



Seminarians embark on pilgrimage with Bishop Vincke

By Karen Bonar
The Register

The bishop. The seminarians. Multiple holy sites. The open road. All were present during the Bishop's Pilgrimage from July 7-10. Bishop Jerry Vincke accompanied the diocese's seminarians to visit several holy sites, and spent time along the way getting to know the young men who are actively discerning a vocation to the priesthood.

"It's two-fold," said Father Andy Hammeke of the trip, which resembled trips Bishop Vincke hosted as the vocation director in Michigan. "Part of the idea is to see holy sites and learn more about saints. It is also an opportunity for our seminarians to spend time with the bishop, to pick his brain about anything they want to."

Also on the trip were the newly-minted vocations directors, Father Hammeke and Father Joshua Werth.

The trip included stops to learn about the life of Blessed Stanley Rother in Oklahoma City and Father Emil Kapaun in Pilsen, just a few miles south of the Salina Diocese's border.



Courtesy photo

Bishop Jerry Vincke and the seminarians for the Salina Diocese view Sacred Heart Church in Pfeifer during the Bishop's Pilgrimage, which was July 7-10.

"We (visited sites of) men who were great priests," Father Hammeke said. "To learn and take inspiration from them."

Deacon Brian McCaffrey said he was familiar with the story of both men whose

sites they visited.

"Something about being in the places — being at Stanley Rother's grave — actually being in Pilsen in the church where Father Kapaun grew up — it made the stories come to life," he

said. "They're both heroic examples of priesthood and laying down your life for the sheep."

SEMINARIAN KADE Megaffin said the chance to spend several days in a

relaxed environment was an exciting opportunity.

"The fraternity time was great," he said. "It was a joy to build the friendship with the brothers and new voca-

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New superintendent excited to lead schools

By Karen Bonar
The Register

SALINA — Strength in numbers.

This is what Geoff Andrews, the newly hired superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Salina Diocese, sees as the possibility for the future of Catholic schools in northwest Kansas.

"We have numbers of people and numbers of acres," he said. "We need to be able to work together to be sure we make our schools as strong as they can be. I think one of my roles is to connect the schools."

In order to do this, Andrews said he intends to help connect schools, teachers and administrators from across the almost 27,000 square miles of the diocese.

"I think so many people think the diocese is just Salina," he said. "They need to know that the second grade teacher in Hanover can get help from the second grade teacher in Oakley if they need it."

ANDREWS, WHO started June 15, has worked in Salina USD 305 for 15 years, first as a teacher and coach, and most recently as an assistant

principal at Salina South Middle School.

"While at south middle, the other two principals were also Catholic, and one day a week, the three of us would go to Mass at 6:30 at the Cathedral," he said. "Going with two colleagues, and starting the day off at Mass was wonderful."

So when the opportunity to apply to become the superintendent of Catholic Schools came up, he jumped on it.

"I was making a list of pros and cons, and I couldn't think of any cons other than not having experience in Catholic

education," he said. "I was just so excited to see the potential."

Andrews began working in USD 305 as a student teacher, with Ken Stonebraker at Salina South High School. He then coached basketball and worked as a para at the school for a semester, before taking a position as a social studies teacher at Lakewood Middle School, where he taught for three years. He then moved to Salina Central High School, where he taught world history and American justice for seven years,

Please see ANDREWS / Page 4



Photo by Karen Bonar / The Register

Geoff Andrews, who worked in USD 305 in Salina for 15 years, was recently hired as superintendent of Catholic schools.

Northwest Kansas Catholics

National trends reflected on local level.
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Conferences

Annual Diocesan Men's conference is Aug. 15 in Hays.
Page 12

Biennial Women's conference is Aug. 29 in WaKeeney.
Page 13

Perpetual Virgin

Salina woman makes promises to live as perpetual virgin.
Pages 14-15



AROUND THE DIOCESE



Courtesy photos

Twenty youth gathered the week of June 16-19 at Sacred Heart Parish in Colby to serve those in the Colby community. The students and adult leaders broke up into three work crews for the week.

Youth take spirit of service to hometown

By Allison Ochoa
The Register

COLBY — After the Salina Diocese’s Prayer and Action program was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students in Colby took the opportunity to serve locally. Under the direction of Katie Allen, Catholic Youth Organization Coordinator for Sacred Heart Parish, students from multiple area parishes came together June 16-19 for a pared-down version of the diocese’s annual summer service program.

“We had a total of 20 kids throughout the week, including incoming freshmen through graduating seniors,” Allen said.

While most of the students represented Colby and Sacred Heart Parish, participants also included teens from Leoville, Hoxie, Angelus and New Almelo.

Allen said that her inspiration for the local version of Prayer and Action came from her brother.

“Around the middle of May, my brother, (seminarian) Luke Friess, (suggested) that if they ended up canceling, I should still try to do a service project,” she said.

Once an announcement came from the diocese that the program would, in fact, be canceled for the summer, Allen started working to recruit volunteers and participants. Sacred Heart parish administrator Jeanie Solko assisted with finding work sites, and the parish’s director of religious education helped coordinate other aspects of the week.

“I’d been on Prayer and Action before, so I was fairly familiar with the program,” Allen said, stressing that while the local service week wasn’t the whole Prayer and Action experience, she wanted to make it as similar to the diocese’s program as possible.

Students and parent volunteers were separated into three different work crews

“I also wanted to give these students the opportunity to serve others for God and then bring them closer to Jesus Christ through the evening testimonies and through prayer, Adoration and confession.”

Katie Allen
Sacred Heart CYO

and tackled projects like painting, cleaning up of properties and yard work. Allen said the local aspect of the program allowed the participants to go home in the afternoons for showers and supper before coming back to the parish in the evening. Programs during the evenings were varied. Students heard presentations about living the faith from local parishioners and seminarians, took part in Eucharistic Adoration and Reconciliation, and enjoyed fun activities and treats like swimming and s’mores while they reflected on their days of work.

Allen said building community between the participants and with the people they were serving was one of her main priorities for the week.

“Especially with the shutdown, there’s a lot of loneliness so I wanted to focus on building that community,” she said. “I also wanted to give these students the opportunity to serve others for God and then bring them closer to Jesus Christ through the evening testimonies and through prayer, Adoration and confession.”

“I was so proud of their perseverance through a hard week,” she continued. “We had a couple of days with 100-degree heat and 50 mile-per-hour winds. I gave one crew the option to quit early one day, but they



Courtesy photo

Youth paint a fence June 17 during a summer service week, hosted by Sacred Heart Parish in Colby. About 20 youth from Colby, Leoville, Hoxie, Angelus and New Almelo participated.

Prayer and Action Team makes videos

The Prayer and Action leadership team made an online series, which is available at:
facebook.com/prayerandactionsalinadiocese/

wanted to keep working. They definitely seemed to enjoy the week.”

FOR JACOB GARDNER, a homeschooled student from Colby, the experience provided the opportunity to meet new people beyond those of his own parish. Sharing the spiritual elements of the program with those new friends was something he also enjoyed.

“It was awesome to see everyone just praying together,” he said. “Now I do a lot more praying, but this experience also led me to being able to appreciate what other people do for me.”

While the soon-to-be freshman enjoyed the social and spiritual aspects of the nearly week-long program, “The best part was just being able to be with other people and do the work as a team. It was inspiring.”

Sister Barbara Ellen Apaceller, CSJ, director of youth ministry for the Salina Diocese, said she was pleased that local parishes



Courtesy photo

Youth work to clear a yard and paint a fence June 17 in Colby. When the formal Prayer and Action program was canceled for the summer, the CYO leaders in Colby used it as inspiration to create a summer service experience for local high school youth.

were taking on a service week project, and she was happy to spread the word about those smaller service opportunities.

“We want to encourage the kids because they love Prayer and Action,” she said. “It really is about (building) relationships; there’s a bond that develops between kids who participate in that week.”

Despite not being able to gather together, Sister Barbara Ellen said the college students and seminarians that comprised the Prayer and Action leadership team were still going to be praying and working together to bring small aspects of the annual program to the high

school students who had planned to spend part of the summer in service around the diocese.

“They’ll be praying for the kids, and every Friday for six weeks, they’ll be giving their talks along with giving the kids a couple of questions for personal reflection,” she said. “So, we want them to continue to build relationships, but to also remember that it’s not just for one summer ...they’re (continually) building the Church.”

The Prayer and Action leadership team’s online series of talks and challenges can be found at facebook.com/prayerandactionsalinadiocese/.

Annual Seminarian Collection is Aug. 8-9

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are extremely blessed to have 10 wonderful men studying for the priesthood in our diocese. This is great news! However, the cost of educating a seminarian is more than \$50,000 per year or \$525,000 total for all our seminarians. While endowed funds generate a portion of the funds each year, your support is also necessary.

Our diocese is blessed with so many amazing priests who go the extra mile to provide and serve us. With 86 parishes, many of our priests have more than one parish to serve. They are served by 37 diocesan priests, two Capuchins and 11 international priests. We also have 16 retired priests who help serve where there is a need.

Please consider helping to keep our

parishes filled with priests. They bring the Eucharist and Sacrament of Reconciliation and other sacraments to all parishioners. This starts with our seminarians. The annual seminarian collection will take place in all of our parishes during the weekend of Aug. 8 and 9. You will be able to donate through your church envelopes or on our Salina Diocese website at www.salinadiocese.org.

Please pray for our priests, our men in the seminary and for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Thank you for your generosity and kindness in advance!



