; Thomas Dury and Derek Soder, Columbus St. Agatha Church; Gabriel Dzikowski, Joseph Taylor and Henry Platek, Columbus St. Patrick Church; Alejandro Espinosa Flores and Ryan Ollam, Grove City Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church; Caitlin Foley and Leah Starinsky, New Albany Church of the Resurrection; Guillermo Garduno Hernandez and Jesus Elizandro Lemus Carmona, Columbus St. Thomas the Apostle Church; Evan George and Juan Joseph Porcayo, Columbus St. Christopher Church; Josh Goers, Cardington Sacred Hearts Church; Elle Hatch and Kolbe Krzeczowski, Columbus St. Andrew Church; Jackson Young and Mary and Molly Herlihy, Columbus Our Lady of Victory Church; Jeffrey Iruthaya and Kieran Nowalk, Gahanna St. Matthew Church; Daniel Jones and Thomas Jones, Columbus St. Matthias Church; Caroline Jonesco and Drew Malouf, Powell St. Joan of Arc Church.

Maxwell Kowalski, Columbus St. Timothy Church; Simon Malmone and William

Thompson, Our Lady Queen of Apostles Parish; Keller and Khloe Maurer, Columbus St. Cecilia Church; Charles McAnespice, West Jefferson Ss. Simon & Jude Church; Andrew McDonough, Sunbury St. John Neumann Church; Darlene Mendez and Milagros Ramirez, Columbus Christ the King Church; Samantha Miller, Matthew Silva and Samuel Rogers, Columbus Immaculate Conception Church; Myles Nardi, Circleville St. Joseph Church; Tyler Olney and Noah Recker, Delaware St. Mary Church; Miya and Matthew Olson, Dover St. Joseph Church; Jocelyn Opoku, Daniel Tibua-Mensah and Elliana Owusu, Columbus St. Aloysius Church; Ivan Orduna Rios, Columbus Holy Spirit Church; Joanna and Thaddeus Schaefer, Columbus Ss. Augustine & Gabriel Church; Ryan Sielschott, Columbus St. Mary Magdalene; Charbelle Sounouyou and Loren Williams, Columbus St. Francis of Assisi Church; Deryn and Lynden Summers, Reynoldsburg St. Pius X Church; Nicholas Williams and Caydynn Young, London St. Patrick Church; and Blake Wohrer, Lancaster Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption.

Essay scholarship winners and the Catholic high schools they will be attending were Joseph Bogue (Columbus St. Francis DeSales), Thomas Dury (Columbus Bishop Watterson), Brandon Hernandez (Bishop Watterson), Kolbe Krzeczowski (Chesterton Academy of St. Benedict), Julien McElroy (St. Francis DeSales), Samuel Rogers (Bishop Watterson), Paul Thomas (Columbus St. Charles Preparatory School), Daniel Tibua-Mensah (St. Francis DeSales), Sebastien Vidal Lopez (Columbus Bishop Ready) and Robert Wickham (Bishop Watterson).

Bishop confirms teens, young adults at Guadalupe parish

Near the end of a busy Confirmation season, Bishop Earl Fernandes conferred the sacrament on 58 teens and young adults at Columbus Our Lady of Guadalupe, Star of the New Evangelization Parish at Holy Name Church on May 28.

After the evening Mass, the bishop offered some brief reflections to the congregants at the parish, which was created last year as a result of the diocese's Real Presence Real Future initiative.

As he looked out at a packed sanctuary during the Confirmation, he said he could see a hunger and thirst for Jesus and a great love for His mother, Mary.

"This is your chance to be the parish and the people that God is calling you to be," he said. "I would not say this unless I believed in you and in the power of God at work in you."

He then addressed two of the main themes of his episcopate: vocations and evangelization.

The bishop spoke directly to the young people, asking, "Where are the Latinos with regard to vocations, especially

priestly vocations? This is not meant to be a condemnation. It is meant to be an invitation to listen to God each and every day, to ask God each day how He is calling you to serve His church."

He went on to say that a million additional people are projected to be living in the diocese in the next 10 years "and every one of them needs Jesus Christ. And I need every one of you to bring Jesus Christ and the love of His mother, Mary, to them.

"And to do that, to use an Army term, I need boots on the ground. I need priests and religious willing to sacrifice to be bearers of the Good News."

With one out of seven Mass-going Catholics currently living in the diocese who consider Spanish their first language, the bishop said there is an urgent need for Spanish-speaking priests.

"My young people, we need you," Bishop Fernandes said. "I need you to help me carry out my mission, so that when I am an old bishop, 25 years from now, I can send in my resignation to the pope and say, 'Look at our church in Columbus,

look at how it's changed. These are my priests, and these are my religious, and these are my people who speak Spanish and English and Portuguese.

"We need a church that represents the people of God around the world."

The bishop urged everyone to be a "living part of our diocese, not just a

Spanish parish, and not just you young people, who will be the future of our diocese. ... I need (all of) you and I believe in you, and with the Holy Spirit at work in you, I believe we can proclaim the Good News of salvation to every creature under Heaven."



Fifty-eight teens and adults stand with their Confirmation sponsors for a blessing from Bishop Earl Fernandes on Tuesday, May 28 at Our Lady of Guadalupe, Star of the New Evangelization parish at Holy Name Church.
CT photo by Ken Snow

Bishop Griffin reflects on service, remains active at 90

By Tim Puet

For The Catholic Times

Bishop Emeritus James Griffin says he feels blessed that at age 90, he's in good health and continuing to live an active lifestyle.

"God has certainly been good to me," he said in an interview at Powell St. Joan of Arc Church. "At 90, I'm still doing the things I want to do and my doctors say I'm where I should be at this point in my life. Like anyone who has reached this point, I have some health concerns, but nothing major."

The diocese honored him on Thursday, June 13, his birthday, at an anniversary Mass in Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral.

Since retiring in early 2005, Bishop Griffin has lived in a condo in Powell. "I've been retired for 19 years and have been a retired bishop now for almost as long as I was bishop of Columbus (nearly 22 years)," he said. "I had to retire early because I needed a knee replacement, but having that procedure was a great boon to my health."

"The operation was necessary because with my knees the way they were, I could barely get through confirmations, one of the most essential parts of being a bishop. I was taking Tylenol all the time because of the pain. Once I recovered, I got back to doing all the things I used to do."

"I have cut back on some things, especially since the COVID pandemic in 2020 and 2021. I used to serve as a weekend assistant for Masses at St. Joan of Arc

but stopped that a few years ago. I might celebrate a Mass in public occasionally if asked, but mostly I say Mass in private every day on an altar I have at home," he said.

Bishop Griffin and his successor, Bishop Emeritus Frederick Campbell, who retired in 2019, continue to appear regularly at important diocesan functions, most recently at the ordination of five diocesan priests on Saturday, May 18 at the cathedral.

"There's been a great increase in the number of diocesan seminarians in recent years and I can't speak specifically about the reasons for that because I'm not in contact much with seminarians these days," he said. "But I think it's due to the emphasis Bishop Fernandes has put on the priesthood in his two years as bishop of Columbus."

"His two points of emphasis have been pursuing vocations to the priesthood vigorously and encouraging everyone in the diocese to play a role in evangelization, and I think the success of those efforts is shown in the number of young men undergoing priestly formation."

Bishop Griffin grew up in the Cleveland area in a family of seven children and continues to visit there regularly to see relatives. "Every few weeks, my one surviving sister, Mary Lou Kistner, who lives in Gahanna, and I go to see my brother-in-law Bob Barendt in Berea," he said. "The rest of the extended family gathers



Bishop Emeritus James Griffin

there and we spend the day eating and talking.

"This always has been very important to me, with most of my brothers and sisters gone, to stay in touch with the in-laws and for us to know we continue to be part of the same family."

The bishop said he's always been an early riser. "I get up at 5:30 a.m., eat breakfast, pray and say Mass, then usually take care of all my domestic chores and walk a mile every day. I still play a little golf, but it's best to say now that I go to the golf course next to my home more than I play," he said.

"I read a lot – some spiritual books, some novels, some history. With the number of books available on tape, I'm

also able to 'read' a good bit while driving, so I seldom turn on the car radio.

"The retired priests of the diocese have regular gatherings, but I don't go to them, mostly because they'd rather not have a bishop there, and I understand that. All of us may be retired, but a bishop's presence still makes a difference," he said. "Priests still call me on a regular basis, so I'm still in touch with many, just not as a group."

"One priest I remain close to is Msgr. (Joseph) Hendricks," retired pastor of Dublin St. Brigid of Kildare Church, who was vice chancellor, chancellor and vicar general of the diocese under Bishop Griffin. "We meet regularly for dinner and he usually brings another priest or two with him," he said.

Bishop Griffin said the restructuring of the diocese through parish closings and mergers that are part of its Real Presence Real Future initiative is something he had been anticipating at about this time since early in his tenure as bishop.

"Back when I was chancellor of the Diocese of Cleveland in the mid-1970s, I had a study done on the future of the clergy there, based on projected seminary enrollment and the ages of priests there, and it predicted with amazing accuracy what the number of priests would be there today and how it would necessitate parish closings and mergers," he said.

See GRIFFIN, Page 8



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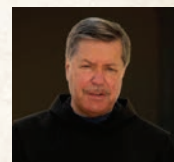
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Bishop of the Diocese of Columbus



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Has Columbus banned weddings?

Dear Father,
I just started marriage preparation and my priest said something about a marriage ban. I'm confused because I thought the Catholic Church wanted marriages. I was too nervous to ask the priest and I didn't want to look stupid. So, I'm writing anonymously to you to ask why Columbus is banning weddings.

-Bachelor Guy

Dear Bachelor Guy,

Having the first meeting with a priest about getting married can feel daunting, especially if you have never sat down and talked with a priest before. It may seem more intimidating when you're talking about marriage. What's worse is to hear from the priest that you may not be able to have a wedding because he's banning it!

What he actually meant was not "ban" but "bann." That 2nd "n" makes all the difference. Ban with one "n" means to forbid, to prohibit, as in "there is a swimming ban until the sharks go away."

When ban is used as a verb, its past tense is "banned." So, a person might think that the Diocese of Columbus has banned weddings, as if the bishop declared that there are to be no more weddings in this diocese.

I heartily assure you that nothing could be further from the truth! We want Catholic weddings. The more, the merrier. "Bann" is a noun. It means proclamation (although there is a River Bann in Ireland). This proclamation, or announcement, is tied specifically to future Catholic weddings.

The origin of the marriage bann was to forestall the possibility of invalid marriages due to matrimonial impediments, such as previous marriages that were never decreed null. Another impediment to marriage is a man who is a priest but has not been officially "laicized." (How a priest can be considered a layman could be a top-

SACRAMENTS 101

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

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



ic for another day.) Yet another potential impediment involves an extremely close blood relationship between the man and woman seeking marriage.

It used to be the case that wedding banns were announced from the pulpit at Sunday Masses and were printed in the parish bulletin. The bann supplied the names of the intended bride and groom and the date of the wedding. The announcement included words to the effect that if anyone knew of a reason these two should not be married, let that person come forward to the priest and explain the reason. The banns were typically announced for three weeks prior to the wedding.

Until recently, people didn't relocate very often from their hometown, so a person's reputation and family connections would have been more easily known. Even in our day, Google and Facebook don't always reveal some well-kept life secrets.

Today, couples preparing for marriage attest to their freedom from impediments and their parents sign affidavits stating that their son or daughter possesses the freedom to marry, especially concerning the possibility of previous marriages.

Contemporary Church law does not stipulate the use of marriage banns but leaves the matter to the conferences of bishops in each country. In the United States, there is no universal mandate for or against the publication of matrimonial banns.

In Columbus, it has been the practice since 2010 to publish marriage banns in the parish bulletin of both the bride and groom at least once three weeks before the wedding. If one or the other lives outside the diocese, we simply request that the other parish print the bann in its bulletin.

If the banns are not required by law, then why use them?

First and foremost, the public nature of the bann emphasizes the magnitude of matrimony. While parents are often the ones to supply testimony about freedom to marry, it is important that other people who know the couple be informed so that they, too, have a role in protecting the sacrament of matrimony.

Another great thing about the publication of the marriage bann is that it advertises, if you will, Catholic marriage. In our day, unfortunately cohabitation is so common that many young people don't even consider marriage as essential to a loving union of complete self-giving.

Even if it's only the parish bulletin (many of which, by the way, are also available online and therefore have a wider audience), the bann proclaims that this man and this woman are giving themselves to each other for life and want to raise a family.

Additionally, with the high rate of relocation, friends in one's current city may not know about a bride's or groom's freedom to marry. Sometimes social media can help in this regard. It is vital that family, old friends and new friends have the opportunity to speak up when necessary.

Wouldn't it be better to let a person's personal history remain secret? Not when it comes to holy matrimony. Marriage is a public act. Both the bride and groom have the right to know the major events in the personal history of a spouse, especially when it is a matter of determining the validity of the marital union.

I wish you well on your future wedding!

Learn how to contribute to a society where it's easier to be good

I am currently teaching permanent deacon candidates a course in Catholic Social Teaching and we are approaching the end of the semester. We have been reading the full texts, or, in some cases, excerpts from the full texts of papal encyclicals that define the principles that undergird the Church's teaching and the process used to illuminate the opportunities to shape a world ever more in line with charity, justice and peace.

A correct answer to dealing with any social problem presupposes the correct answer to two fundamental questions: "What is the human person?" and "What is the human person for?"

Reason and revelation tell us that the human person is a unity of body and soul created in love by God, in God's image and likeness, male and female. Sharing in the light of the divine mind through the power of human reason, the human person can detect the voice of conscience within and move in freedom toward what is good and true.

The Baltimore Catechism answered the second question in this way: "We are created to know, love and serve God in this life, and be happy with Him in the next." Thus, the human person is called to relationship, with God and with the other fellow sojourners in this earthly life, having been created in the image of God, who is a community of persons. Pope John Paul II described this call to an eternal relationship with God as our transcendent vocation and our ultimate end.

The conditions of social life and the structures that are part of its environment can either help or hinder the human person in living out a life in accord with their inherent worth and human dignity and in reaching eternal beatitude. That is why Dorothy Day, quoting her co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, Peter Maurin, would often say, "We must make the kind of society where it is easier for people to be good." The Church cares about life, poverty, unemployment, racism, war, refugees, marriage,

FAITH IN ACTION | Mark Huddy

Mark Huddy is the Episcopal Moderator for Catholic Charities and the Office for Social Concerns in the Diocese of Columbus.



the family and all other social issues because she cares about the dignity and destiny of every human person and wants to animate the followers of Christ to make it easier for people to be better by building a better society.

Every good solution to a social problem must take into account the inherent worth and dignity of every person from conception to natural death as well as their transcendent vocation and ultimate end. Creating a better society necessarily involves politics.

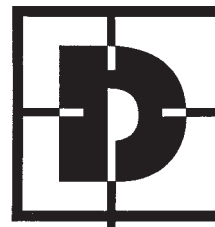
The Church recognizes what Pope Benedict XVI stated in his encyclical letter *Deus Caritas Est*: "The Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible.

She cannot and must not replace the State. Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice. She has to play her part through rational argument and she has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice, which always demands sacrifice, cannot prevail and prosper. A just society must be the achievement of politics, not of the Church. Yet the promotion of justice through efforts to bring about openness of mind and will to the demands of the common good is something which concerns the Church deeply."

Pope Benedict also recognized that the direct duty to work for just ordering of society is an important task of the laity in the Church and their participation in the political realm.

Summer is almost here, and that means election season is not far behind. The Church offers resources for us to consider as we prepare ourselves to take our proper role in the just ordering of society. The U.S. bishops' guide, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, is a helpful resource in purifying our power of reason from the narrow vision of political ads and special interests. It can be read at <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/upload/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship.pdf>. Another good resource is *Civilize It*, calling us to a better kind of politics. It can also be found on the USCCB website at <https://www.usccb.org/civilizeit>. Take time this summer to immerse yourself in these resources. We can help to create a society where it is easier for people to be good.

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Thank you, Jesus, for chance to see world outside prison

By Michele Williams

I recently went on my first road trip in many years. I had to go to Franklin Medical Center, the prison hospital, for some specialized testing. My feet were shackled, my hands cuffed to my waist, and I had to wear a hideous orange transportation outfit. However, my barely containable excitement over leaving the Ohio Reformatory for Women for a day completely overrode the discomfort (and embarrassing fashion statement).

The fully-armed officers driving and escorting were ones I've known for years, giving me a sense of relief and safety. They laughed and only rolled their eyes a little when I jokingly asked if we could stop at McDonald's on the way. The answer was a definitive "no."

When we got rolling on the highway, it seemed we were traveling extremely fast -- until we were passed by car after SUV after truck. So, apparently, we were not speeding and I just didn't remember what going 65 mph was like. From my seat in the back of the van, I could feel the road as it created a kind of rhythm that was quite soothing for my over-excited self.

With my attention riveted to the scenery, looking through the bars on the windows wasn't difficult. It's the same as when I look out the window of my cell; while the bars obviously still exist, I don't necessarily see them, I see the great outdoors.

On this trip, I was busy reading billboards! The very first one I saw outside of Marysville proclaimed this: "Who the Son sets free is free indeed," and "JESUS" was highlighted as the background. I didn't expect Him to be on a highway billboard! I was struck deeply by the message and all I could muster was "thank you, Jesus." Though I was not technically free, I sure felt free indeed. I truly hoped every person in every vehicle saw that message because it was

profoundly meaningful for every day.

Some of the billboards changed seemingly by magic -- I would blink and a different message appeared. It took me a minute to realize they weren't magic, they were electronic. But they sure did the trick, capturing my eyes with their snazzy changing colors.

Sooner than I expected, we arrived at the outskirts of Dublin and got stuck in my first traffic jam in 30 years! Several times, we came to a complete stop on the freeway, and I was probably the only one really happy about that. It gave me more time to look around and take in the countless changes in landscape, cars, buildings, and to people-watch. There were plenty of commuters looking less than happy at the traffic slowdown and I drew the conclusion that this is nothing new for them.

I was particularly thrilled to see the Anthony Thomas candy factory. It's not quite as majestic as Willy Wonka's but significant enough to make me sing the "Oompa Loompa" song to myself. If the windows were not sealed shut in the van, I bet I could have smelled chocolate-scented air. A tour and a tasting are now on my To Do When I Get Home list, for sure!

Much farther south was Cooper Stadium. I was surprised and a little bummed at its condition. When I was young, my family used to go to Columbus Clippers games there; our seats were behind the third base dugout. My brothers and I would run up and down the ramps and go exploring. Dad taught me the fundamentals of baseball scorekeeping, and Mom bought us Cracker Jack. What more could a kid ask for?

After my appointment at FMC, the return trip was equally fascinating. We passed Westland Mall as it was being torn down. It evoked memories of spending Saturdays at Northland with my friends. I know Northland is gone too, though. Since I've never been to the Easton, Polaris or Tuttle Crossing malls, those are all

on my TDWIGH list because I'm a mall-girl at heart.

The fields between Columbus and Marysville were breathtaking, although there aren't as many as years ago. The ones remaining gave me a powerful sense of openness and tranquility. It was too early in the season to plow, so covering the fields were vast patches of knee-high yellow flowers. I don't know what they were, but they were beautiful. I just wanted to stand in the middle of the field, be surrounded by flowers and such serene stillness, and maybe hear some crickets. As we passed by, I was greatly appreciative of the view and thanked God for creating it.

The regular Marysville exit was closed, so we had to detour through part of town. I was absolutely overjoyed at being in civilization!

It was a blessing to be in the midst of regular people doing regular things: mowing the lawn, chasing a dog, sitting on a front porch that looked exactly like my grandparents' porch. I became teary-eyed and sentimental as I remembered those easy, wonderful days.

By the time we pulled into ORW's long driveway, I was emotionally exhausted. My journey was over. I'd been so close to society, but I'd not set foot on the ground. This realization stoked the fire in my soul to do whatever it takes to become worthy of a second chance -- of putting my foot on society's ground.

I want to be a real Ohioan, not just an inmate passing through on a medical trip. And one day I will, because Jesus reminded me on a highway billboard that there is hope for my future. I am so grateful this incredible excursion allowed me a foretaste of heaven in "the heart of it all."

Michele Williams is an inmate at the Ohio Reformatory for Women.

Aroused consciences changing history

Forty-five years ago, *The New York Times* cast its gimlet eye over the first three days of Pope John Paul II's return to his Polish homeland. Reading the signs of those times through the conventional wisdom of the day, the Grey Lady then offered a typically *ex cathedra* judgment in a June 5, 1979, editorial:

As much as the visit of Pope John Paul II must reinvigorate and reinspire the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, it does not threaten the political order of the nation or of Eastern Europe.

Oops.

To begin with, the Polish Church did not need reinvigorating or reinspiring in June 1979 -- it was the strongest local Church behind the Iron Curtain, the repository of Poland's authentic national identity, and a constant thorn in the side of the communist authorities. (Stalin had famously said that trying to make Poland communist was like fitting a saddle on a cow. Little did he know.)

As for the "political order of the nation," well, Polish Communist party boss Edward Gierek surreptitiously watched John Paul's homecoming Mass on June 2 from a hotel room high above what was then Warsaw's "Victory Square." When he heard the pope call on the Holy Spirit to "renew the face of the Earth -- of this land!" as hundreds of thousands of Poles chanted "We want God! We want God!", he surely felt the winds of change blowing, even if the anemometers in New York failed to register what amounted to a Force 10 storm on the Beaufort Scale.

And as to the "political order ... of Eastern Europe," America's premier historian of the Cold War, Yale's John Lewis Gaddis, would write in 2005 that "when John Paul

THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

George Weigel

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



II kissed the ground at the Warsaw Airport on June 2, 1979, he began the process by which communism in Poland -- and ultimately everywhere else in Europe -- would come to an end." I had made precisely that argument 13 years before in my book *The Final Revolution*. There, I suggested that, while many causal factors shaped what we know as the Revolution of 1989, the indispensable factor determining when the revolution happened, and how it happened, was John Paul II.

What did he do, and how did he do it?

What he did was ignite a revolution of conscience, which preceded and made possible the nonviolent political revolution that brought down the Berlin Wall, emancipated the countries of east central Europe, and, through the auto-liberation of the Baltic States and Ukraine, imploded the Soviet Union. The tinder for such a revolution of conscience -- the decisions of men and women determined to "live in the truth," as Václav Havel put it -- had been in place for some years in east central Europe. Activists encouraged by the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and its "Basket Three" human rights provisions built organizations like Czechoslovakia's Charter 77, Lithuania's Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights, and Poland's KOR (Workers' De-

fense Committee) that were linked to "Helsinki Watch Groups" in North America and western Europe. John Paul supplied the flame that lit that tinder and helped keep the fire burning by his vocal support for those who were taking "the risk of freedom" (as he would describe it at the United Nations in 1995).

And how did that happen?

John Paul's revolution of conscience began when he restored to the Polish people the truth about their history and culture, which Poland's communist regime had both distorted and suppressed since 1945. Live in that truth, the Pope suggested from June 2 through June 10, 1979, and you will find tools of resistance that communism's brute force cannot match. John Paul didn't design those tools; the Polish people did that when, 14 months later, they formed the Solidarity trade union, which later evolved into a vast social movement. But the movement's heart and soul -- like its name -- was shaped by the thought and witness of John Paul II.

The Pope's friend, philosopher-priest Joseph Tischner, once described Solidarity-the-movement as a great forest planted by aroused consciences. Father Tischner's brilliant image is one that bears reflection today. For the West needs "reforestation": a planting of new seeds of conscience, reflecting the built-in truths about human dignity to which John Paul II appealed during those nine days of June 1979. Those were days on which modern history pivoted -- for once, in a more humane and noble direction.

In Professor Gaddis's words, John Paul II was one of those "visionaries" who, as "saboteurs of the status quo," were able to "widen the range of historical possibility." Are there such visionaries among us today?

Navigating the mountains in our lives

Recently, I went on pilgrimage to Medjugorje, Bosnia Herzegovina. One of the highlights for me was climbing Cross Mountain or Krizevac on the morning of Pentecost.

There is a beautiful cross that the villagers erected at the top of the mountain in 1933 for the 1,900th anniversary of Christ's crucifixion; this was done many decades before pilgrims began visiting Medjugorje as a spiritual pilgrimage to the place where Our Lady, Queen of Peace began appearing to six young visionaries in 1981 and continues to be present to them today.

A group of about 25 people, all ages, from my pilgrimage group climbed Cross Mountain together on the morning of Pentecost and I have some reflections to share with you.

As I stood at the foot of the mountain on that warm May morning, I looked up at the steep rise and the endless, giant, craggy rocks, and I wasn't sure of my decision to do this anymore.

Isn't that like the challenges in our lives? When we are faced with a trial, challenge or a Cross, our initial inclination is to run away or ask Jesus to take it away. It feels daunting, overwhelming, and we don't know if we can do it. We forget, even for a moment, that we are never alone -- Jesus is always with us through it all and that all things are possible with Him.