In Christ's service,

+ Gerald L. Vincke

Most Reverend Gerald L. Vincke
Bishop of Salina

BISHOP'S CALENDAR

August 2020

- 9 Vocations BBQ, 4 p.m., Hays
- 13 Seminarian Dinner 5 p.m., Salina
- 15 Diocesan Men's Conference, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Hays
- 16 Confirmation 10:30 a.m., SS. Peter and Paul, Clay Center
Rural Life Day, Clay Center
- 29 SDCCW Biennial Convention, Christ the King, WaKenney
- 30 Confirmation 8:30 a.m., St. Augustine, Washington
Confirmation 11 a.m., St. John the Baptist, Hanover

All calendar items subject to change

New Victoria pastor assigned

By The Register

Father James Moster, OFM Cap, is returning to the Salina Diocese, the Capuchin Province of Mid-America announced. He will serve at the Basilica of St. Fidelis in Victoria.

He has been the pastor at St. Aloysius Church in Meriden and St. Theresa Church in Perry in the Archdiocese of Kansas City since 2017.

Father Moster is a native of Muenster, Texas. He was invested with the Capuchins in 1970, made his final procession as a brother in 1974 and was ordained a priest on April 3, 1976, by Archbishop Ignatius Strecker in Shawnee.

He served in the Salina

Diocese as a priest from

1976-91 in the following communities: Hays, Victoria, Thomas More Prep School, Atwood, Bird City, St. Francis, Beardsley and Ellis.



Father James Moster, OFM Cap

Father Moster served in the Archdiocese of Kansas City, in Topeka, Overland Park and Atchison, from 1991-2010.

He was assigned to serve in the Diocese of Colorado Springs, Colo. from 2010-17, then was transferred back to serve in the Archdiocese of Kansas City.

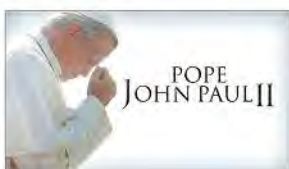
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WEDDINGS

Jason and Mary Krantz's marriage was validated May 16, 2020, at St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City. Father Gnanasekar Kulandai, HGN, witnessed their vows. Witnesses were Kathy and Kevin Jones and Amanda and Brian Fields.

Jerry Lee Schnee and Anita A. Finley were married June 13, 2020, at St. Francis Xavier Church

in Junction City. Father Gnanasekar Kulandai, HGN, witnessed their vows. Witnesses were Pat Schnee and Jarett Finley.

Robert and Sharon Phillips' marriage was validated on May 27, 2020, at St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City. Father Gnanasekar Kulandai, HGN, witnessed their vows. Witnesses were Sheri and Fritz Beck.

JULY PRAYER INTENTION

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'Beyond the Frontier' — A new book on the history of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia

By Cathy Doud
For The Register

CONCORDIA — The 1948 book "Footprints on the Frontier" by Sister M. Evangeline Thomas, Ph.D., has long been considered the most comprehensive history of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia. Updating that work left big footprints to fill. Following in those footsteps was historian Sister Sally Witt, CSJ, of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, Pa., who took on the task of writing an updated history of the Concordia congregation.

And now, after years of meticulous research and writing, Sister Sally has completed a detailed book documenting the rich history of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia. Her book, "Beyond the Frontier," builds upon the pioneering work of Sister Evangeline in order to document the complex history of the religious Community.

Witt said that while the book follows Sister Evangeline's work, it is not a sequel, although it is done in a similar style.

"The book doesn't start where 'Footprints' left off," Sister Sally said. "It actually starts in prehistoric Kansas and then gets more seriously in depth when the sisters go to Canandaigua, N.Y., in 1854."

Sister Marcia Allen, who initiated the project when she was president of the congregation and read the manuscript throughout the process, was pleased to see the project culminate in success.

"Beyond the Frontier" — finally Sister Evangeline Thomas' dream is fulfilled! She dreamed of bringing her history, 'Footprints on the Frontier,' up-to-date and took comprehensive notes. Her death interrupted her work," Sister Marcia said. "Sally has brought about that dream in a work that is respectful of Evangeline's work and enriches it with information that Evangeline did not have. Sally's own work is an

"Sally's writing of our history is a great and enduring gift for us as a Community of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia and to all religious communities in the world. It was thoroughly researched using primary source material. Sally used books, articles, face-to-face interviews, visits, phone and email interviews. The material she has cited in the book is voluminous. No stone was left unturned."

Sister Bernadine Pachta
Archivist, Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia

artful and research-grounded portrayal of a community, not shy of risks that the frontier demands, yet firmly grounded in its charism of inclusive and active love."

While Sister Marcia first contacted Sister Sally about the project in 2009, she was not available to begin work on the project until October 2013 — her first visit to the Motherhouse in Concordia. Over the years since, she regularly returned to the Motherhouse archives three to four times a year to stay for three-week intervals.

Throughout the project, she worked closely with Sister Bernadine Pachta, archivist for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

"Sally's writing of our history is a great and enduring gift for us as a Community of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia and to all religious communities in the world," Sister Bernadine said. "It was thoroughly researched using primary source material. Sally used books, articles, face-to-face interviews, visits, phone and email interviews. The material she has cited in the book is voluminous. No stone was left unturned."

THIS WAS NOT SISTER Sally's first venture into historical research and writing. She is the author of "A Hidden Spirit," a 2014 book about the Sisters of the Holy Spirit of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, and the 2005 book "Sisters of the North Country," about the Sisters of St. Joseph of Watertown, N.Y.

She said every community

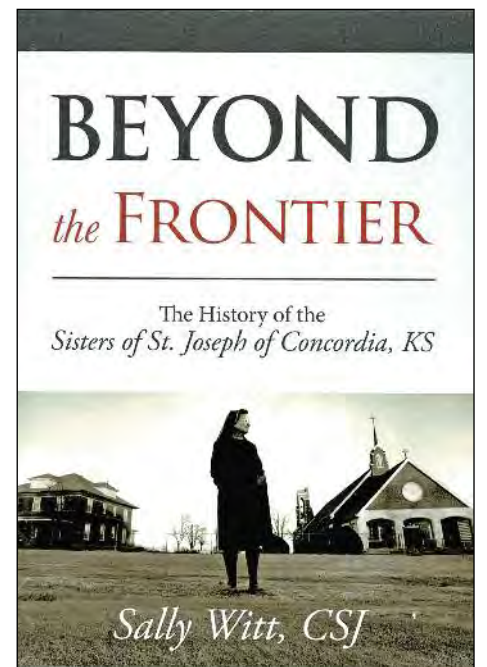
reveals a different history.

"I already knew that each congregation is part of a particular place and carries within it the marks of the people and land of that place. In Concordia, I found the power of the daily faithfulness of sisters past and present and how this has been a gift to the area and to the world," Sister Sally said. "The education, health care and spiritual development among the people give evidence to daily life with sisters as neighbors. The land and sky of Kansas, with the particular loneliness and independence, have given their mark to the congregation. The small missions in western Kansas are good examples of this. In 1966, statistics from the national Sisters Survey confirmed the rural characteristic of this community."

"It was amazing to learn about the development of the Community in Brazil. It became so clear that the sisters were considered subversive when they dared to tell the people they had dignity as God's children," Sister Sally said. "All the sisters, Brazilian and North American, lived in danger just by doing their daily work. The entire history brings up all the issues of public life. The sisters' entire lives, whether they were in small parishes or large institutions, were intertwined with the major happenings of the world."



Sister Sally Witt, CSJ



"Beyond the Frontier," written by Sister Sally Witt, CSJ, is 541 pages, with 30 black and white photographs. The book is available by calling (785) 243-2113, Ext. 1101 or emailing jwahlmeier@csjkansas.org.

"I hope in some way this book will help future researchers of religious life. Many historians are interested in this field," Sister Sally said. "My hope is that I might have provided some insight into this one congregation from the perspective of an 'insider' to religious life. And for all of this, I am grateful."

THE BOOK, PUBLISHED BY Word Association Publishers, spans 541 pages and contains 30 black and white photographs. The extensive appendices includes a list of all living sisters as of March 2020, as well as all deceased sisters.

The book is available for purchase at the Nazareth Motherhouse gift shop in Concordia. While the Motherhouse is currently closed to visitors due to COVID-19 restrictions, the book can be ordered for shipping or curbside pickup by calling Jane Wahlmeier, administrative services coordinator, at (785) 243-2113, ext. 1101 or emailing jwahlmeier@csjkansas.org.

Andrews hopes to be visible at schools across diocese

From page 1

as well as was the head girl's basketball coach. He then moved to Coronado Elementary School as a lead teacher. After two years, Andrews moved to South Middle School as assistant principal, where he held the position for two years.

Andrews is a 2005 graduate of Kansas State University in Manhattan, and graduated with a master's in education administration from Emporia State University in Emporia and holds his building level leadership license. Andrews is currently working on his district-level license through Fort Hays State University in Hays.

WHILE ANDREWS DID not grow up Catholic (he was raised Lutheran), he dated a Catholic girl all through high school and college.

"We talked a lot about church and what it would look like when we got married," he said of his wife, Valerie.

Andrews said he had mentors who were Catholic, such as the teacher during his student teaching days. It was during that time he took RCIA class at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Salina, with Father Frank Coady.

He joined the Church in 2006, and the couple wed in June of that year.

They have a son, Reid, who will be a first grader at St. Mary's Grade School in Salina this fall.

AS A HIGH SCHOOL student, Andrews said he knew he wanted to work in education. One influence on him was the superintendent of the Ellis schools, where he moved in 1997. He was a 2001 graduate of Ellis High

School.

"At that point, I knew I wanted to be a principal," Andrews said. "During my junior and senior year, our superintendent was awesome. He was always out and about. He would come to the weight room with us sometimes. I saw what he was doing and that he was a great leader for our community."

The visibility made an impression on him.

Andrews said his involvement at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton as a religious education teacher helped shape his desire to bring his Catholic faith into a more active role in his career.

"I think when you connect your faith with your (professional) skills ... it's a different feeling that I've never had before," he said.

Once hired, Andrews said he personally met every sin-

gle Catholic school principal during his first week.

"I'm looking forward to getting to know them more and growing our schools," he said. "I want to make sure we direct the mission and vision of our schools to everyone, to work closely with the bishop to be sure our schools are doing the best they can for our students."