I was with a special group, a community, composed of beautiful new and old friends, all ages, from all over the world. We are truly sisters and brothers in Christ and we would ascend and descend together. I would have gone home had there not been the love and support of our pilgrim community that is madly in love with Jesus.

So, I took a step. One. Step. At. A. Time. My heart was racing. I'm physically active and I knew I was strong, but I have a pacemaker, so my heart rate gets up there, which is OK, but still, it was disconcerting to feel my heart pounding so hard and fast in my chest.

Trust. Jesus, I trust in you. I trust that you are here with me, that you have placed the people I need around me and that I can do this. My first big, holy lesson was to trust Jesus totally, trust my body and trust the people He placed with me.

HOLY AND HEALTHY | Lori Crock

Lori Crock is a SoulCore Rosary prayer and exercise leader and a St. Brendan parishioner. Lori is online at hollyandhealthycatholic.com, where she shares her passion for faith and fitness.



We made it to the first station, second station and third station. We prayed the Stations of the Cross the entire way up. I can do this. Someone even handed me the booklet to read the reflection at one of the stations. Lord, give me the voice to proclaim your love, your victory, and your sacrifice. Blessed Mother Mary, I feel you close.

Our Lady's presence is everywhere in Medjugorje and she was with me on that mountainside. I felt her love and tenderness. I felt her nudging me along and even prompting me to slow down and to enter in to this experience — to stop striving and start really trusting. How must she have felt walking the Way of the Cross with Her Son? My eyes teared up as I thought about her pain, her sadness and her strength in accepting that this was how it had to be. My steps grew steadier and my heart pounding seemed less intense.

We continued our ascent. At one point, we bunched up a bit as we moved into a narrower stretch of the mountain. I took a bigger step forward than normal and I began to fall backward, clearly off balance. There was no fear, no shriek, no panic, surprisingly. There was a supernatural calm around me as one member of our group put his hand on my back and gently pressed me forward. I didn't miss a step. I didn't fall. Jesus, you are truly watching over me and our group. Gratitude and joy moved me onward. Lord, you are truly alive in us!

We hiked with a good cadence at this point, seeking shade and a bit of rest and water at each station. I noticed an elderly woman and her adult daughter gently guiding her exactly where to place her feet with each step. Many examples of patience and perseverance around us.

We had some dear ones in our group checking in on others to make sure we were all OK. It was a beautiful symphony of love, support, kindness and joy in the spirit of the Acts

of the Apostles. I began to pray for the intercession of the 12. I rejoiced in the remarkable transformation of the first apostles on Pentecost hovering in fear in the Upper Room — and then all of a sudden, full of zeal and courage to proclaim the love and truth of Jesus after receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Jesus, pour this into us in a new way today!

I continued to pray ... the Hail Mary prayer, the Surrender prayer, offering step after step for my son whose birthday happened to be on that day, for my daughter, my mom, my husband and all of our extended family, friends, my parish, diocese, ministries, our country, our world, our priests — for those who had asked me to pray and for their intentions. Unlike most days, there was plenty of time to pray.

We reached the top of the mountain and we paused to rest and pray and to give thanks at the beautiful cross. I found a shady spot and sat on a rock to reflect and rest before the journey down the hill — honoring this blessed time and honoring my body, made in His image, thank you Jesus.

Most pilgrims dislike the descent even more than the ascent. We are tired, it's slow and it can be especially hard on the knees with greater risks for falling. For me, it was peaceful. After conquering the ascent, I began the hike down on my own — not with the group — as many of us did. I was lost in my thoughts and prayers, now fully entered into this experience of body, mind and soul united with Jesus through Mary. There was no fear; I could hear myself say, just take a step and another step. Be aware, be in the present moment, do not rush, stay close to me Jesus.

I walked a bit behind a friend who did the entire hike barefoot. I prayed for her and her intentions. Keeping an eye on her freed me from thinking about myself and my needs.

At one point, there was finally a spot of flat, open dirt with no rocks, and I thought, wow, isn't this nice? Those rocks are interminable! I took a confident step, slipped and fell while taking the easiest step I'd taken all day. I sat there for a minute on my bum asking the Lord for the lesson in this. As passersby asked if I was OK, and I said yes, laughing, I realized that I'd lost my

See MOUNTAINS, Page 8

Examining our hearts

ALL THAT WE HAVE

MaryBeth Eberhard

MaryBeth Eberhard writes about marriage, life experiences of a large family and special needs. She attends Sunbury St. John Neumann Church.



osity has formed. Perhaps I have spent too much time pointing out the negative and the obvious amazingness of my children has been blanketed by my own tendency toward correction. Perhaps also I have been too focused on worrying about the temptations so very available to them that I do not celebrate their victories against those very moments. Hmm. Thoughts to ponder.

The role of mother has such influence. Is there not a more powerful role in a child's life than that of a mother? It is a beautiful sanctifying, and oh so humbling, journey to heaven. God willing. We have goals of laughter, warm memories of snuggles, books read, late night Dairy Queen runs, belting out songs in the car, but we also have obligations to help form our children in virtue. While overwhelming to contemplate, I think the key is in the words that we speak and the words we teach them to speak to themselves.

Here's how I'm beginning to change hearts in my home and reclaim this beautiful practice of examining our day through the lens of Christ.

Step 1: I have explained what I see happening. Satan

sees us examining our days and he creeps into the gap where we fall short, and whispers lies. We need to recognize the lies and know how God speaks to us. Hint: God does not condemn.

Step 2: I've taken to writing down what I've done well that day; victory moments. Not what I've done, as I'm tempted to do. I made a healthy dinner for the kids. I sat and read a book giving myself rest. I prayed my rosary in the car while running errands. This helps me fight against the lies I'm tempted to let in. For example: I'm not a good mom. I am stretching myself too thin. Etc.

Step 3: Invite Jesus in. Ask ourselves where Jesus was in our day. See the day through His lens. Where did He show himself? Perhaps every examination and every conversation should begin with this as the focus. When we do this, we draw ourselves back to His heart where we are sheltered and can find peace. This is where I need to grow right now both as a mother and as a follower of Christ.

Colossians 3:15 reminds us to "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful." Examination of our days can lead to gratitude and peace. In my house, peace equals sleep, and when my children sleep peacefully, momma sleeps peacefully. Lord, help us draw closer to you through our motherhood. May we, in instructing our children in the faith, do so in a way that helps them feel your love, mercy and presence.

I am in a season of going back to the basics of my faith in many ways and in doing so I am reminding myself to teach them to my younger kids. With four young adult children and four younger children, it's easy to lose track of what has been taught to whom and when. This was the case when I saw a surprise guest on the couch at the foot of my bed this morning. I found my daughter snuggled on the couch at the foot of my bed this morning wearing a beautiful rosary and clutching her Mary statue given to her at her first communion. When I went upstairs to turn off her bedroom light, I found she had made a little shrine on her nightstand with prayer cards, a candle, her bible. Clearly, she had had a difficult night. I loved her response of surrounding herself with anchors that help her feel safe and loved.

As I pondered when these nights began to get harder for her, I realized it was when I taught them the habit of a nightly examination of conscience. I shared with the kids that taking a moment to look at your day and think about where you fell short of who God made you to be is good. We can hit the reset button. What a gift! However, I think the devil can take what is meant for good and speak words of anxiety, unworthiness and condemnation into it. I've noticed a trend with my kids reporting in on what they have gotten done rather than celebrating their wins. From a stolen mini-Starburst to chores left undone, a spirit of what I think is scrupu-

Eucharistic pilgrimage shows unity among diversity

By Sister Constance Veit, Isp

After participating in the launch of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage in New Haven, Connecticut, I had the grace of re-joining it in New York.

Although a New York native and frequent visitor to the Big Apple, the pilgrimage introduced me to areas of the city that I had never seen or experienced.

Over the course of four days, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament visited many parishes, schools, healthcare institutions and even Central Park. He found himself at home among the most devout and made himself known even among those who do not know him.

We Little Sisters were blessed to participate in several pilgrimage events, each of which showcased a unique neighborhood or aspect of New York.

One day we participated in stops at a Catholic nursing home and high school in the Bronx. The next day we attended Mass at the Mother Cabrini Shrine in upper Manhattan and then went to a prayer vigil at St. Vincent Ferrer Church in the Upper East Side, the city's wealthiest neighborhood.

On Trinity Sunday, we attended Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral and then climbed

up on the pedestrian level of the Brooklyn Bridge to witness the handover of the Blessed Sacrament from the Archdiocese of New York to the Diocese of Brooklyn.

Finally, after processing along some of the borough's oldest streets, we prayed at Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Cathedral.

That our participation in this portion of the Eucharistic Pilgrimage began in a nursing home seemed so natural to us. We felt right at home as we knelt among the wheelchairs in the chapel of St. Patrick's Home, thanking God, who never forgets the poor and lowly, that the pilgrimage organizers had not forgotten them either.

Similar sentiments filled our hearts as we prayed with people of all ages at Cardinal Hayes High School in the South Bronx later that day. The setting and music were modest, but the preaching and prayers were lively, heartfelt and very real.

Surely, Jesus was pleased to be among those who were so aware of their need for him.

Like the evening at Cardinal Hayes, the program at St. Frances Cabrini shrine the next day was bilingual and the congregation predominantly Spanish-speaking.

The Shrine is home to Cabrini Immigrant Services, which offers much-needed assistance to newcomers from all over the world.

Once again, it was touching to see Jesus

at home among simple people seeking refuge and a second chance in life.

Later, we found ourselves in one of the most beautiful neo-gothic churches I have ever seen. We enjoyed reflections drawn from Dominican saints and listened to Latin motets exquisitely sung by a schola clothed in crisp cassocks and surplices.

As simple as the previous evening had been, this night's program reflected the architectural, artistic and musical richness of the church.

Sunday's celebration at St. Patrick's Cathedral also showcased the church's spiritual and artistic riches.

At the conclusion of Mass, Cardinal Timothy Dolan offered Benediction outdoors on the front steps of the Cathedral and then hundreds of people followed the Blessed Sacrament in procession through Manhattan.

Jesus was truly among us!

As the nearly 15-mile procession reached its climax on the Brooklyn Bridge, hundreds of tourists walked around, seemingly oblivious to what was happening, but some stood respectfully as the throng of faithful advanced across the Bridge, singing and praying in English, Spanish and Latin as cars sped in both directions on the Bridge below.

Once again, I was struck by Jesus' humility in allowing himself to be carried among his people in the ordinariness and grittiness of city life.

Our pilgrimage afternoon concluded in the Maronite Cathedral of Our Lady of Lebanon.

I later learned that this church had been built in the mid-1800s by a Christian group tracing their lineage back to the original pilgrims who landed in Plymouth in 1620.

By the early 20th century, the group's numbers were diminishing and the number of Eastern-rite Syrians and Lebanese in New York was growing. The church of the pilgrims was remodeled and reconsecrated, becoming Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church.

As we knelt in the Maronite Cathedral singing O Sacrament Most Holy, Tantum Ergo and finally, Holy God We Praise Thy Name, it struck me that we had sung the same hymns and witnessed the same tradition of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament along each stop of our pilgrimage.

Regardless of the great diversity we witnessed in New York, there were elements common to each celebration.

How beautiful it is to realize that in the midst of such great diversity, there is profound unity in the Body and Blood of Christ.

Sister Constance Veit is the communications director for the Little Sisters of the Poor in the United States and an occupational therapist.



SEPTEMBER 28, 2024
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Family rate:

Save \$5 per person when registering at least 3 participants at one time.

PRESENTED BY THE FRIENDS OF THE JOSEPHINUM

GRIFFIN, continued from Page 4

"I did the same sort of study in the mid-1980s after I'd been here a few years, and it showed that this diocese would have to make the same types of changes at this time. So what's happening now didn't take anyone by surprise.

"I think Bishop Fernandes and Bishop (Robert) Brennan before him have been doing an excellent job explaining the situation and bringing about the changes the diocese is undergoing in a way that's been well-received."

Bishop Griffin said he feels the Catholic Church is still recovering from the effects of the COVID pandemic. "I think the Church in America suffered greatly as a result of COVID," he said.

"Only about 80 percent of regular Mass goers have returned, so in America, the Church is not as strong as it used to be in the public square. But in Africa and other places, the Church is thriving. History establishes that the Church goes through periods of advancement and decline wherever it is, but it's always there."

MOUNTAINS, continued from Page 7

focus, got a little cocky and had taken my eye off the terrain and also off of Jesus. When Peter set out of the boat to walk on water, and he took his eyes off Jesus, He began to sink. That made me smile. So many lessons on the mountainside!