Among the principals he's working with is Dr. Nick Compagnone, who is the principal of St. Mary's Grade School in Salina. In addition to his responsibilities as principal, Compagnone served as the superintendent of Catholic schools for more than 25 years.

"Right now, Nick is mentoring me," Andrews said. "I'm working closely with him, and he's been incredible. I think he sees my excitement, and paired with

his wealth of knowledge of school law, canon law, accreditation process ... I think it's a really good recipe."

One of Andrews' goals is to be at the schools once a month.

"I'm going to try to be at the schools and see what's going on in our classrooms. I can't get a good idea about what's going on if I'm not actually seeing it," he said. "I want to see all of the awesome things that are happening and get a good bird's eye view of what's going on in our schools from the education standpoint, as well as fundraising and community engagement."

The potential he's witnessed already is exciting.

"When you step into each school in our diocese, you feel the love for learning and students," Andrews said.

Smiling behind your mask

THERE IS GREAT IRONY in the twists and turns of our journey through COVID-19. Despite the obvious simplicity of the three basic means of limiting the spread of the virus — hand washing, social distancing and the use of facemasks — more and more people seem to be ignoring the advice of public health experts. As a society we only seem to pay attention when the numbers reach crisis proportions and the intensive care units fill up.

This situation reminds me of the biblical story of Naaman, a Syrian army commander and a leper, who visits a prophet in Israel seeking a cure (2 Kgs:5). After a long trip Naaman arrives at the home of Elisha the prophet with his retinue. A messenger appears, telling Naaman to go and wash in the Jordan River seven times and he will be cured. Naaman balks at these simple instructions and walks away in a rage because he feels that the



Sister Constance Veit

Little Sisters of the Poor

rivers of Syria must surely be better than any water in Israel. His servants intervene, however, suggesting that perhaps he ought to follow the prophet's instructions. So Naaman washes in the Jordan and sees his skin miraculously restored.

Naaman was angry because he expected a reception befitting an important public figure. But Elisha didn't even bother to come out and greet him, and his prescription seemed far too mundane for a person of his prominence.

We're a bit like that today. We're told over and over that the key to controlling COVID-19 is wearing facemasks, washing our hands and avoiding crowded spaces — and yet as a

society we can't follow these simple directives.

THERE ARE ANY NUMBER of reasons for neglecting such common sense measures — from political loyalties and claims of personal autonomy to naïve notions of invincibility and even “pandemic fatigue.” But it seems to me that what's really lacking is a real sense of social responsibility and authentic concern for the most vulnerable members of our families and local communities.

For a time, we seemed to celebrate the heightened sense of connectedness and solidarity to which the pandemic gave rise. We admired the charitable initiatives publicized on social media and the celebrity appearances on Zoom. But we quickly grew tired of it all.

Social consciousness and solidarity in this situation, it seems to me, should be measured over the long haul, even when this entails sacri-

ficing the habits and pastimes we most enjoy. This is what our elderly residents at the Little Sisters' Homes have had to do for the last four months, and for them there is no end in sight.

While young people have begun going out to beaches and bars, elderly nursing home residents are virtual prisoners in their own rooms. They remain deprived of many of the daily activities they most enjoy. They eat alone in their rooms and haven't had a haircut or a hug from their loved ones in months. On the rare occasions when they are allowed out of their rooms, they must wear a mask, and so must their caregivers. No exceptions.

In the world of long-term care, we are subject to constant oversight by outside agencies. We have no choice but to accept the advice of experts. There are few voluntary recommendations and many obligatory regulations. Yet everyone seems to

understand that we are all in this together and that personal sacrifices must be made for the good of all. Everyone goes on smiling behind the masks.

I dare say that what sets the elderly and our devoted caregivers apart from the beachgoers and bar frequenters is that they know how to put the good of others above their own, and they've discovered how to find joy in little nothings and mundane moments spent together. Perhaps this wisdom comes from not having a lot to start with, or from living close to death on a daily basis.

As I walk through the hallways of our home for the elderly, I find myself humming a well-known tune composed by Charlie Chaplin. So I try hard to keep smiling behind the mask even when my heart is aching.

Sister Constance Veit is director of communications for the Little Sisters of the Poor.

Serving others is a way we can serve God

IT'S FUNNY WHICH childhood memories stick and become engrained in our brains. I have some distinct memories of my uncle when I was growing up. Uncle Gerry, a handsome bachelor and one of my mom's younger brothers, became paralyzed on the left side of his body as the result of an aneurism soon after he turned 40. He entered a nursing home and was confined to a wheelchair at a young age.

My parents drove across town regularly to visit my uncle, always bearing homemade treats and other goodies. They talked at length with him about sports, recent events and gave family updates. This was all before computers and cell phones.

What I remember even more distinctly is that my mom and dad brought Uncle Gerry to our house on the



Patti Lamb

Archdiocese of Indianapolis

holidays and special occasions for stretches of a week or so, in order for him to enjoy the company of family. It was no small feat, as he slept in the dining room — which our mother transformed into a comfortable and accommodating hotel room — on the second floor of our house. It took several men to help him navigate the stairs with his good leg.

Mom cooked like never before, and I marveled at her culinary masterpieces. She would prepare special food that typically didn't have its place on our regular family menu. As a small

child, I remember staring at the supper table at my uncle's spot before he would roll up his wheelchair and being impressed, wondering why my parents went to such great lengths.

“Dorothy, thank you for another delicious meal,” he would say after each time at the kitchen table. My brothers and sisters and I remember this well. He gratefully spoke from his heart.

FACILITATING USE OF the bathroom for my uncle was not an easy task, and my parents signed up for some unglamorous duties as a result. I remember looking at my mom one day after she helped my uncle, and I inquired about how she did difficult things without complaining.

I'll never forget her response, “I'm doing it for

God.”

I wasn't quite 10 years old. I didn't appreciate it at the time, but she went on to explain that when we are called to do the monotonous, thankless and even dirty works of service, we must shift our mindsets. When we frame it that we're doing it for God, that's a game changer, she said. She told me that we've got to look to the divine — to the presence of God — in others. Then service can even become joyful.

My goal is to better adopt this mindset during uncomfortable service opportunities, such as:

- Cleaning up after my child's bout with a ferocious intestinal bug at 2 a.m.
- Delivering appliances to a family on behalf of St. Vincent DePaul on a sweltering summer day.

• Changing our plans to visit the community pool as a family and instead, using our family time to help our elderly neighbors with yardwork when we saw them struggling.

Scripture reminds us: “And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’” (Mt 25:40).

While this may not be particularly comforting in our earthly moments, Jesus promised unfathomable eternal rewards when we act with humility and kindness, acknowledging his presence in others. I'm beginning to understand that it starts by loving and serving family and those closest to us, then extending our circles.

Patti Lamb is a freelance writer from Plainfield, Ind. Her columns appear in The Criterion, the newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The saints lead, guide us if we get to know them

EARLY IN MY LIFE, I imagined that we human beings all belonged to the same enormous “family” that spanned all time. Eventually, I came to see this “family” as the communion of saints: people already in heaven, the “poor souls” awaiting entrance into heaven for whom my mother had tender devotion, and those I sat next to at Sunday Mass.

Those who are in heaven have become more and more important to me over time. Perhaps, my relationship with the communion of saints in general began with my family's practice of praying the family rosary. We began the rosary with the Apostles' Creed where we confessed: “. . . I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.”



Catherine Michaud

Register columnist

As my immediate family grew, we were frequently involved in selecting names for the new babies. The primary criterion in choosing a name was its connection to a saint whose name, if chosen, would bestow upon its new owner the “patronage” of that saint — the promise to fill the role of friend, hero, helper and protector. The saints whom we enlisted to care for our new baby brothers and sisters had to be proven lovers of Christ and role models of faith. We entrusted ourselves to them for their protection and love from our

baptisms to our graves.

EVERY JULY, THE MONTH of my birth and baptism, I reflect on my membership in the communion of saints. I treasure the spiritual solidarity that binds them to believers like me. We constitute an organic unity: the Mystical Body of Christ. Participants in that solidarity are called saints because of their destination and because they have chosen to share in Christ's death and resurrected Life.

The Church's calendar records the names of those who have reached their destinations and received public recognition — canonization. July is filled with memorials of holy men and women whom you might like to meet. St. Bonaventure, for example, on whose feast day I was born was a highly

respected Franciscan theologian who taught at the University of Paris in the 1250s. (Who knew I would become a theologian, too!) My younger sister was born on the feast day of St. Thomas Aquinas (in January). He was a young, Dominican theologian who also came onto the faculty at the University of Paris. Astonishingly, Bonaventure, chair of the theology department at the time, fired him!

Fascinating stories like Bonaventure's and Aquinas' abound! Here are a few of the saints we are celebrating in July:

Maria Goretti, one of the youngest saints to be canonized, only 12 years old.

Benedict, founder of western monasticism. He died at Monte Cassino in 543.

Kateri Tekakwitha, patron saint of Native

American and First Nations Peoples, born in 1656.

Apollinaris, one of the first great martyrs of the Church whom St. Peter made Bishop of Ravenna.

Mary Magdalene, the first disciple to announce the resurrection of Jesus.

Martha, sister of Mary and Lazarus, and one of Jesus' dearest friends.

Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus — the Jesuits.

What is the story of your patron saint? When was the last time you had a conversation with him? Her? Our patron saints, important members of the communion of saints, are our cheering squad as we work our way into their company to meet face-to-face.

Sister Catherine Michaud is a Sister of St. Joseph of Concordia.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Seminarian dinner is Aug. 13

By Karen Bonar
The Register

SALINA — The annual “Evening with Our Seminarians,” which is often in the spring and coincides with ordinations, will be Aug. 13 this year.

Pushing back the event was necessary, due to the coronavirus, said Beth Shearer, director of stewardship and development for the Salina Diocese.

The event will need to be limited to 200 and will be held at the Salina Country Club, 2101 E. Country Club Rd. The evening begins with a social at 5:30 p.m. followed by Vespers (evening prayer), then dinner and a short program. The event is open to the public, but reservations are required.

“When it became apparent the best decision was to postpone our spring event, we decided to schedule the new dinner in conjunction with the annual Seminarian collection,” Shearer said. “The change to an August date allows us the opportunity to meet and honor not only our current seminarians, but also the new ones. The Monday after this event, all the men will start their academic studies for the year. We can send them off with our good thoughts and prayers. This is a fun and inspiring event.”

This is the seventh year for the event, which began in 2014.

The cost is \$60 per person, and the deadline to RSVP is Aug. 3. For more information, contact Shearer or Katie Greenwood at (785) 827-8746 or katherine.greenwood@salinadiocese.org.

Annual Seminarian Collection is Aug. 8-9

By The Register

SALINA — The seminarian collection is scheduled for Aug. 8-9 in all parishes across the diocese. Funding the intellectual, human, spiritual and pastoral formation of seminarians is essential to the growth of future priests for the Diocese of Salina. They will be the priests who will minister to future generations of Catholics in northwest and northcentral Kansas.

“We are extremely blessed to have 10 wonderful men studying for the priesthood in our diocese,” Bishop Jerry Vincke wrote in the letter supporting the seminarian collection (letter is on p. 3 of this issue). “This is great news! However, the cost of educating a seminarian is more than \$50,000 per year or \$525,000 for all our seminarians.”

He asks for both spiritual and financial help. The Seminarian Collection typically accounts for approximately 24 percent of the annual amount needed to educate the seminarians.

“There are multiple ways that these annual educational costs are funded,” said Beth Shearer, director of stewardship and development for the diocese. “The funds come through a combination of outright gifts, the Bishop’s Annual Appeal, the Annual Seminarian Fundraising Dinner, endowments, grants and the seminarian collection.”

The Diocese of Salina assumes the cost for seminarian education so that any man can listen and discern a call to the priesthood regardless of his ability to pay. “Having the funding available,” Shearer said, “makes it possible to continue encouraging men to consider their call to the priesthood. With a gift to the seminarian fund, donors are becoming partners in the effort to educate our future priests.”

It can take up to nine years to complete that education. “Please consider helping to keep our parishes filled with priests,” Bishop Vincke wrote in the letter. “They bring the Eucharist and Sacrament of Reconciliation and other sacraments to all parishioners. This starts with our seminarians.”



Register file photo

Seminarian Kyle Pfeifer (second from right) introduces himself at the 2019 Seminarian Appreciation Dinner.

Estimates suggest that a priest of the Salina Diocese will celebrate 20,000 Masses, perform 1,200 baptisms, preside at 700 weddings, officiate at 900 funerals, and hear 30,000 confessions during his years of active ministry.

Bishop Vincke also emphasizes the importance of prayer in fostering vocations. “Please pray for our priests, our men in the seminary and for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life,” he wrote. “Thank you for your generosity and kindness in advance!”

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT SEMINARIAN EDUCATION INCLUDE:

- Giving a monthly gift that is automatically deducted from a bank account or charged to a credit card. Select the recur-

ring option and seminarian education on the diocesan webpage, under general donations — <https://salinadiocese.org/development/general-gifts>

- Establishing a named seminary bursary endowment in honor or memory of someone.
- Include the Catholic Diocese of Salina Seminarian Education Fund in a will or estate plan.
- Make a one-time gift any time of the year.
- Pray for the seminarians and increased vocations.
- Donate to Seminarian Education on #iGive Catholic giving day, which takes place on Dec. 1.

To learn more about how to support the seminarians, please contact Beth Shearer at (785) 827-8746 or beth.shearer@salinadiocese.org.

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BAPTISMS

Emmet John Allen, son of Kendall and Kyle Allen, was baptized May 31, 2020, by Bishop Jerry Vincke at St. Mary Church in Smith Center.

Kendall Jay Allen, son of Roger and Janice Allen, was baptized May 31, 2020, by Bishop Jerry Vincke at St. Mary Church in Smith Center.

Juliann Rose Clanin, daughter of Nick and Starla (Balthazor) Clanin, was baptized June 6, 2020, by Father David Metz at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Concordia.

Olive Coco Dechant, daughter of Joshua and Alyssa (Klaus) Dechant, was baptized June 7, 2020, by Father Nick Parker at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays.

Brixon Dean Gabel, son of Nathan and Kelli Gabel, was baptized June 14, 2020, by Father Jarett Konrade at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays.

Kaisyn Ann Gerhard, daughter of Cade and Heidi Gerhard, was baptized June 14, 2020, by Father Jarett Konrade at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays.

Abigail Wren Gierhan, daughter of Adam and Amanda Gierhan, was baptized June 7, 2020, by Father Randall Weber at SS. Peter and Paul Church in Clay Center.

Wrenlee Jean Hunsicker, daughter of Riley Hunsicker and

Tori Tebo, was baptized May 17, 2020, by Father Dana Clark at St. Mary Church in Ellis.

Kaden William Kirmer, son of Kyle and Kacie Kirmer, was baptized May 31, 2020, by Father Jarett Konrade at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays.

Lincoln Ray Libera, son of Betsy and Andrew Libera, was baptized June 14, 2020, by Father Gnanasekar Kulandai, HGN, at St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City.

Trey Wayne Parker, son of Kamerun and Samantha Parker, was baptized May 31, 2020, by Father Jarett Konrade at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays.

Cedric Michael Stanberry, son of Shawn and Ellie Stanberry, was baptized May 31, 2020, by Bishop Jerry Vincke at St. Mary Church in Smith Center.

Shawn Michael Stanberry, son of Rick and Ginny Stanberry, was baptized May 31, 2020, by Bishop Jerry Vincke at St. Mary Church in Smith Center.

Rylan Henry Withernam, son of Joe and Jessica Withernam, was baptized June 14, 2020, by Father Randall Weber at SS. Peter and Paul Church in Clay Center.

Send news and photos to newspaper1@salinadiocese.org

ANNIVERSARIES

Jerry and Jo Ann Holman, of Wakefield, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on July 25 with a family dinner, pictures and weekend camping trip. Jerry Hohman and Jo Ann Lang were married on July 25, 1970, at St. Mary Church in Ellis. They are members of St. Francis Xavier in Junction City.

They have four children, Jerrod Hohman, Jackie Seirer, Jamie Hohman and Jay Hohman and 10 grandchildren.



Mr. and Mrs. Holman

My mom needed your help.



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AROUND THE DIOCESE

Colby youth receive Confirmation



Courtesy photo

Youth at Sacred Heart Parish in Colby received Confirmation June 14. Front row (from left) are Libertee Fellhoelter, Anna Brown, Lexie Schroeder, Hali Booi and Kathie Chavez; middle row, Isaiah Rosales, Elliot Weber, Blayne Reid, Tucker Wark and Amanda Jaeger; back row, Father Richard Daise, Zane Betz, Lacey Bergsten, Taden Fikan, Riley Voss, Jacob Gardner and Bishop Jerry Vincke.

Norton youth receive Confirmation



Courtesy photo

Youth at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Norton received Confirmation on June 20. St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Norton, recipients are: Bailey Sides, Cara Cox, Collin Cox, Derian Musquiz, Ella Carter, Gentry Sproul, Jefferson Otter, Mattison Barrett, Nolan Juenemann, Rylan Wildeman, Tate Schulze, and Wesley Brooks. St. Joseph Parish, New Almelo, recipients are Hailee Scheetz, Jaelyn Rumbach, Joaquin Wahlmeier and Wade David.

Diocese of Salina: Catholic Charities Executive Director

The Diocese of Salina is accepting resumes for the position of Executive Director of Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas.

The Executive Director oversees and manages all activities related to the ministries of Catholic Charities. As the leader, strategic planning and execution of the vision/mission are a top priority. This role includes oversight for the daily operations, 15-20 programs, grants, marketing, fundraising, visibility in 31 counties and the utilization of a support team of 25 in 3 locations within the diocese. The position reports to the Chancellor for the Diocese and works very closely with the Catholic Charities Board of Directors.

Position Requirements

BS Business Administration or Social Services related fields of study is preferred. Prefer a minimum of 5+ years of non-profit leadership experience, with budget, fundraising, asset and supervisory management. Strongly prefer experience with delivering services to those most in need. Preference will be given to those applicants with a work history related to the social mission/teachings of the Catholic faith. Excellent verbal and written communication skills needed for this collaboration with other non-profits, parish/clergy and visibility in the 31 counties served by the diocese.

To request a full job description or to ask questions about this opportunity, please email Kim Hoelting, HR Director at kim.hoelting@salinadiocese.org. EOE.

FAITH AND REASONS

Evaluating our approach to prayer

Q What's the best way to pray for personal needs, for loved ones, for the world, the Church, etc.?



Father Andrew Rockers
Diocese of Salina

A To answer this question, I don't want to focus so much on the type of prayer being offered (Holy Mass, Rosary and Chaplet of Divine Mercy would be at the top of that list if you're wondering), rather I want to focus on what we should be praying for, what our intention should be. Another way to put it would be our attitude or our approach to prayer.

All of us have countless intentions/needs/desires/hopes that we (hopefully) bring to God in prayer; the things we ask for in prayer. This is traditionally called intercessory prayer or prayer of intercession, where we come before God asking for something, either for another or for ourselves. This is a very important and beautiful aspect of prayer and of our relationship with God. Our Heavenly Father truly cares for us, is interested in our lives and in the world, and he wants to provide for us out of the abun-

dance of his goodness and love. Jesus tells us many times that the Father is pleased to hear and answer our prayers.