We returned to town in time for the Pentecost Mass and we were ever so

Bishop Griffin also said he still has a "bucket list" of things he'd like to do but prefers to keep it private.

"Approaching 90, you do a lot of reflection and think about 'What are the best things I did?'" he said. "When I look back, I find these were the things that involved helping individuals, many of whom were in terrible straits when they came to me. These are stories I can't tell because they're kept in confidence between me and those people. But there are a number of them and they give me great satisfaction.

"When I became bishop of Columbus after being an auxiliary bishop in Cleveland, I read somewhere that most bishops serve a diocese for about 11 or 12 years. I thought maybe I'd get 15, and it turns out I had 21, plus another 19 in retirement. I never imagined I could be of such help to so many people. When I wake up every day, the first thing I do is thank God for the privilege of continuing to serve Him."

thankful that everyone in our group made it up and down the mountain without injury. We praise you Jesus for coming to us in this very special way, on such a special day, I continue to reflect on how you are working in us, and through us, and on all of the mountains in our lives.

Parishes celebrate Corpus Christi Sunday with processions

Eucharistic processions took place throughout the diocese for the Solemnity of the Body of Blood of Christ on Sunday, June 2 and the following day.

Outdoor processions have long been an annual tradition at parishes on Corpus Christi Sunday as a devotion to Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

Many processions began after Mass and followed routes around church grounds. Others passed through neighborhoods or business districts as a public witness to bring Christ, who is truly present Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the host contained in the monstrance, to the world.

Later this month, the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage's Seton Route will go through the diocese on the way to Indianapolis for the National Eucharistic Congress in July.

Among the diocesan parishes reporting Eucharistic processions on Corpus Christi Sunday weekend were Columbus St. Patrick, Immaculate Conception and St. Andrew; Westerville St. Paul the Apostle; Somerset Holy Trinity; New Albany Church of the Resurrection; Gahanna St. Matthew and Johnstown Church of the Ascension.



Eucharistic processions on Corpus Christi Sunday, June 2, and the following day were held (clockwise from top left) at Columbus St. Patrick, Somerset Holy Trinity, Gahanna St. Matthew, New Albany Church of the Resurrection, Johnstown Church of the Ascension, Columbus St. Andrew and Westerville St. Paul the Apostle. Submitted photos

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Watterson graduate feels blessed to be perpetual Eucharistic pilgrim

By Hannah Heil
Catholic Times Reporter

Matthew Heidenreich, a Columbus Bishop Watterson High School and Delaware St. Mary School graduate, is one of several pilgrims traveling across the United States with Jesus in the Eucharist ahead of the National Eucharistic Congress in July.

The Perpetual Pilgrims are a group of young adults dedicated to full-time travel from May to July, accompanying the Eucharistic Lord on His journey to the 10th National Eucharistic Congress, which will be held July 17-21 in Indianapolis.

The National Eucharistic Pilgrimage consists of four routes crossing the United States from the north, south, east and west. The routes will meet in Indianapolis on July 17 for the congress.

Heidenreich, who is currently in his second year as a student at the University of Alabama, is traveling along the northern route, known as the Marian Route. His journey began in the Diocese of Crookston, Minnesota and will continue into Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana.

"It's unlike anything I've ever done before, and it's unlike anything this nation has ever seen before," Heidenreich said.

He said every day of the pilgrimage has been different. The day's activities depend on the preferences of the diocese that the pilgrims cross through.

Typically, he said, upon arriving at a parish, pilgrims participate in the celebration of the Mass or a Holy Hour with the Eucharistic Lord, which is often followed by a Eucharistic procession. He said processions can be a mile or sometimes 12 miles in duration.

"No one has traveled this far with Jesus since the time of the Apostles, which is mind boggling," he said. "This is a once in a lifetime event. It's really a blessing to be able to participate in this and also to bring this to so many communities."

Perpetual pilgrims visit multiple Catholic churches every day of the pilgrimage. In larger cities, Heidenreich said,



Matthew Heidenreich (right) of Delaware is one of the perpetual pilgrims on the Marian Route of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage covering the entire distance from Minnesota to Indiana en route to the National Eucharistic Congress in July. CNA photo

pilgrims might visit as many as 10 or 11 churches in a day.

He said evenings often consist of Adoration and a fellowship dinner or potluck. The perpetual pilgrims stay with host families during their journey.

Eucharistic processions through various towns and cities have attracted many people who fall to their knees in worship, Heidenreich said. Several people have joined the pilgrims and processed with them.

"I've been awestruck by just how receptive people are," he said. "I think a lot of us were expecting hostility, were expecting aggressive reactions, and that just hasn't been the case."

Heidenreich said he has witnessed the Lord reveal Himself throughout the pilgrimage. He has encountered Christ as King and is learning its meaning, he said.

For some places along the route, the encounter with Christ in the Eucharist

is similar to His entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday as many waved palm branches and shouted "hosanna" to the King.

"It's been surprisingly beautiful to watch how other people receive Him, how other people are welcoming Him," Heidenreich said. "All these people being brought back to faith is, in a way, just so edifying to us as pilgrims and to me especially, watching how towns are welcoming our King with church bells, with gongs sometimes, with songs, all sorts of things."

On Sunday, June 16, the Marian Route will pass through Champion, Wisconsin, located in the Diocese of Green Bay, and visit the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion. The day will include the celebration of Mass, a Eucharistic rosary procession and Eucharistic Adoration at the shrine.

Our Lady of Champion is the only approved Marian apparition in the United States. The Blessed Mother appeared there in 1859, identifying herself as "the Queen of Heaven who prays for the conversion of sinners."

The Marian Route, because it passes through the apparition site, is named in her honor. The Blessed Mother is the patroness of the route.

During an earlier Eucharistic procession in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Heidenreich said, the Eucharist was displayed in a monstrance used in the last national Eucharistic congress, which was held in St. Paul-Minneapolis in 1941.

"Seeing that monstrance, seeing how many people came out was like a foretaste of the Congress and got me really

excited," he said.

The National Eucharistic Congress in July will be the nation's 10th Eucharistic congress. An estimated 80,000 people are expected to attend, the Catholic News Agency reported.

The first National Eucharistic Congress took place in 1865 at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. This year's congress is an opportunity for Catholics to resume the work begun 129 years ago by numerous clergy, religious and lay people.

"I think that the experience will be very much so this revival, this re-revelation of the Eucharist, re-experiencing His presence there, and then, also, I think that the Holy Spirit is really going to bless that," Heidenreich said.

From June 24 to June 30, the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage will pass through the Diocese of Columbus. Perpetual pilgrims on the eastern route, known as the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Route, will hold processions and make stops at various diocesan churches.

The eastern route is named for the first American-born saint to be canonized by the Church. She was born in New York and established the first Catholic girls' school in Maryland – both are states that the eastern route passed through.

Because Heidenreich is on the Marian Route, traveling in the northern part of the country, he will not be part of local diocesan processions. However, he is praying for those back home.

"My heart still goes out for the community that I'm from – from Columbus – and so, I am interceding for Columbus, and I know that the Lord is going to do great things," he said.

Heidenreich applied to be a perpetual pilgrim and was invited to serve on the Marian Route. He said he could submit preferences and was matched with a route. The pilgrims' placement was mainly based on the specific needs of each route, he said.

Other routes include the St. Juan Diego Route, which covers the southern part of the United States, and the St. Junipero Serra Route, which is traversing the western part of the country.

While he has some responsibilities as a pilgrim, Heidenreich said the pilgrimage ultimately has brought him closer to Christ.

"It's been this beautiful process of just following after our Lord step by step and learning together and learning from Him," Heidenreich said of his experience with his team.

"At its heart, it has been just this experience of intimately following Jesus closer and closer every day, which has been life changing."



Columbus Bishop Watterson High School graduate Matthew Heidenreich holds the canopy over the Blessed Sacrament during a procession in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on the Marian Route of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage. Photo courtesy National Eucharistic Pilgrimage

DIOCESAN FINANCIAL REPORT



MY DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

Fiscal 2023 saw our Church and Diocese return to relative normalcy with lingering effects of the pandemic subsiding. We are also persevering with the implementation of the Real Presence Real Future initiative. In all of this, we depend on the love of the risen Christ to bring hope in the midst of our ongoing challenges. Please know that I pray for you each and every day that you will look to Christ and receive His love.

As your Bishop, it is my responsibility to provide all Catholics in the Diocese of Columbus with an annual view of our financial position and activity. I am pleased to present to you the financial reports of the Diocese of Columbus for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. Our independent accounting firm has completed their procedures on our Financial statements and have issued an unmodified opinion on them.

We continue to see good progress in our reports to indicate we are returning to pre-pandemic operations. The upturn in the market provided significant gains in our endowment and investment funds as well as a large decrease in our pension fund liabilities. On the following pages, we provide the detail on significant variances between fiscal 2022 and fiscal 2023.

Please know that I continue to be humbled and honored by your generosity for our parishes, schools, and Diocesan programs. While our Diocese faces many challenges at this time, we also have a great opportunity to evangelize and carry out our mission for years to come. Your continued support is critical to our success.

Grateful for your generosity during the past year and offering my prayerful best wishes, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Earl K. Fernandez

MOST REVEREND EARL K. FERNANDES
Bishop of the Diocese of Columbus



**DIOCESAN ORGANIZATION
FINANCIAL REVIEW | FOR FYE JUNE 30, 2023 & 2022**



The financial statements titled **CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS – DIOCESAN ORGANIZATION** represent the combined financial position and functional expenses for the Chancery, the Catholic Cemeteries, the Diocesan Offices and funds managed at a diocesan level (i.e. Parish Aid, Self Insurance and Varia Trust Funds). The information presented was extracted from audited financial statements. These statements do not include the financial position or activity of our parishes or schools, or agencies that are governed by their own boards, as each reports their financial information separately to their communities.

The financial statements for the Diocesan Organization are audited by the independent CPA firm of Schneider Downs & Co., Inc. The audit was conducted according to auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. For the fiscal years ended June 30, 2023 and June 30, 2022, the auditors issued an unmodified opinion.

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, Net Assets increased by 26.6% from the previous fiscal year. Our financial position and results were primarily impacted by favorable investment performance and a significant decrease in our pension liabilities. The highlights of the Financial statements are:

First, our liability for pension benefits in the Lay and Priest plans decreased by over \$20 million. In accordance with current accounting principles, we are required to measure these liabilities using current economic factors although these liabilities will be funded and paid well into the future (over the next 40 years or more). The overall positive movement in the discount rate at year-end, along with strong market returns on pension assets, decreased the value of our liabilities. The impact of these changes has been recognized as an increase in net assets in the Statement of Activity. It should be noted that although we reflect an overall liability for pension benefits, our actuaries have confirmed that our pension plans are fully funded.

Second, our investment and invested trust funds bounced back from weak performance in fiscal year 2022 and increased \$8 million in fiscal year 2023.

Third, revenues from The Appeal for 2023 came in at \$6.4 million which was nearly a 5% increase over 2022 performance.

Finally, we continue to see a decrease in the issuance of new Parish Aid Fund loans for major fundraising and capital campaigns at the Parish level. These campaigns were delayed until recommendations from the Diocesan Strategic Plan, Real Presence/Real Future were finalized.