There is one caveat, though. Every single one of us has experienced what seems like an unanswered prayer. This can at times undermine our confidence in the power of prayer. We need to have the humility, though, to recognize that maybe what we were praying for wasn't actually what was best in that situation or at that time. After all, our perspective is always limited and bound by time. If God doesn't at times answer our prayers, it's not because he doesn't care or doesn't love us, it's because he is infinitely more wise and loving than we are, and he knows what is best.

I THINK ALL OF US CAN work on shifting our understanding of prayer to this: the purpose of prayer

is not to conform God's will to ours (to get him to do what we want), rather the purpose of prayer is to conform our will to God's (to want what he wants). After all, he loves every person on Earth infinitely more than we do, and he also knows infallibly what is best for every person in every situation.

This is why at the heart of the Lord's Prayer, the perfect prayer, is: "Thy Will Be Done." This was the perfect prayer of Jesus in the Agony in the Garden, "Not my will, but thy will be done." This is how we should approach intercessory prayer: bringing all our petitions and all our loved ones before the Lord and then saying with great faith and trust, "thy will be done." What God wants in every situation and for every person is always better than what we want. And the more we pray that his will be done and the more we try to conform our will to his, the more his perfect plan will be realized in us and in the world.

Father Andrew Rockers is the parochial vicar of Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina. E-mail questions to him at faithandreasons7@gmail.com or write him at P.O. Box 1038, Salina, KS 67402.

Pope asks consecrated virgins to help the poor, stand up for justice

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Women who have discerned a call to consecrate their virginity to God in service to the Church must be living signs of God's love in the world, especially where too many people live in poverty or suffer from discrimination, Pope Francis said.

"Be women of mercy, experts in humanity. Women who believe in the 'revolutionary nature of love and tenderness,'" the pope said in a message to the estimated 5,000 women around the world who formally belong to the Order of Virgins.

Pope Francis' message, released by the Vatican June 1, marked the 50th anniversary of St. Paul VI's revival of the "Ritual for the Consecration of Virgins."

The women, who — unlike members of religious orders — are consecrated by a local bishop and make their own living arrangements and decisions about work, were scheduled to meet at the Vatican to mark the anniversary. The COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of their meeting.

"Your virginal consecration helps the Church to love the poor, to discern forms of material and spiritual poverty, to help those who are weak and vulnerable, those suffering from physical and mental illness, the young and the elderly, and all those in danger of being marginalized or dis-

carded," the pope told the women.

THE CORONAVIRUS pandemic, he said, has shown the world how necessary it is "to eliminate inequalities, to heal the injustice that is undermining the health of the entire human family."

For Christians, he said, it is important to be disturbed and concerned by what is happening around them; "do not close your eyes to it and do not flee from it. Be present and sensitive to pain and suffering. Persevere in proclaiming the Gospel, which promises fullness of life for all."

The women's consecration gives them "chaste freedom" in relating to others, being a sign of Christ's love for the Church, which is "virgin and mother, sister and friend of all," the pope said.

"By your gentleness, weave a web of authentic relationships that can help to make the neighborhoods of our cities less lonely and anonymous," he told them. "Be forthright, capable of parrhesia (boldness), but avoid the temptation to chatter and gossip. Have the wisdom, the resourcefulness, and the authority of charity, in order to stand up to arrogance and to prevent abuses of power."

Please see related story on p. 14-15

NFP Awareness week is July 19-25

By Julie Asher

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — "Live the truth and beauty of God's plan for married love!" is the theme of this year's Natural Family Planning Awareness Week July 19-25.

The weeklong observance is a national educational campaign of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops that celebrates "God's design for married love and the gift of life and to raise awareness of Natural Family Planning methods," said a USCCB news release.

The week annually high-

lights the July 25 anniversary of St. Paul VI's 1968 encyclical, *Humanae Vitae* ("Of Human Life"), which affirmed Catholic teaching against artificial contraception and provides clear teaching about God's plan for married love and the transmission of life. It also includes the July 26 feast of SS. Joachim and Anne, the parents of the Blessed Mother.

Natural family planning, or NFP, involves the monitoring by a married couple of the various biological signs indicating a woman's time of fertility and infertility. It can be used both to

avoid pregnancy or to aid in becoming pregnant.

Church teaching on contraception "is also shaped by a knowledge that those who become parents generally become much better people; they need to develop quite a set of virtues in order to be good parents. Those virtues also help them be good spouses, good co-workers, good citizens," said Janet E. Smith, who

Please see NFP / Page 20

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A Family Serving Families

Catholic population fluctuates in the Salina Diocese

By Karen Bonar
The Register

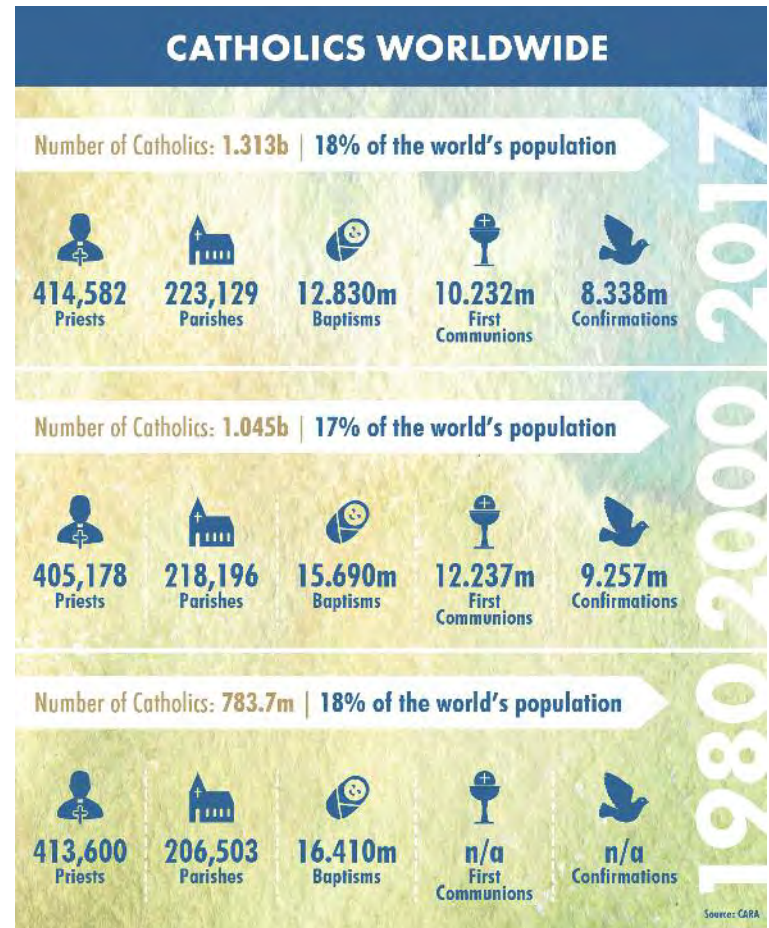
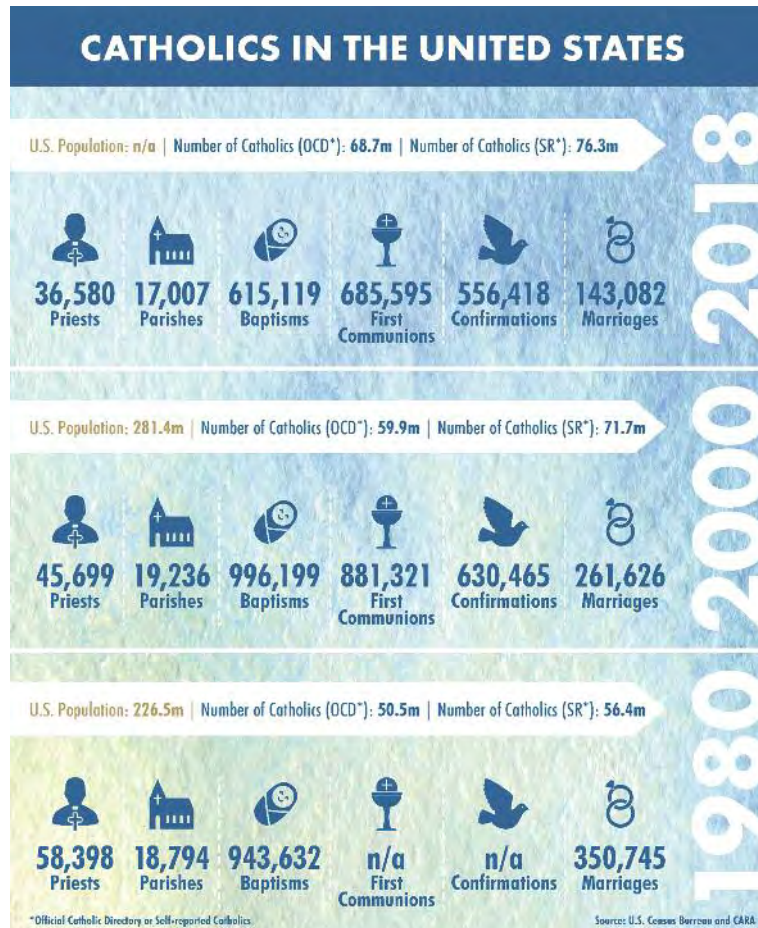
Nationally, the percentage of Catholics is on the decline, a trend that is mirrored across the Salina Diocese.

From 2009 to 2019, the number of Catholics dropped nationally by three percent — from 23 percent in 2009 to 20 percent in 2019, according to the Pew Research Center. During the same time period, the number of Catholics decreased in the Salina Diocese from 45,103 in 2010 to 40,056 in 2019, according to the Official Catholic Directory (OCD).

“There are many good, high-quality surveys, and they all show the same basic downward trend in religion,” said Alan Cooperman, the director of religion research at the Pew Research Center.