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS - DIOCESAN ORGANIZATIONS

COMBINED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS	As of 6/30/2023	As of 6/30/2022
Cash & cash equivalents	\$15,972,355	\$25,360,829
Accounts receivable, net	5,277,324	3,628,796
Pledges receivable, net	1,442,576	1,182,997
Inventory	1,944,246	1,974,701
Prepaid expenses	143,361	10,592
Investments	156,278,944	148,168,783
Loans and advances receivable, net	12,978,495	14,307,236
Land under sale contract	3,576,893	3,576,893
Property and equipment, net	18,597,361	16,067,745
Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts	38,581,827	36,465,450
Total Assets	\$254,793,382	\$250,744,022
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	\$1,784,057	\$1,743,791
Agency funds	365,588	387,558
Deposits payable	105,215,489	107,253,972
Accrued expenses	2,049,167	2,010,452
Deferred revenue	150,365	71,174
Self-insurance reserve	6,182,000	3,065,000
Priest post-retirement benefits	9,434,592	10,616,393
Liability for pension benefits - lay	15,763,589	33,789,709
Liability for pension benefits - priests	1,558,444	3,132,923
Total Liabilities	142,503,291	162,070,972
NET ASSETS	112,290,091	88,673,050
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$254,793,382	\$250,744,022

COMBINED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

REVENUES:	Year Ended 6/30/2023	Year Ended 6/30/2022
Annual appeal, net	\$6,396,370	\$6,112,617
Investment income, net	3,410,415	2,580,968
Realized/unrealized (loss) gain on investments	4,013,322	(15,818,866)
Change in fmv of beneficial interests in perpetual trusts	3,204,601	(5,329,396)
Operating revenue, net	2,729,578	6,549,772
Diocesan assessment	4,548,725	4,335,872
Gain on sale of land under sale contract		1,055,874
Gain on sale of property and equipment		1,017,884
Other	54,223	44,552
Contributions & other additions	2,090,197	1,307,803
Contribution of net assets	1,424,492	-
Total Revenues, Gifts, & Grants	27,871,923	1,857,080
EXPENSES:		
Program expenses	22,444,005	20,844,486
Management and general	2,574,251	3,056,103
Fundraising	737,893	838,810
Total Expenses	25,756,149	24,739,399
Change in net assets prior to pension-related changes other than net periodic pension cost	2,115,774	(22,882,319)
Pension-related changes other than net periodic pension cost	21,501,267	10,115,455
Changes In Net Assets	23,617,041	(12,766,864)
NET ASSETS		
Beginning of year	88,673,050	101,439,914
End of year	\$112,290,091	\$88,673,050

COMBINED STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

	Year Ended 6/30/2023				Year Ended 6/30/2022			
	Programs	Mgmt & General	Fundraising	Total	Programs	Mgmt & General	Fundraising	Total
Compensation and benefits	\$9,416,001	\$523,610	\$-	\$9,939,611	\$8,361,182	\$838,962	\$204,680	\$9,404,824
Direct expenses	7,654,320	325,663	679,520	8,659,503	6,703,878	342,473	502,116	7,548,467
Interest	1,956,870	-	-	1,956,870	1,816,917	-	-	1,816,917
Cost of goods sold	1,204,100	-	-	1,204,100	1,331,779	-	-	1,331,779
Other	183,032	232,775	-	415,807	441,666	532,377	-	974,043
Professional services	149,760	161,740	-	311,500	776,485	-	-	776,485
Occupancy	759,564	144,075	-	903,639	501,014	162,637	-	663,651
Pension Service Cost	-	440,984	-	440,984	-	521,140	-	521,140
Depreciation	119,932	339,830	-	459,762	143,862	329,510	-	473,372
Office expenses	432,760	5,308	58,373	496,441	300,300	6,904	129,694	436,898
Information technology	79,156	360,123	-	439,279	6,166	294,826	-	300,992
Contract services	245,843	37,458	-	283,301	274,786	22,281	-	297,067
Travel	87,773	2,601	-	90,374	80,254	2,507	865	83,626
Publicity	79,960	-	-	79,960	69,781	-	1,279	71,060
Seminars and meetings	74,934	84	-	75,018	36,416	2,486	176	39,078
Total Expenses	\$22,444,005	\$2,574,251	\$737,893	\$25,756,149	\$20,844,486	\$3,056,103	\$838,810	\$24,739,399

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS HIGH SCHOOLS



DIOCESAN HIGH SCHOOLS FINANCIAL REVIEW FOR FYE JUNE 30, 2023 & 2022

The financial statements titled **CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS – HIGH SCHOOLS**, represent the combined financial position and functional expenses for the Diocesan High Schools.

The financial statements for the High Schools are reviewed by the independent CPA firm of Schneider Downs & Co., Inc. The review was conducted according to Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

On an overall basis, Net Assets for the High Schools increased 11.3% or \$13.7 million. 2023 was a very positive fiscal year for several reasons:

The High Schools experienced a positive market return on endowment assets that generated net realized and unrealized gains of \$4.1 million in 2023 versus a loss of \$5.7 million in 2022. This accounts for the majority of the change in Revenues and Support.

Additionally, the High Schools were eligible for the Employment Retention Credit (ERC) and, in total, qualified for \$5.8 million in credits. ERC is part of the CARES Act which is a federal program to assist organizations affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, overall tuition income increased by 4.1% or \$1.5 million over the prior year. Total Expenses increased by 6.1% mainly due to an increase in salaries and benefits.

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

	<u>Year Ended 6/30/2023</u>		
	Programs	Fundraising	Total
Salaries and benefits	\$33,565,840	\$1,290,584	\$34,856,424
Extracurricular activities and cafeteria	\$10,182,793	\$-	\$10,182,793
Depreciation and amortization	\$4,622,153	\$-	\$4,622,153
Building, grounds and utilities	\$3,672,304	\$-	\$3,672,304
Technology	\$1,027,803	\$-	\$1,027,803
Office supplies	\$683,148	\$-	\$683,148
Other	\$948,765	\$-	\$948,765
Departmental costs	\$754,389	\$314,697	\$1,069,086
Central administrative fees	\$133,957	\$-	\$133,957
Interest	\$122,583	\$-	\$122,583
Bad debt expense	\$110,055	\$-	\$110,055
Total Expenses	<u>\$55,823,790</u>	<u>\$1,605,281</u>	<u>\$57,429,071</u>
	<u>Year Ended 6/30/2022</u>		
	Programs	Fundraising	Total
Salaries and benefits	\$31,614,960	\$1,103,018	\$32,717,978
Extracurricular activities and cafeteria	9,243,742	-	9,243,742
Depreciation and amortization	4,457,055	-	4,457,055
Building, grounds and utilities	3,380,355	-	3,380,355
Technology	817,591	-	817,591
Office supplies	559,734	247,550	807,284
Other	503,974	-	503,974
Departmental costs	892,583	-	892,583
Central administrative fees	119,519	-	119,519
Interest	117,425	-	117,425
Bad debt expense	1,075,779	-	1,075,779
Total Expenses	<u>\$52,782,717</u>	<u>\$1,350,568</u>	<u>\$54,133,285</u>

COMBINED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

	<u>Year Ended 6/30/2023</u>	<u>Year Ended 6/30/2022</u>
REVENUES AND SUPPORT:		
Tuition	\$37,575,639	\$36,099,473
Extracurricular activities and cafeteria	9,389,647	9,364,501
Contributions & grants	7,514,146	7,853,718
ERC income, net	5,834,843	-
Net realized and unrealized gains	4,055,032	(5,658,015)
State of Ohio administration cost reimbursement	1,895,956	1,886,859
Fundraising events, net	1,635,115	1,191,073
Other school income	1,008,968	590,841
Parish support	997,182	1,084,639
Investment income, net	542,798	697,362
Gift and grants - Diocese	363,795	499,038
Interest income	358,381	382,411
Total Revenues and Support	<u>71,171,502</u>	<u>53,991,900</u>
EXPENSES:		
High School	55,823,790	52,782,717
Fundraising support services	1,605,281	1,350,568
Total Expenses	<u>57,429,071</u>	<u>54,133,285</u>
Net revenues in excess of expenses	13,742,431	(141,385)
NET ASSETS		
Beginning of year	121,428,027	121,569,412
End of year	<u>\$135,170,458</u>	<u>\$121,428,027</u>

COMBINED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	<u>As of 6/30/2023</u>	<u>As of 6/30/2022</u>
ASSETS		
Cash & cash equivalents	\$35,079,744	\$38,955,786
Accounts receivable, net	7,435,586	857,626
Pledges receivable, net	6,988,788	7,203,723
Prepaid expenses	69,422	80,986
Operating right-of-use (ROU) assets	809,853	-
Buildings, leasehold improvements & equipment, net	52,839,088	45,713,054
Beneficial interest in perpetual trust	45,273,058	40,232,961
Total Assets	<u>\$148,495,539</u>	<u>\$133,044,136</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	\$1,835,083	\$1,880,076
Accrued liabilities - operations	2,708,167	2,561,544
Deferred revenue	252,889	191,132
Operating lease liabilities	809,853	-
Prepaid tuition & fees	3,808,458	4,395,480
Notes payable - related party	3,910,631	2,587,877
Total Liabilities	<u>13,325,081</u>	<u>11,616,109</u>
NET ASSETS		
Total Net Assets	135,170,458	121,428,027
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	<u>\$148,495,539</u>	<u>\$133,044,136</u>

PARISHES COMBINED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

RECEIPTS:	Year Ended 6/30/2023	Year Ended 6/30/2022
Offertory	\$60,668,618	\$59,245,262
Fund Drives	3,357,004	4,982,894
Gifts & Bequests	3,745,022	4,728,255
Diocesan Support	2,681,572	2,805,536
Other Parish Income	8,064,973	7,818,310
Religious Education Income	1,458,619	1,305,790
School Income	56,880,952	53,710,724
Total Receipts	136,856,760	134,596,772
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Parish Salary & Benefits	26,894,510	25,543,609
Parish Operating Expenses	23,836,475	21,328,484
Diocesan Assessment	4,504,037	4,272,172
Depreciation	8,482,513	7,786,784
Debt Interest Payments	424,353	470,198
Religious Education Salary & Benefits	4,451,231	4,131,809
Other Religious Education Costs	2,219,807	1,684,744
School Salary & Benefits	49,938,840	47,634,722
Other School Costs	8,338,915	7,972,201
Total Disbursements	129,090,681	120,824,722
Excess Receipts over Disbursements	\$7,766,079	\$13,772,050
New Loan Funds	\$-	\$3,343,305
Payments on Loans	\$2,538,579	\$4,403,466



**DIOCESAN PARISHES
FINANCIAL REVIEW
FOR FYE JUNE 30, 2023 & 2022**

The financial statement titled **CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS – PARISHES**, represents the consolidation of the receipts and disbursements for the parishes and associated elementary schools of the Catholic Diocese of Columbus. This statement was prepared from the unaudited financial reports submitted by those organizations.

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, Total Parish Receipts increased 1.7%. Offertory increased 2.4% compared to the prior year. We believe the increase in Offertory was a result of the return to normal activities as the pandemic eased. Fund Drive receipts decreased 33% due primarily to our major strategic plan, Real Presence/Real Future. Major parish capital fundraising and capital projects were put on hold until this strategic plan was finalized. Religious Education income increased 12% due again to the resumption of normal activities as COVID restrictions eased.

School Income increased 6%, while school costs increased by 4.8%. The school income increase was primarily due to an increase in overall enrollment.

Total Parish Disbursements increased 6.8% year to year mainly due to general increases in Parish expense categories. This is a result of the increase in inflation over fiscal years of 2022 and 2023.

Overall, Excess Receipts over Disbursements decreased by 44%.

It should be noted that during 2023, New Loans, Payments on Loans and funds spent on Major Capital Expenditures were greatly reduced due to completing the strategic plan for the Diocese, Real Presence Real Future, and the decision to put all major capital and fundraising projects on hold.

For those interested in the financial results for a particular parish, please contact that parish directly.

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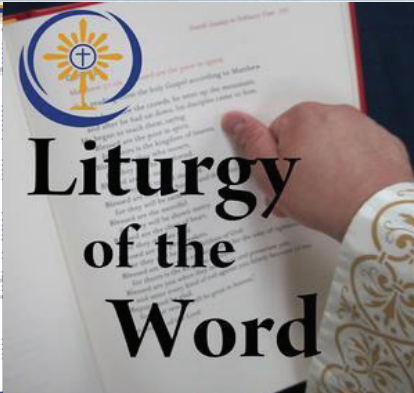
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Retreat offers moms, daughters a chance to grow closer in faith

By Hannah Heil
Catholic Times Reporter

For mothers and daughters seeking to bond in faith and celebrate their God-given gift of femininity, the Saint Philomena Mother-Daughter Retreat, which offers a whole-person approach by celebrating and educating on the body, mind, spirit and social aspect of young women, could be considered a dream come true – literally.

The retreat, which helps mothers and their daughters ages 11-14 grow closer to Christ and each other while exploring God's gift of femininity, was inspired by a dream approximately 16 years ago.

The founder, Genine Telepac, while seeking to establish a retreat for young girls, discovered a book on the life of St. Philomena, an early Christian virgin and martyr who consecrated herself to God at a young age. The book belonged to Telepac's mother, who had recently died. Telepac experienced a deep connection to her mother while reading the book.

The following Mother's Day, "she had a dream – a very vivid dream – in which St. Philomena appeared to her and told her that she wanted to be the patroness of this retreat and that Genine should not be afraid to write this retreat herself with her team of people and that St. Philomena would ask God to bless their efforts," said Kris Forbes, director of the retreat.

The Saint Philomena Mother-Daughter Retreat, based in the Phoenix area, came to western Ohio for the first time last year at the Spiritual Center of Maria Stein. It will be held at the retreat center, located in Maria Stein, Ohio, again this summer

on July 26-28.

The retreat, which is entirely volunteer run, offers a series of talks, mainly led by mothers and their grown daughters who previously attended the retreat. It also includes various activities and one-on-one time for mothers and their daughters.