In the Salina Diocese, the population has fluctuated over the years. The 31 counties that comprise the diocese saw steady growth from the 1950s-’80s, according to numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau. The next few decades experienced population dips, with a slight recovery of overall numbers in 2010.

In terms of Catholics in the Salina Diocese, the number grew steadily from about 35,000 in 1920 to more than 61,000 in 1980 (according to the OCD). Numbers fell slightly in 1990 and have been declining since (see infographic



on page 11).

THERE ARE SEVERAL ways to count Catholic population.

The first is from the Official Catholic Directory, which is published annually, and contains information submitted from each diocese in the country. In this book, the number of Catholics are counted by those who are registered at a parish.

“A lot of people self-identify as Catholic, but the Church isn’t aware (of them),” said Mark Gray, who is a senior research

associate and the director of CARA Catholic Polls (CCP) at the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. “The Official Catholic Directory approximates parish-affiliated Catholics only.”

Number of Catholics may also be counted via survey, such as the Religious Landscape Study conducted in 2007 and 2014 by the Pew Research Center, or in their ongoing political surveys.

For example, in 2010, about 78.3 million people identified as Catholic via

surveys, while the OCD listed only 65.6 million Catholics in the United States.

“The Church’s definition (of Catholic) is the same as a social scientist,” Gray said. “If you’re baptized Catholic or you self-identify as Catholic, you’re Catholic, regardless of how frequently you attend Mass.”

CARA also looks at worldwide numbers. Over time, the number of Catholics worldwide has increased from about 650 million in 1970 to 1.3 billion in 2017.

While the aggregate num-

ber of Catholics has increased in the last few decades, the population of both the United States and the world have also increased. The national and international population increased at a higher rate than the number of Catholics. For example, the number of Catholics worldwide has more than doubled from 1970 to 2017, yet Catholics remains a steady 17 to 18 percent of the world’s population, due to population increases.

Please see RURAL / Page 10

Percent of Catholics dips nationally, while “nones” grow

By Karen Bonar
The Register

While many religions are facing decreasing numbers, one segment is growing: the nones.

The term “none” is used to describe adults who do not affiliate with any religious group. This includes atheists, agnostics or “nothing in particular.”

“The important thing to realize is that younger people today are not only less religious than older Americans today, they’re also less religious than young people used to be,” said Alan Cooperman, the director of religion research at the Pew Research Center.

Over time, the Pew Research Center tracked the generations’ religious beliefs throughout their lifetime.

“Most age groups have become more unaffiliated as they have gotten older,” he said. “The bigger pattern is each new generation has started off more unaffiliated (than the previous).”

“It isn’t that people over the course of their lifetime are leaving religion. It’s just that each generational cohort is less religiously connected than the previous one.”

The Pew Research Center conducted Religious Landscape Studies (RLS) in 2007 and 2014. During that time, the overall number of “nones” grew from 16 to 23 percent of the population. In addition to the RLS, Cooperman said the Pew asks religiously-related questions throughout the year during other polls it conducts. Those answers are compiled into aggregate data and paint a broad picture over time.

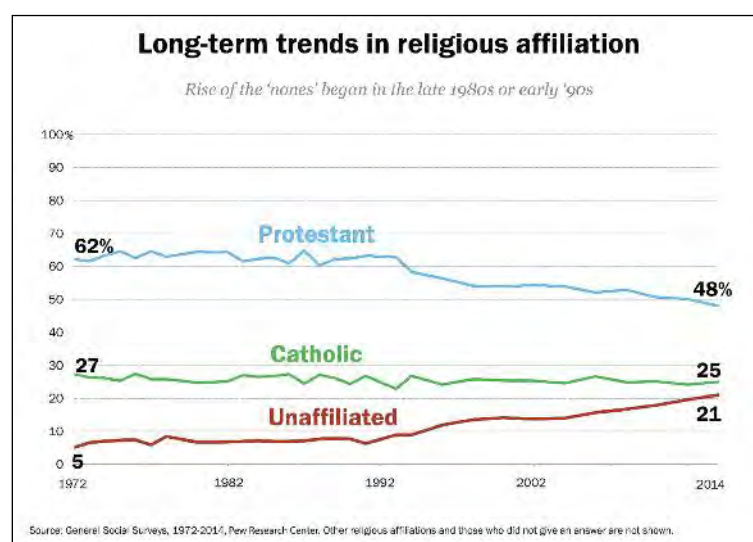
For the “nones,” the increase is steady: from 17 percent in 2009 to 26 percent in 2019.

THERE COULD BE several contributing factors to a decrease in religious affiliation, Cooperman said.

One theory is that adults are dissatisfied with political ties between religious groups and the political activists (the Hout-Fischer hypothesis). Another relates to marriage.

“When you look at the marriage trends, the share of adults who is not getting married is rising,” Cooperman said. “People are getting married later and later and a larger share of people are never marrying.”

This ties into religion,



regardless if a couple weds in a religious ceremony.

“Religion is transmitted from generation to generation in families,” he said. “So when less marry, there’s less transmission of religion.”

“Also, married adults tend to be intermarried among religions. The chances of intergenerational transmission of religious identity are greater when the mother and father have the same religion.”

The third theory relates to the decline of social interactions.

“Participation in things like Elks Clubs, bowling leagues and civic organization are down,” Cooperman said.

If participation in community-related events is declining, it is logical that religious institutions would also see a decline.

“Maybe what’s going on is what’s happening in religion is a symptom of a much broader social change,” he said. “If we live more individual lives, then what’s happening in religion is an effect of that broader social change.”

Finally, he said, an increase in affluence could lead to a decrease in the perception of the need for religion.

THE PEW RESEARCH Center published a report in October, detailing data col-

lected from telephone surveys conducted in 2018 and 2019.

Results shows 65 percent of adults identify as Christian, which represented a 12 percent drop from the previous decade (77 percent in 2009).

Within the Christian umbrella, 51 percent of U.S. adults identified as Protestant in 2009, while 43 percent did so in 2019. The percentage of Catholics also dropped, but slightly less, from 23 percent in 2009 to 20 percent in 2019.

While those who identify with organized religion is decreasing, those who remain unaffiliated religiously, or “nones” are growing.

In 2009, 17 percent of adults did not affiliate with a particular religion; in 2019, it increased to 23 percent.

“The most common reason Catholics leave the faith is they just drift away,” said Mark Gray, who is the director of CARA Catholic Polls (CCP) and a senior research associate at CARA. CARA is the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University in Washington,

Please see DOWNWARD / Page 18

Rural nature of diocese provides unique challenges for the faithful

From page 1

THE STEADY, DOWNWARD TREND OF Catholics in the Salina Diocese is important to acknowledge, said Father Steve Heina, who is the director of the Office of New Evangelization for the Salina Diocese. “It seems to me one thing that is pretty clear is what we thought were the tried and true methods of parish life probably need to be significantly changed,” Father Heina said. “Some groups such as Knights of Columbus or Altar Society have drop in numbers because some young adults don’t have the same sense of fulfillment from belonging to groups like their parents and grandparents did.”

For parishes with a diversity of age in attendees, and those who express interest in being involved in parish activities, hurdles still exist.

“Many times, even those who are more open to parish involvement can’t find the support from peers,” Father Heina said. “If anything, they are criticized (by their peers) or thought crazy to be wasting time on church stuff when there are so many other things they could be doing.”

Additionally, families tend to be busy with school, sports and other social activities. It can seem easy to put religious activities on a back burner. This is a struggle when it comes to sacramental preparations.

“Almost any publisher has a baptismal preparation program for parents of infants. Almost always they will have a multi-session outline to their material, and not all parents want to come to multiple sessions because of their schedules,” Father Heina said. “There could also be a lack of interest and lack of support from family or peers. You’re lucky if you can schedule them for a single hour.”

A REALITY IN THE 31 COUNTIES THAT comprise the Salina Diocese is population shifts.

With the exception of Ellis, Geary, Riley

and Saline counties, the remaining 27 counties have routinely experienced steady population decline.

“The other reason different areas see a decline in population is mobility,” Gray said. “Any place that includes rural geography will probably see population loss. When young people leave, they don’t come back. It’s a common story in the country. It doesn’t mean they left the Church, it just means they left the area.”

Father Heina said the struggles rural parishes face are unique.

“When many of us think of the Diocese of Salina, we’re conscious of the rural parishes and communities that are declining in numbers,” he said. “I often tell people when I was at Sacred Heart Parish in Park for five years, there was not a single new family that moved into the parish. In that time, plenty of people died or kids went off to college and never came back.”

With nearly 27,000 square miles, the diocese spans more than a quarter of the state. It includes larger cities such as Manhattan with three Catholic Churches, and small communities such as Atwood in far northwest Kansas.

“How do we address the needs of people in different demographics?” Father Heina said. “The ministries you need to support in Manhattan are different kinds of ministries than you need in Atwood.”

With rural communities declining, he said it can feel difficult to expand parish activities.

“You have fewer people to accomplish the same tasks (as larger parishes and communities),” Father Heina said.

Resources are available, but many focus on large parishes.

“Almost everything that’s written is written for urban communities, parishes,” he said. “Many pastoral resources assume you have a large pool of untapped and potentially interested parishioners, and in rural Kansas, that’s just not the case. It’s very

hard to find pastoral resources about the needs of the small, rural communities.”

Coupled with limited parish volunteers is a decline in the number of diocesan priests.

In the year 2000, there were 78 priests in the diocese, but only 48 of the total were active, diocesan priests. Often included in the priest population count is retired priests (17 in the year 2000), as well as religious priests (11, which includes foreign missionary priests and the Capuchin friars in Victoria) and extern priests (often, a missionary priest who is diocesan and not affiliated with a religious order).

The number of priests affects parishes, and how they are administered. For example, in the year 2000, only 39 of the 92 parishes in the diocese had a resident diocesan priest as the pastor. Four parishes had a resident religious priest as pastor, an additional 43 parishes were administered by priest, but had no resident pastor, four parishes were administered by women religious, and two parishes were administered by lay people.

In the year 2010, the active diocesan priest count in the Salina Diocese was down to 38 priests, with 18 retired priests, 15 religious and 5 extern priests. During that year, of the 86 parishes, 34 had a resident pastor, six had a resident religious priest, 40 were administered by a priest but had no resident pastor, one was administered by a religious woman and five were administered by lay people.

SOME FAMILIES MOVE OUT OF THE diocese, but Gray said many who grew up in the Catholic faith fall away.

“In 2002, Pew and a number of places asked people why they left Catholicism,” he said. “The question was open-ended, and very few bring up clergy sex abuse. It’s not a reason people leave the Church. It will influence them to give less to the bishop’s appeal, but it’s not a reason they will leave the faith.”

Cooperman said the Pew Research Cen-

ter tracks multiple aspects of religion, including retention and conversion rate.

“The ratio is skewed toward larger numbers of people leaving Catholicism than becoming Catholic,” he said. “Catholics have a low proportion of people who convert in (compared to other religions).

“It’s a big commitment to convert to Catholicism,” he said, referring to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adult (RCIA) classes, that often span a minimum of six months before a convert joins the Catholic faith.

Cooperman said about 60 percent of adults who were raised Catholic still identify as Catholic.

“Right now, the Church is in a bit of a recession, where the (percentage of) Catholic population is declining slightly, but it’s in a slightly better position than many Protestant denominations,” Gray said.

Cooperman agreed with the assessment. “The Catholic line is fairly flat. It is going down slightly as a percentage of the U.S. public, but the Catholic numbers are relatively stable compared to Protestant numbers, which are declining more rapidly,” he said.

Some of the perspective depends on regional geography.

“If you’re in the Midwest, it seems like the sky is falling,” Gray said. “If you’re in the Southwest, you are moaning about not enough parking spots at church. It just depends on where you are in the country.”

Overall, Cooperman said the number of Catholics in the U.S. is bolstered by immigration.

“Because of the influx of immigrants, particularly from Latin America, many are Catholic and raise their offspring Catholic, that has helped bolster the Catholic numbers,” he said. “If you look at just white Catholics, (the decline of Catholics) is beyond dispute.”

ANOTHER WAY TO MEASURE CATHOLIC participation is by local sacramental num-

bers, Gray said. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of the Salina Diocese remained almost steady from 1920 to 1960, while the sacramental numbers fluctuated. The population continued to decline over the next 40 years, with sacramental numbers also decreasing in the year 2000.

According to the OCD, more than 2,400 infants were baptized in 1920 in the Salina Diocese, then decreased to about 1,900 in 1960 and decreased to nearly 1,000 baptisms in the year 2000. Similarly, more than 500 couples were married in 1920 in the Salina Diocese, with almost 750 in 1960 and almost 400 in 2000.

Xan Wedel, the state data center lead at the Kansas State Data Center at Institute for Policy and Social Research at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, said the increase in marriages, baptisms and First Communions from the 1960s to the ‘80s could be simple to explain.

“I suspect that part of that is demographic changes,” she said. “The baby boomers, which are a large segment of the population, would have gotten married in the mid-’60s until about 1980. During those years, they had the highest population of marrying age.”

With fewer adults in the same age range today, she said it is logical that weddings, and also baptisms, have experienced a decrease.

“Our birth rate is really going down,” she added, “which in 18 years creates even fewer people to get married.”

The downward trend for all religious groups is troubling, Gray said.

“I don’t know if there are any simple solutions to address these changes,” he said. “I think one strange thing with the pandemic is that parishes are reaching out to parishioners. This wasn’t a common practice prior to the shutdown. We may see this leading to more parishioners coming back as things return to normal.”

Rural parishes face uphill climb to educate, form youth in Catholic faith

By Allison Ochoa
The Register

GRINNELL — A First Communion Class of one.

This seems unthinkable in some towns in Kansas, but in parts of the Salina Diocese, it is a reality.

“Our Director of Religious Education begs year after year for catechists, but we barely have enough,” said Leona Dickman, a parishioner at Immaculate Conception Parish in Grinnell. “I stepped up to teach because I want my granddaughter to have a good Catholic background.”

She has worked as the parish secretary since 2014, as well as served as a catechist off and on for more than two decades. Most recently, she led the second and third-grade class which included two students, one of which was her granddaughter Taryn Dickman, the parish’s only First Communicant this year.

With the trend of declining populations in rural Kansas, these dwindling numbers mean small sacramental classes and decreasing numbers in parish participation.

“This year, we have four First Communion students at Clifton and zero at Clyde,” said Father Steve Heina, pastor of St. Mary of the Assump-

tion parish in Clifton and St. John the Baptist parish in Clyde. “Our religious education classes at Clyde generally have between five and ten students, and we typically have a few less in Clifton.”

The parishes, which serve the population in a geographical area that spans portions of three counties, have a combined confirmation class comprised of 16 students.

IN THE CENTRAL AND eastern portions of Washington County, the parishes of St. Augustine in Washington and Sacred Heart in Greenleaf also combine their religious education classes. Father Joseph Kieffer, who is the pastor of both parishes as well as of St. John the Baptist parish in Hanover, said there are an average of eight to 10 students in each combined class, with larger Confirmation classes due to the two-year preparation process.

While small sacramental classes have become the norm for these and other rural parishes, there are concerns that accompany those smaller numbers. For Father Heina, the quality of the interaction between the students themselves, and between the catechist and the students, is one such issue.

“With a small number of



Leona Dickman, left, served as catechist for her granddaughter’s First Communion. Taryn Dickman received her First Communion on June 13 from Father James Thomas at Immaculate Conception Church in Grinnell.

students in each class, it doesn’t generate a lot of discussion among the students,” Father Heina said. “It takes a certain number — a minimum number — to have an energized discussion.”

Another challenge rural parishes face is finding volun-

teers willing to lead religious education classes.

“We’ve struggled trying to keep teachers and get teachers who want to teach the religious education classes,” Father Kieffer said.

The reasons for the scarcity

“I think when kids can see not only their parents but other adults in their parish growing in their faith — not just coming to Mass but how the faith helps these folks be better people — I think that’s the single most supportive thing parishioners can do.”

Father Steve Heina

of catechists are varied, Father Heina said.

“The two biggest obstacles I’m facing are the time commitment involved for catechists to prep and to teach, and the confidence in our potential catechists,” he said. “Sometimes they feel very inadequate in their ability to teach about religious matters. Informed catechists are important.”

He recognizes that continuing faith formation as an adult can be challenging but stresses that living the faith is vital.

“I think it’s part of the overloaded schedules and lives of people that [continued religious education] falls off their radar,” he said. “In all religious education — for chil-

dren and adults — a good grasp of the subject matter is important, but what we’ve added in the past several years is the [importance of] lived faith. So, it’s not just head knowledge or book knowledge or computer knowledge, but ‘how do I apply this to my life — in my witness, my prayer life, and social justice teachings of the Church?’”

THE DECREASING population in rural Kansas could be contributing to the trend of fewer catechists, smaller sacramental classes, and fewer religious education students.

The number of residents in Gove County, for example, decreased by 12 percent between 2000 and 2010, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Between the 2010 census and the 2018 Population and Housing Unit Estimate the Bureau compiled, the number decreased an additional three percent.

Coupled with a population decrease is a shift of religious belief, as well. According to the Pew Research Center’s 2019 report, the percentage of Catholics in the U.S. population dropped three percent from 2009 to 2019.

While the local impact of national trends can take time

to be felt, the year-to-year needs and challenges in the diocese’s parishes are obvious and immediate.

Dickman says children need religious education, but the formation must start at home under the guidance of their parents. Then, even if there is only one student in a formal parish class, the sacraments need to be emphasized.

“Every soul is worth saving, and they need the sacraments to conduct themselves in the faith and stay Catholic in the future,” she said. “I’ve seen young kids go [to religious education classes] until they get Confirmed and then they see it as having graduated, but it’s not. It’s supposed to be a lifelong education.”

Father Heina suggests that individuals across the diocese can play a part in encouraging, building and sustaining solid religious education programs to benefit children and adults alike.

“Financial support is always significant, but I think when kids can see not only their parents but other adults in their parish growing in their faith — not just coming to Mass but how the faith helps these folks be better people — I think that’s the single most supportive thing parishioners can do.”

CATHOLICS IN NORTHWEST KANSAS

The Diocese of Concordia was founded on Aug. 2, 1887, with Bishop Richard Scannell. On Dec. 23, 1944, under the leadership of Bishop Francis Thill, it was renamed the Diocese of Salina.



The first Catholic Mass was celebrated in Salina in 1861. By 1866, two dozen Catholic congregations were established in what is now the Salina Diocese.

NW Kansas Population: n/a Number of Catholics: 40,056



NW Kansas Population: 325,116 Number of Catholics: 50,113



NW Kansas Population: 348,387 Number of Catholics: 61,011



NW Kansas Population: 358,385 Number of Catholics: 53,416



NW Kansas Population: 339,775 Number of Catholics: 43,000



NW Kansas Population: 359,218 Number of Catholics: 35,179



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Official Catholic Directory

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Men's conference is on holy day, has Marian theme

By Karen Bonar
The Register

HAYS — This year, the Annual Men's Conference will coincide with the Feast of the Assumption of Mary and embrace a Marian theme: Men of God Men of Mary.

The Ninth Annual Men's Conference, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Aug. 15 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays, will feature Patrick Coffin and Father Andy Hammeke as keynote speakers. Bishop Jerry Vincke will celebrate Mass (for the Holy Day of Obligation) with the men, and Father Gale Hammerschmidt returns as emcee for the event.

"I want to focus on what it means to be a man in relationship to our savior," said Coffin. "My goal is to dispel confusion and call men into the most important relationship of their life. The world tells them it's everything but the family. The importance of family life, the interior life, is almost totally forgotten."