Forbes said talks are based on Biblical wisdom and draw from Pope St. John Paul II's Theology of the Body and his apostolic letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* (On the Dignity and Vocation of Women). They also explore the "feminine genius," a phrase made popular by the pope's 1995 Letter to Women that refers to the unique gifts women have to offer.

Forbes said there is time for mother-daughter discussion after the talks at the retreat, and discussion questions are provided for mothers.

She said the goal is to open a path of communication between mothers and daughters. For the young girls, she said, it is especially important to set a precedent of communication with their mothers.

"It's really important that we are opening that pathway because we do believe that parents are the primary educators of their children, as we're told in the Catechism," Forbes said.

The retreat is intentionally designed. From the retreat grounds to the décor, in every detail, the retreat coordinators ensure the retreat is beautiful, as beauty is a reflection of God.

"People are drawn to truth, beauty and goodness, and so, we want to have a beautiful statue of Mary. We want to have beautiful flowers. We want to have table coverings and beautiful music so that we can be drawn in and look to God, the

source of truth, beauty and goodness," Forbes said.

During the retreat, mothers and daughters explore the body as being good and a reflection of God. They also learn that "female" has meaning and discuss the feminine nature.

The retreat explores "spiritual motherhood," which Pope St. John Paul II discussed in his Letter to Women.

"In our body, as females, we have a receptive nature, and we have a life-giving nature, and so, we really try to focus for the girls on their age – they're not actual mothers, but they're all spiritual mothers – we have this gift of empathy, this gift of life giving, this gift of being aware of situations, being able to read body language and maybe nonverbal communication, which allows us to respond in a motherly sense and bring life to the world that way," Forbes said.

The retreat also explores vocations. The girls learn about the various ways God could be calling them.

"We talk about vocation – you're called to a vocation, that it can be religious life, that some people are called to remain single for an amount of time or indefinitely and some people are called to marriage," Forbes said.

For the vocation to marriage, the retreat offers a talk on sexuality and the marital embrace. Forbes said "marital embrace" is the name used because of the age range of girls, and it is a new concept to some of them. She said mothers can opt out and discuss the topic with their daughter privately if they prefer.

"Most moms are really looking for help with this," she said. "They don't feel



Young girls participating in the St. Philomena Mother-Daughter Retreat, which is for mothers and their daughters age 11-14, offer a prayer to the Blessed Mother as they reach for a candle with an image of St. Philomena. Photo courtesy St. Philomena Mother-Daughter Retreat

equipped to have this conversation, and so, we're trying to meet the need of the mom who felt ill-equipped to have these conversations but do it with them present and offer them an opportunity for discussion afterward – one-on-one discussion with their daughter – with guided discussion questions."

See RETREAT, Page 17

Former Columbus resident finds Marian shrine to be special place

By Elizabeth Pardi

In 2010, the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in New Franken, Wisconsin was declared by the Catholic Church to have been established through an approved apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary, making it the first and only national shrine in the United States to include an approved Marian apparition site.

The spot was such a special place for Lianne Jones that she was thrilled when her family had the opportunity in 2019 to move from Columbus to Green Bay, Wisconsin, which list just a few miles away from the shrine.

"The shrine is honestly my favorite place on earth," Jones said. "It is a place where my husband prayed for me while we were dating ... (and) where we discerned marriage. It's a place to ask for healing for ourselves, each other and for loved ones (and) ... where we have brought our grief and sufferings ... and have received confirmation that we are following God's will.

"I've never experienced another place quite like it; the peace that emanates all around and the profoundly simple beauty that envelops me as I sit quietly in the Oratory or walk around the grounds. I also love the fact that I can receive the sacrament of reconciliation there any day of the week."

The shrine is one of many Catholic pilgrimage spots throughout the Midwest that individuals, families and groups have the opportunity to visit during the summer vacation months. Among the popular sites in Ohio are the Shrine of the Holy Relics in Maria Stein, the Sorrowful Mother shrine near Bellevue, the Rhoda Wise home and the Mother Angelica Museum in Canton, and the Basilica of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey.

The Blessed Mother's appearance in Wisconsin took place in 1859 and was witnessed by Adele Brise, a Belgian immigrant who as a child had promised Our Lady to one day dedicate her life to being a religious teaching sister.

At age 28, after immigrating from Belgium to Wisconsin, Adele was walking

in the woods to Mass one day when she encountered a woman who claimed to be the Queen of Heaven. She instructed Adele to "make a general confession and offer Communion for the conversion of sinners," according to the shrine's website, championshrine.org.

The woman then said, "Gather the children in this wild country and teach them what they should know for salvation." When Adele insisted that she was not qualified to teach, the woman replied, "Teach them their catechism, how to sign themselves with the sign of the Cross, and how to approach the sacraments; that is what I wish you to do. Go and fear nothing, I will help you."

Adele fervently followed the instructions, sometimes traveling 50 miles to knock on doors and offer to do chores in exchange for parents allowing her to instruct their children in the faith.

Adele's father built a small chapel and other women began joining the mission. Soon, a convent for the women was built

See SHRINE, Page 17



The Blessed Virgin Mary's appearance in the 19th century where the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion is now located is the only shrine in the United States with an approved Marian apparition site. Photo courtesy of National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion

LOCAL NEWS AND EVENTS

Carey Assumption Vigil Mass will include four bishops

Bishop Earl Fernandes of Columbus will join Bishops Daniel Thomas of Toledo and Edward Malesic of Cleveland and Auxiliary Bishop Michael Woost of Cleveland in celebrating Mass at the Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey on Wednesday, Aug. 14, the Vigil of the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary.

A candlelight rosary procession will begin at 9 p.m., with the statue of Our Lady of Consolation being taken from

the shrine's basilica to its outdoor park, where the Mass will take place.

Carey is about 80 miles from downtown Columbus, a 90-minute drive on U.S. 23 North, and has traditionally been a place of pilgrimage for central Ohio Catholics.

The Catholic bishops of Ohio also invite the faithful to join in praying a novena in honor of Our Lady of Consolation from Tuesday, Aug. 6 to Aug. 14.

Find daily novena prayers and reflec-

tions from Bishop Fernandes as well as details on the pilgrimage at www.ohio-cathconf.org/pilgrimage.

Father Ryan to celebrate Mass of Thanksgiving

Father Michael Ryan, CSC, will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving at his home parish, Columbus St. Catharine of Siena Church, 500 S. Gould Road, at 11 a.m. Sunday, June 23.

He was ordained a priest of the Con-

gregation of Holy Cross in the Sacred Heart Basilica of the University of Notre Dame on Saturday, April 6. His brother, Father Brogan Ryan, CSC, was ordained as a member of the same congregation in 2019 at Notre Dame.

Their parents are Bob and Mary Ginn Ryan of Columbus. Both are graduates of Columbus St. Charles Preparatory High School and Notre Dame.

Father Michael is rector of the O'Neill Men's Residence Hall at the university.

SHRINE, continued from Page 16

along with a school. And in 1861, a larger wood chapel was erected.

A confirmed miracle took place on the chapel grounds in 1871 when the most destructive fire in U.S. history – the Great Peshtigo Fire – broke out. The blaze killed thousands of people and burned up millions of acres of land.

In the midst of its destruction, as the flames spread toward the chapel grounds, “people from the surrounding countryside fled to the chapel where Adele and her companions were praying for Mary's protection,” the shrine's website explains. The large group of them began processing around with a statue of Mary,

singing hymns and praying the rosary.

Eventually, it began to rain and the flames were extinguished. The land surrounding the chapel grounds was destroyed, but everything within, including the convent and school, were unharmed.

Each year on Oct. 8, the anniversary of the fire and subsequent miracle, many travelers come to the site.

“(Thousands) of candles are lit all around the grounds for prayer intentions and there is the retelling of the story of the Great Fire,” Jones said.

The shrine is staffed by priests from the Fathers of Mercy, a congregation focused on preaching and the sacraments,

specifically the Eucharist and reconciliation.

Father Joseph Aytona, CPM, the shrine's rector, said the site attracts both national and international visitors.

“I hope people experience God's mercy through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary at this Shrine,” he said.

Asked about memorable visitors, he said that “anyone who has been away from their faith for a long time or who hasn't gone to confession for many years (is) a noteworthy visit for me.”

Jones, who called the shrine “a place where the Holy Mother of God came down and left her footprint,” said, “It

is my hope that the shrine continues to grow in number of pilgrims and in recognition all around the world, but that it remains humble and simple. That's the beauty of it, and I believe that's what the world needs more than ever.”

Our Lady of Champion's website, championshrine.org, includes information for travelers on lodging, food options, events, hours and contact information.

Elizabeth Pardi is a freelance writer and contributor to The Catholic Times who lives in Columbus.

RETREAT, continued from Page 16

The retreat offers a whole-person approach to God's design for sexuality. The concept is explored in a talk on the marital embrace.

“Of course, if God says they will be one, the two will become one flesh, as it says in the Bible that God has a plan for that and a reason for that,” Forbes said. “I think that that's unique in our retreat that it's not just about the physical but really understanding the whole person.”

She said many mothers benefit from hearing the talks. It is good for them to be reminded of God's design for their vocation as a wife and mother.

“For a lot of the moms, they're hungry for this message, too – the truth, the beauty and goodness of their vocation, their dignity as women,” Forbes said. “It's very healing for them to hear this as well.”

Mothers and daughters also explore friendship. They discuss Aristotle's three levels of friendship: a friendship of utility, pleasure and virtue, as well as verses in the Bible regarding friends. She said the girls learn “what a blessing a true friend is and how sometimes that does take time, and it's a rare treasure to find a good friend.”

The retreat also includes a talk on dating. A newly engaged or married young woman shares her story with the participants. Forbes said this sets the stage for “God's great love story.”

The retreatants explore “deal breakers” in dating, too, she said. Understanding

that they are made in the image and likeness of God, girls can then discern with their mothers what is necessary and good in a dating relationship. Mothers and daughters brainstorm deal breakers together.

“That can be anything from the very light ‘he has to love dogs and be a dreamy dream boat’ to – a lot of girls have really great like, ‘He needs to be Catholic ... he needs to go to Mass on holy days, needs to treat his mom well,” she said. “It's really beautiful to see, and we encourage the girls to hold on to those, update them each year, pray over them, pray for their future spouse if they're called to marriage.”

Activities at the retreat include crafts and a fashion show, where the girls make dresses out of tissue paper.

There is also free time. Forbes said it is encouraged that the free time be between mothers and their daughters. They can do a scavenger hunt, play board games and explore the retreat grounds.

“Moms who are taking the time to bring their daughters on these retreats, that makes the girl feel so special and loved to bond with their mom in that way,” she said.

The mother-daughter integration helps young girls “to really understand that, ‘My mom's gone through this, too. She was once my age. She's going to walk me through this, and I have an identity within my family as a daughter,’” Forbes

said. “I think that's really why it's so timely right now.”

Tonya Moorman of Anna, Ohio, and her daughter, Isabelle, 12, attended the retreat together at Maria Stein last summer. She decided to attend the retreat, thinking it could offer Isabelle more information than Moorman had for her daughter in her toolbox.

She said the sessions addressed “things I never even really thought about talking about with my daughter, so I learned some things with that, too.”

She said the retreat fostered communication between her and her daughter. As a result of the retreat, Moorman believes Isabelle is more comfortable asking questions and coming to her for answers.

“She would ask me even more questions, even about faith and just about adulthood, womanhood and stuff like that,” Moorman said. “She's never been afraid to come to me with any questions, and I think that that's helped her to open up even more after the retreat.”

They also benefited from hearing that their femininity is a gift from God, and they are each a gift to be given. Moorman said she never thought about herself as a gift, and she found the talk to be beautiful.

Learning how they uniquely reflect God as women also altered how they view each other.

“Sometimes I'll get down on myself, but my daughter picks up on that, and I don't want my daughter to pick up on that

because that's just a bad role model, and I don't want to be like that, but she will even say, ‘You are a gift from God,’ like, ‘You're made in the likeness of God,’ and I'm like, ‘You are absolutely right,’ and so, we'll say that to each other all the time,” Moorman said.

Isabelle wrote her favorite Scripture verses from the retreat and then rewrote them in a prayer journal that Moorman gave her. After the retreat, Isabelle shared her experience with her father and younger siblings.

Moorman said Isabelle enjoyed telling the family about the St. Philomena dress-up activity, which they did with other mothers and daughters, and how she was chosen to be dressed as the saint.

During their free time, Moorman and Isabelle explored the grounds, completed puzzles together and did a scavenger hunt that included locating several saint statues. The time spent together could be considered as valuable as the knowledge they gained.

“A lot of people would hesitate spending the money, ... you know, ‘Should I do that?’” Moorman said. “A lot of times we don't think twice about spending money on an electronic device, but I just thought, this is for diving more into our faith and this for our kids, that's why it's definitely worth it.”

For more information and to register for this year's retreat, visit www.philomenaretreat.org.

11th Sunday of Ordinary Time Year B

Plant the seed and trust in God's providence

Ezekiel 17:22-24
Psalm 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16
2 Corinthians 5:6-10
Mark 4:26-34

Two contrasting approaches to life are evident in the world today. One attempts to control everything by narrow ways of thinking, setting rigid standards for how we want things to proceed. The other is just to throw up our hands and to give up on finding a way forward. The feelings of the moment dictate how we act, without regard to consequences. Neither way of behaving serves us very well.

The Biblical approach, proposed by Jesus Himself, allows for a "third way." We do what we can and do not attach ourselves to an outcome, trusting in providence to accomplish more than we could ever hope for or plan. The parables of the scattered seed and of the mustard seed illustrate the Kingdom that Jesus announces.

Anyone who has planted a garden knows that the usual protocol is to plant seeds carefully, in rows, with spaces between each plant that allow room to grow. When seeds are merely scattered, without proper digging and intentional planting, there is no guarantee that there will be growth in an orderly manner. The one who plants does nothing after the initial scattering and yet, "through it all the seed would sprout and grow, he knows not how. Of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come."

If the one who plants pays attention to the seeds, it is also evident that there is no

12th Sunday of Ordinary Time Year B

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Father Timothy Hayes

Rev. Timothy M. Hayes is the pastor of Granville St. Edward the Confessor Church.



accounting for just what size the plant that comes from the seed will be. As a case in point, there is "a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade."

Note, however, that if birds live in the mustard bush, they are not very safe from predators. A mighty oak from a small acorn is a better guarantee of safety, though even that is precarious. (Just watch how squirrels treat bird feeders, carrying their food away, and the abandon with which they run through tree branches, heedless of any creatures that may dwell there.)

The kingdom grows, we know not how, and it will be whatever size and shape providence chooses. Our call is not simply to plan or to avoid participation because we are unable to do so with certainty. Rather, it is to be engaged. The kingdom is promised. It will come. Ezekiel's prophecy assures Israel that this is so: God says, "As I, the Lord, have spoken, so will I do." We must open our eyes to see. The parables invite us to learn to look, in order to see and understand God's ways.

St. Paul shares with the Corinthians his own readiness to accept the dictates of providence. He is courageous in the body but also longs to leave the body to be with the Lord. He keeps before his eyes the fact of future judgment. Life in this world

is affected by the situation.

One of the sculptures that I noticed was a carving of a boat that represents this Sunday's Scripture. There was a small gold plaque affixed to the sculpture lest its reference was missed by whoever would purchase it. Here is what it said: "Jesus Calms the Storm." (Editor, please do not correct this text! Reader, do not think this is a typo! I put down exactly what was written!) Of course, the artist meant to say, "Jesus Calms the Storm."

I wandered around the shop, but I kept coming back to this piece. It was beautiful. But I felt bad for the shopkeeper because I thought that such a spelling mistake would mean that no one would ever buy it. Eventually, I decided to point out the error to the owner of the shop and explained that the word should be "Calms" rather than "Clams." I am sorry now that I did not buy the boat myself. I often wonder whether the mistake was corrected or whether someone who was not an English major happened to buy it.

Jesus promises to calm the storms of

THE WEEKDAY BIBLE READINGS

6/17-6/22 MONDAY 1 Kings 21:1-16 Psalm 5:2-3b,4b-7 Matthew 5:38-42	THURSDAY Sirach 48:1-14 Psalm 97:1-7 Matthew 6:7-15	6-24/6-29 MONDAY Isaiah 49:1-6 Psalm 139:1-3,13-15 Acts 13:22-26 Luke 1:57-66,80	THURSDAY 2 Kings 24:8-17 Psalm 79:1b-5,8-9 Matthew 7:21-29
TUESDAY 1 Kings 21:17-29 Psalm 51:3-6,11,16 Matthew 5:43-48	FRIDAY 2 Kings 11:1-4,9-18,20 Psalm 132:11-14,17-18 Matthew 6:7-15	TUESDAY 2 Kings 19:9b-11,14-21,31-35a,36 Psalm 48:2-4,10-11 Matthew 7:6,12-14	FRIDAY 2 Kings 25:1-12 Psalm 137:1-6 Matthew 8:1-4
WEDNESDAY 2 Kings 2:1,6-14 Psalm 31:20-21,24 Matthew 6:1-6,16-18	SATURDAY 2 Chronicles 24:17-25 Psalm 89:4-5,29-34 Matthew 6:24-34	WEDNESDAY 2 Kings 22:8-13;23:1-3 Psalm 119:33-37,40 Matthew 7:15-20	SATURDAY Acts 12:1-11 Psalm 34:2-9 2 Timothy 4:6,8,17-18 Matthew 16:13-19

DIOCESAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION

Mass Schedule: Weeks of June 16 and June 23, 2024

SUNDAY MASS

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

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

Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Birmingham, Ala., at 8 a.m. on EWTN (Spectrum Channel 385, Insight Channel 382, or Breeze-line Channel 378). (Encores at noon, 7 p.m., and midnight).

Mass from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee at 6:30 a.m. on ION TV (AT&T U-verse Channel 195, Dish Network Channel 250, or DirecTV Channel 305).

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

DAILY MASS

8 a.m., Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Birmingham, Ala. (Encores at noon, 7 p.m. and midnight). See EWTN above; and on I-Lifetv (Channel 113, Ada, Logan, Millersburg, Murray City, Washington C.H.; Channel 125, Marion, Newark, Newcomerstown and New Philadelphia; Channel 207, Zanesville); 8 p.m., St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.

12:05 p.m. weekdays, 8 a.m. Saturdays, Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com and diocesan website, www.columbuscatholic.org. (Saturdays on radio only).

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

WE PRAY WEEKS III AND IV OF THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

is uncertain, but life beyond this life is promised. "Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil."

Joy in this world is to be found through trusting in providence and putting our hands into the "holy work" entrusted to us. We can attend to the needs that are great,

searching for solutions with minds and hearts that show real concern. At the same time, we can sleep peacefully while we wait upon the Lord to accomplish His own purposes among us. We must be ready to be surprised at how the Kingdom grows.

The world around us continues to doubt that we can find our way together. In the days ahead, while polarization becomes more intense, choose not to go there. Plant your own mustard seed and watch it grow!

Navigate the stormy seas in life with faith

Job 38:1, 8-11
Psalm 107:23-24, 25-26, 28-29, 30-31
2 Corinthians 5:14-17
Mark 4:35-41

Once, on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land several years ago, I was in one of the many shops just down the street from the Holy Sepulcher, the site of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection, admiring the beautiful olive wood items that were for sale. These works of art are crafts handmade by members of Christian families who have chosen to face the challenges of their society with courage and creativity, staying as a remnant in the culturally diverse territory sacred to three faith traditions (Jewish, Christian, and Muslim).

Many parishes support these brave souls by hosting family-run businesses that export such goods to cover losses sustained due to the current state of war. Fewer pilgrims mean fewer sales in their homeland. This is one positive way to be in solidarity with those whose livelihood

our lives. But sometimes He really does seem to "clam up" instead. The Gospel account tells us that their situation was perilous, and the boat was in great danger of sinking. "A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up. Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion." In our lives, we can be overwhelmed by troubles and by the turbulent emotions that fill us. Social media and news can stir up greater worries by retelling the stories of what happens in ways that make things seem ever more scandalous and perilous. Gossip shared with us will grab at our hearts and twist us into knots that paralyze us. God allows all that we trusted to keep us safe to seem ready to capsize.

The disciples woke Jesus, who was resting peacefully in the midst of the storm. With a simple word, He calmed the wind and the sea. He was with them even when He was sleeping. Jesus then spoke to His disciples, asking, "Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?"

Seeing what Jesus did, they are filled with awe and wonder. They begin to have faith, acknowledging that Jesus is more than He appears to be, a tired man seeking rest while they are in danger of drowning. "Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?"

The Gospel reveals Jesus to possess the power of the Creator that Job encounters in the storm that assails him. God says to the waters of the sea, "Thus far shall you come but no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stilled!" This is the same God encountered by those who sail in ships that inspires them to sing out in the Responsorial Psalm: "Give thanks to the Lord, his love is everlasting."

God's power and love are always available to us. When we experience the storms and troubles of life, we are invited to respond with faith. The Lord is with us. He knows our plight. What is washed away in the storm gives way to something new. "So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come."

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CONTEMPLATIVE
DEVOTION
FAITH
FISHES
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Words of Wisdom

by Pat Battaglia, aka Dr. Fun

Draw a path from letter to letter to spell the words given in capital letters that completes the wisdom statement. Move one square at a time, up, down, right, left or diagonally until all letters are used once. Ignore any black squares.

Trusting in God can transform ...

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PRAY FOR OUR DEAD

ALLEN, Marianne, 53, May 20
St. Matthew Church, Gahanna

GRIMM, Ralph E. "Ed", 93, May 26
St. Bernadette Church, Lancaster

ROTELLA, Alfred J., 98, June 1
Church of the Resurrection, New Albany

SHEEHAN, Janet E. (McGlaughlin), 80, May 21
St. Cecilia Church, Columbus

BAHNER, Patricia (McKenna), 90, May 16
St. Joan of Arc Church, Powell

IACOBELLIS, Frances E., 94, May 31
St. Francis de Sales Church, Newark

SANDER, Catherine, 88, May 26
Church of the Resurrection, New Albany

WINTERS, Richard "Dick," 85, May 29
St. Francis de Sales Church, Newark

BATTOCLETTI, Frank E., 90, May 28
St. Paul Church, Westerville

KOCZWARA, Ann M., 94, June 3
Church of the Resurrection, New Albany

BRICKER, Janice M. (Hardy), 92, May 23
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Grove City

KNIGHT, Douglas, 82, April 30
St. Mary Church, Groveport

COONEN, Jacqueline A., 96, May 18
St. Paul Church, Westerville

MAGNACCA, Constance, 83, June 1
St. Patrick Church, Columbus

DOTTER, Judith, L., 82, June 4
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

O'DONNELL, Rose A. (Karl), 89, May 23
St. Joseph Church, Dover

FAGAN, Irene M. (Breckler), 93, May 22
St. Mary Church, Groveport

O'ROURKE, Patrick J. "Pat," 74, June 2
Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Lancaster

GLAVIANO, Sam, 74, May 26
St. John Neumann Church, Sunbury

PRITT, Patricia, 89, June 2
St. Mary of the Annunciation Church, Portsmouth

GRIMM, Jean A., 92, May 15
St. Bernadette Church, Lancaster

Tuscarawas Central Catholic's International Club makes dental donations



Tuscarawas Central Catholic Junior and Senior High School International Club in the New Philadelphia and Dover area collected dental donations this spring to help people in Honduras. On Tuesday, May 14, the club traveled to Central American Medical Outreach in Orrville, Ohio to deliver the donations and volunteer with service. Using donations, the students were able to create 185 kits that consisted of a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss and washcloth. An additional 100-200 toothbrushes and toothpaste were left over. *Photos courtesy Tuscarawas Central Catholic*



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St. Matthias 'Glory Beaders' embrace rosary making

By Hannah Heil
Catholic Times Reporter

When they're not busy in class, a group of middle school students at Columbus St. Matthias School can be found making rosaries for those in need.

The group, which consists of 42 students, is open to any sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade student at the school. Each week, a different grade meets – on a rotating basis – one day after school to make rosaries.

Students often elect to spend their recess, free period or time between classes making them, too. Some can be spotted under trees during recess using time that could be used to play to make rosaries instead.

The students are led by St. Matthias teacher and dean of students Kelly Buzenski. While teaching at the former Columbus St. Anthony School, which closed at the end of the 2022-23 school year, she founded the group, nicknamed the "Glory Beaders."

"That started at St. Anthony, when I started the group in 2009, just a play off the words 'glory be,' the prayer 'The Glory Be' and then the fact that they're beaded rosaries, so it just kind of stuck," she said.

This year is the first for the group at St. Matthias School. Buzenski received permission from the school's principal, Carey Wrigley, to start the group there.

The Glory Beaders officially began at St. Matthias last October – fittingly, the month dedicated to the holy rosary on the Church calendar. Since then, students made a total of 2,601 rosaries.

They assemble the rosaries and tie the knots themselves, using rosary kits organized by Buzenski. Students follow a large diagram of a rosary, which is displayed in her classroom.

"They've picked up on it very quickly," she said of the Glory Beaders.

Buzenski added that "they have taken to this very well and are very skilled at it, which is a blessing to the school but also a blessing to me and to the people who receive the rosaries," which are distributed around the school, diocese and beyond.

"The rosaries that these kids have made have gone all over the world, which is pretty cool," she said.

The hand-crafted rosaries are given to people who request them in and outside of Columbus. Students gave rosaries to their peers in the second-grade class who made their First Communion this year.

Buzenski also mails batches of the rosaries to Mary Ann Lynch, a retired flight attendant in Florida who distributes them to flight attendants traveling across the world.

The flight attendants utilize their contacts wherever their flights are assigned to deliver the rosaries to Catholic church-



Columbus St. Matthias students (from left) Teresa Nguyen, Jamilly Espindola, Wesley Costa and Josie Rodriguez, members of the Glory Beaders, make rosaries in teacher Kelly Buzenski's classroom. Buzenski leads the group of sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students. Photos courtesy St. Matthias School

es, missions or individuals in need.

The rosaries landed in several continents, including South America, Europe and Asia. Among the places that received them: Nicaragua, Ecuador, the Philippines and Vatican City. Lynch mails students a letter afterward, telling them where their rosaries were delivered.

So far, four batches of rosaries were mailed since October. A fifth batch will be mailed out to conclude the school year.

Students shared that they enjoy being part of the group. In addition to spending time with friends, they recognize that their rosaries impact others.

"It means a lot because they go out to people all over the world, and it can mean a lot to them because they can't get them themselves," said Josie Rodriguez, a seventh-grade student who was previously part of the Glory Beaders at St. Anthony before coming to St. Matthias this year.

"I think it helps them a lot because they could get closer to God."

Wesley Costa, a sixth-grade student in the Glory Beaders group, shared how rosary making fosters his relationship with the Lord.

"I like making rosaries because I really like God, and I want to get close with Him," he said. "I like that we can give rosaries all around the world to people who can't get them to help them get closer to God, too."

The Glory Beaders each keep a rosary for themselves that is blessed by Father Anthony Davis, the pastor of the Northland Catholic community, which includes Columbus St. Elizabeth Church and the former St. Matthias and St. Anthony churches.

"I pray the rosary every



The Glory Beaders consist of 42 middle school students at Columbus St. Matthias School who meet after school and often during recess to make beaded rosaries, which are distributed in the school, diocese and several continents across the world.

day with my mom, so I use that rosary," Costa said of the one he made and kept.

Some students, such as Jamilly Espindola, a sixth-grade student, evangelize by bringing rosaries home to their families.

"I customize some, and I also give it to my family who doesn't have one," she said.

Unlike some school organizations and teams with tryouts or skill sets, the Glory Beaders is open to all interested middle schoolers. The group is composed of students who want to play a part in making what could be considered the world's greatest "weapon," according to St. Padre Pio.

Students are also honoring the Blessed Mother, who asked, when she appeared in Fatima, Portugal, that the rosary be prayed daily.

"This is a group that you don't need to

have any academic skill; you don't need to have any athletic skill," Buzenski said. "It really is just willing to serve: willing to serve the Church, willing to serve the school community, willing to put in the time and their talent for God and for His work and for His Church, so I'm very proud of the kids."

Several students expressed interest in continuing during the summer.

Buzenski is arranging for students to bring rosary kits home. She hopes to plan a day during the summer for students to meet and pick up kits.

The Glory Beaders are eager to break their record for rosaries made next school year. Considering the thousands they've already made, it should be no problem.

"As long as I can keep up with making kits," Buzenski added with a laugh.

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Christ Child Society awards high school scholarships

During its annual Founder's Day event, the Christ Child Society of Columbus awarded partial scholarships to students who will attend central Ohio Catholic high schools next year.

Tsion Dereje was awarded the Liz O'Brien/Louise Zink scholarship. She was a student at Columbus Holy Spirit School who will attend Columbus Bishop Hartley High School.

Reese Keiffer, a student from Columbus St. Catharine School who will attend Bishop Hartley, received the SMA scholarship, which is offered by members of the St. Mary of the Springs Academy Alumnae Association. St. Mary's was an all-girls school founded in the 19th century that closed in 1966.

Other recipients who will attend Bishop Hartley are Christina Allwein from St. Catharine and Michael Appiah, a student at Columbus St. Mary School in the German Village area. Both received Christ Child Scholarships.

Christ Child Scholarships were also awarded to Favour Ugwa and Sia Precious Roberts, students at Columbus St.

Matthias School who will attend Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School.

Additional scholarship winners were Darlene Mendez, a student from Columbus All Saints Academy who will attend Cristo Rey Columbus High School, and Ava Burchett and Alain David Martinez Pablo, both from Columbus St. Cecilia School and planning to attend Columbus Bishop Ready High School.

Recipients who will attend Columbus St. Charles Preparatory School are Jimmy Manzano from All Saints Academy, Jack Curtis from Columbus Our Lady of Peace School, Francisco Lopez Shane from Columbus St. Timothy School and Aaron Asamoah from Columbus St. Mary Magdalene School.

The Christ Child Society of Columbus is a non-profit organization of members dedicated to making a difference in the lives of Central Ohio children. Volunteers donate more than 10,000 hours in direct service and fundraising for at-risk children.

In addition to presenting scholarships, the society provides new mothers with



Incoming high school students awarded Christ Child Society Scholarships pictured with Bishop Earl Fernandes are (from left) Reese Keiffer, Christina Allwein, Michael Appiah, Favour Ugwa, Sia Precious Roberts, Darlene Mendez, Jimmy Manzano, Jack Curtis and Francisco Lopez Shane.



The Christ Child Society of Columbus recently welcomed new members (front row from left) Kristen Kallman, Debbie Pyers, Paula Hamm, Karen Donnelly, Krista Joseph, Margo Simmons, Sheri Cook, Susan Crown, Pam Eifel, Louise Berasi; (second row from left) Eileen Steadman, Joyce Weinandy, Kimberly Cromwell, Bishop Earl Fernandes, Sue Bergman, Erika Boll and Elaine Morris at its annual Founder's Day Luncheon. Not pictured are Kathy Snyder and Beth Miller. Photos courtesy Christ Child Society

essential baby items and offers infant supplies to mothers attending parenting classes, child care tuition assistance and preschool learning opportunities, meals for a school and after-school program,

tutoring for elementary school students and help for foster children transitioning to new homes.

For more information on the society, visit www.christchildssociety.org

Community festival provides resources, celebrates family well-being

Families needing assistance in obtaining child car safety seats and other supplies for infants and toddlers ages 0-5 can find help and access to these essentials at Little Blessings/Pequenas Bendiciones, a community festival sponsored by Catholic Social Services (CSS) on Sunday, June 23.

The festival marks the launch of CSS' new Little Blessings/Pequenas Bendiciones program offered through its Our Lady of Guadalupe Center, 409 Industry Drive, Columbus.

"Little Blessings is an expansion of

our outreach services for families with young children. It is an opportunity for us to serve eligible families in Franklin and Licking counties as neighbors by providing essentials such as formula, diapers, wipes, baby food, nutritional classes, case management and more to caregivers who may need assistance," Kelley Henderson, president and CEO of CSS, said.

The Little Blessings/Pequenas Bendiciones festival on June 23 will feature free car safety seats and other supplies for eligible mothers and families, games and

a bounce house for children, a produce market, food and music entertainment at the Our Lady of Guadalupe Center from 2 to 5 p.m.

To qualify for the program and the free safety seats at the festival, families must be living at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level with at least one child ages 0-5 living in the home.

"The purpose of the program, which is rooted in our Catholic values, is to help families live happier, healthier lives and build community among our neighbors in need," Henderson added.

While the program is focused on mothers and families with infants and toddlers, Henderson encourages the entire community to come to the festival and celebrate as neighbors serving neighbors. Admission is free.

The Little Blessings/Pequenas Bendiciones program is supported by a grant from the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

For more information on Little Blessings/Pequenas Bendiciones, contact the Our Lady of Guadalupe Center at 614-340-7061.



Laura Bateson (left), president of Muskingum Valley Right to Life, and Jonathan Medaugh, campus ministries director for the Catholic Schools of Zanesville, are pictured with the donated items.

Photos courtesy Catholic Schools of Zanesville

Mary's House receives donations

Members of Muskingum Valley Right to Life in Zanesville, led by president Laura Bateson, visited Mary's House in Stockport on May 28 for a firsthand look at the services provided there to women and children and to deliver a \$1,000 check.

Using the month of May's devotion to Mary, students from Zanesville Bishop Fenwick School and Bishop Rosecrans High School collected items needed for the daily activities at Mary's House. Jonathan Medaugh, the campus ministries director for the Catholic Schools of Zanesville, accompanied the Muskingum Valley Right to Life members on their visit to Mary's House to deliver the donations.

Medaugh said Muskingum Valley Right to Life and Zanesville's Catholic schools are exploring other ways to work together.



Muskingum Valley Right to Life members visit Mary's House in Stockport.

Mary's House is a nonprofit, Catholic-based home for pregnant women of all faiths age 18 and older. Its director is Teresa Coleman.

Mary's House walks beside women on

the journey to motherhood from pregnancy to delivery of their baby. Residents are invited to stay there if they are willing to become a successful parent and productive citizen to their community.

Lancaster St. Mary students build His kingdom

May 3 was a day full of paint, teamwork, talent, joy and laughter as students at Lancaster St. Mary School created a playhouse for Forest Rose School that was made possible through Habitat for Humanity's Project Playhouse fundraiser.

St. Mary students participated in the project for the second consecutive year. This year's recipient was Forest Rose School, which serves students from ages 6-22 with developmental disabilities.

To help raise money to build homes for those in need, Habitat for Humanity encourages businesses to sponsor, design, paint and build a playhouse for a specific family or organization as a fundraiser. Usually, the construction takes place in a warehouse, but Stephanie Taylor, director of community engagement for Habitat for Humanity of Southeast Ohio, and Kayla Elrich, principal of St. Mary School, thought it would be impactful to have the playhouse built at the school.

In May 2023, the first on-site Project

Playhouse had taken place at St. Mary School. The playhouse was built for Benny McCauley, the son of Brian and Gina McCauley. Brian served as the director of sacramental preparation and faith formation at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption before he was diagnosed with brain cancer in April 2022.

"When Stephanie asked me for a recommendation for a family to receive the playhouse, I could not think of anyone more deserving than the McCauley family," Elrich said. "Brian and Gina both truly are witnesses of His love in our community, and we were humbled and honored to provide their son, Benny, with something that will bring him joy for years to come."

This year, Taylor approached Elrich with a proposal to build the house for Forest Rose School. "The moment that Stephanie asked me if we wanted to build a house for Forest Rose School, I immediately said 'Yes!' Three of our students have a sister who attends Forest Rose, and

I loved the idea of involving them in this process," Elrich said.

The cost to sponsor the playhouse was \$5,000, which came from money raised through donors, dress-down days and a Penny Wars competition between classes.

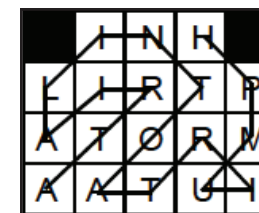
The walls of the playhouse were designed by each middle school House, which are groups of 8-10 students in Grades sixth through eighth who meet once a month to grow in their faith and provide service to their school and local community. Each House is named after a saint, so the students also learn about their House's patron.

On the build and reveal day, students came to the gymnasium to sketch, prime and paint the playhouse. This year, an addition to the house was a ramp and a wider entry for wheelchair accessibility.

Once the house was painted, volunteers gathered to put together the home outside.

When it was time for the big reveal, Elrich said, all of the students gathered around the home as Father Craig Eilerman, rector of the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Assumption, prayed and blessed the home with holy water.

As the students made a path for the home to be revealed, the Hillis Family came forward with Addie, a student at Forest Rose School. The St. Mary students cheered as Addie and her family explored the home before it was transferred to Forest Rose School, where it will be enjoyed by students for years to come.



WORDS OF WISDOM SOLUTION



Lancaster St. Mary School students build and paint a playhouse for Forest Rose School as part of Habitat for Humanity's Project Playhouse. Photos courtesy St. Mary School

Father Craig Eilerman, rector of the Lancaster Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, blesses the finished playhouse with holy water.



Lancaster St. Mary School students surround the finished playhouse for its unveiling.

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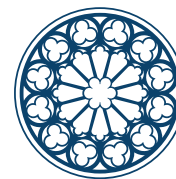


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