He hosts The Patrick Coffin Show, a podcast on faith and culture heard in over 100 countries.

Coffin is the former host of Catholic Answers Live radio show, where he interviewed Dr. Jordan B. Peterson, two-time Academy Award winner Kevin Costner, Fox News host and author Tucker Carlson, Emmy Award winning



Courtesy photo

Patrick Coffin will speak about a man's relationship with Christ during the Ninth Annual Men's Conference on Aug. 15 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays.

singer-actor Harry Connick, Jr., horror novelist Dean Koontz, four presidential candidates and top Vatican cardinals.

"If you're not praying, then your faith is your hobby," he said. "It's easy to become a robo-apologist."

Coffin said he likes to weave humor through his talks.

"If you're not growing in your relationship with Christ, you're just a smarty pants with holy water," he quipped.

Coffin is also the author of four books: "The Contraception Deception"; "Stay Cool When the Argument Heats Up"; "How To Handle Haters"; and "Once Saved Not Always Saved."

"An increasing number of

young people don't have a connection with traditions of the Church," Coffin said. "Our culture no longer has social support structures for men. Our culture is starving for social groups like bowling leagues, men's choirs and father/son outings."

This is why he said it's important for men to attend a conference where they can meet, deepen and strengthen their relationship with like-minded men.

Coffin lives in Orange County, Calif., where he runs the culture-building

Statement on August events

The Salina Diocese is monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic and how it will affect events in August. An update will be released July 29 at salinadiocese.org.

membership site coffinnation.com.

ALSO ON THE SLATE of speakers is Father Hammeke, who was ordained in 2018.

As a newly-minted co-vocations director, he will address discernment for young men.

"There are many misconceptions and fears about what it might look like if their son becomes a priest," he said. "It's a joy to have their son be a priest."

His talk is titled "Fathering Fathers."

"I'm also speaking to brothers, too," Father Hammeke added. "Some young men might have a brother who is thinking about entering the seminary. One of my brother's biggest fears was the idea of, 'I have to watch how I have to act in front of him now, and now my relationship will change.'

"Most priests I know have deepened their relationship with their family once

they've become priests."

Father Hammeke said he spoke before a large crowd at commencement for Thomas More Prep-Marian Sr. High School and CYO Convention once, but is new to speaking to large conferences.

"I want fathers to know that their son will be happy and still a part of their life," he said. "It's good to dispel some of those misconceptions."

THE ANNUAL MEN'S conference is hosted by the Salina Diocese office of Family Life. The event will feature the speakers, as well as Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, Reconciliation and lunch.

Fathers are encouraged to register and attend with their sons. Seminarians, deacons and priests attend for free, but must RSVP.

The cost for the conference is \$35 for an adult. Middle school, high school and college students may register for \$15. Fathers who bring one son pay an additional \$10. After Aug. 1, registration increases by \$10 per person; Registration is accepted the day of the conference at the door.

For more information or to register online, go to: salinadiocese.org/family-life or email familylife@salinadiocese.org.

PROMISE TO PROTECT

PLEDGE TO HEAL

COMPROMISO PARA SANAR

If you have been abused or victimized by someone representing the Catholic Church ... Please believe in the possibility for hope and help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out. Our diocesan assistance coordinator is available to obtain support for your needs, to help you make a formal complaint of abuse to the proper authorities and to arrange a personal meeting with the bishop or his representative, if you desire.

Si has sido abusado o fuiste víctima de alguien que represente a la Iglesia católica ... Cree en la posibilidad para la esperanza, la ayuda y la sanación. Ven y cuéntanos tu problema. La coordinadora diocesana estará disponible para atenderte en tus necesidades, para ayudarte a presentar una queja formal de abuso ante la diócesis y para que veas personalmente al obispo o su representante, si lo así lo deseas.

The diocesan assistance coordinator for the Diocese of Salina is Maria Cheney, LSCSW. Contact her at (785) 825-0865 or P.O. Box 2984, Salina, KS 67402. reportabuse@salinadiocese.org

La coordinadora para la diócesis de Salina es Maria Cheney. Puedes contactarla al (785) 825-0865 o P.O. Box 2984, Salina, KS 67402. reportabuse@salinadiocese.org

Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

Secretaría de Protección de Niños y Jóvenes, La Conferencia de Obispos Católicos

DIOCESE OF SALINA

MEN OF GOD MEN OF MARY

9th Annual Men's Conference

AUGUST 15TH 8AM - 4 PM

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY CHURCH 1805 VINE STREET - HAYS, KANSAS

Featuring

MASS WITH

Bishop Vincke

TALKS BY

Patrick Coffin & Fr. Andy Hammeke

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt

REGISTER ONLINE @ SALINADIOCESE.ORG BY AUGUST 10TH

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Women's conference to focus on the Beatitudes

By Karen Bonar
The Register

WAKEENEY — Women from around the diocese are invited to the biennial Women's Conference, featuring singer/songwriter Sarah Hart.

The convention, which is Aug. 29 at Christ the King Parish in WaKeeney, will include Mass with Bishop Jerry Vincke, several presentations by Hart, lunch and the Salina Diocesan Council of Catholic Women meeting.

Hart said she will spend about 30 minutes discussing each Beatitude in her presentation, "Blessed Are You: The Beatitude Walk."

"It's a fun and joyful day," she said. "People have the chance to speak with each other in small groups."

As a musician and speaker, she weaves music throughout the day.

HART HAS PRESENTED previously during a Lenten retreat in Manhattan, which is why SDCCW president Patricia Erickson said she wanted Hart to present at the upcoming conference.



Courtesy photo

Sarah Hart, a singer/songwriter from Nashville, will speak at the Women's Conference on Aug. 29 at Christ the King Parish in WaKeeney. The theme will revolve around the Beatitudes.

"I wanted an interactive speaker who will get people excited," Erickson said. "I wanted someone who would appeal to older and younger audience members."

Hart said she loves talking about the eight Beati-

tudes.

"The Beatitudes are such beautiful words that Jesus gave us," she said. "Jesus was speaking to a people in a time who had never heard anything like that before. A lot of poor people were con-

Statement on August events

The Salina Diocese is monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic and how it will affect events in August. An update will be released July 29 at salinadiocese.org.

sidered religious outcasts. So for Jesus to say in a way that was so different than what they heard about God — that God blesses you because you're poor in spirit — Jesus spoke directly to their hearts."

Hart said the beatitudes could seem outdated to some, but they aren't.

"They are applicable to any situation we face in modern day," she said. "We still mourn. We still need to practice mercy."

SIMILARLY, SHE SAID it's important for women to gather in community for time to reflect.

"Women have a way of speaking to one another in their language that is all their own," Hart said. "Certain tough points are emotional for us. We might not feel comfortable sharing with men. That's why it's important for women to come together and speak in a language that is uniquely theirs."

Materials for the day are included, but if attendees

wish to bring their own Bible or reflection journal, they are welcome.

"Maybe bring extra Kleenex," Hart added. "People do their fair share of crying because we dig in to the personal faith experience. We take the Beatitudes one by one. We talk about what it means to mourn and be comforted."

"Some of these Beatitudes are very sensitive subjects for people. It brings people to perhaps a deeper understanding, and it helps to focus in and sometimes people feel things they haven't dealt with before."

HART, WHO LIVES IN Nashville, is married and has two daughters.

She is the author of four retreat books. She is also working on her 11th full-length recording, "And Lovely It Is." Her songs have been recorded by Amy Grant, Celtic Woman, Matt Maher, Laura Story, Audrey Assad and The Newsboys. Additionally, Hart wrote a musical about the life of St. Bernadette, wrote the music for "Kaytek the Wizard" and the score for "Du Iz Tak."

More information about Hart may be found at sarahhart.com.

Registration is \$35 and may be completed at <https://salinadiocese.org/family-life>.

The Most Reverend Gerald L. Vincke,
Bishop of Salina,
extends a special invitation to you to support
our seminarians through your attendance at the
Annual Seminarian Dinner or with a financial gift.

At the dinner, you will meet the men who
are currently in seminary formation.

Please consider helping us recognize their
gift of stewardship to our diocese.



Thursday, August 13, 2020

Salina Country Club

2101 East Country Club Road
Salina, Kansas

5:30 pm – Social
Vespers

6:30 pm – Dinner

RSVP required

Dinner seating is limited to first 200 who respond

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SEMINARIANS
IN THE #SALINASEMS VIDEO SERIES:**

 **YouTube**
@Salina_Diocese

Salina Diocese Council of Catholic Lay Women

Biennial Convention featuring

Sarah Hart

presenting

Blessed Are You: The Beatitude Walk

AUGUST 29, 2020

CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC PARISH CENTER

412 N 9TH, WAKEENEY, KS

Registration 8 - 9 a.m with coffee and rolls

Mass at 11:00 with the Bishop

Sarah Hart is one of the leading figures in contemporary Catholic music today. Her songs of faith and workshops have touched the lives of thousands. Originally from Lancaster, Ohio, she has a degree in music from Ohio State University. Now based in Nashville, she's on the road a good part of the year, juggling a busy songwriting, recording, concert and event schedule.

**REGISTRATION FOR SDCCW 2020 CONVENTION
CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC PARISH CENTER
412 N 9TH
WAKEENEY, KS**

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

PARISH: _____

REGISTER BY AUGUST 1, 2020 to Pat Erickson, 5100 N Range Ave, Colby KS 67701. Or on-line at the Salina Diocese website - Family Life tab.

COST \$35 PER PERSON INCLUDES LUNCH.

SDCCW Meeting and Installation of officers will occur at 3:00 after the presentation by Sarah Hart.

Hotel rooms blocked at Best Western Hotel, 525 S 1st, Wakeeney until August 21st. Rooms are approximately \$94 before taxes.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Perpetual virgin makes promises June 27

By Karen Bonar
The Register

SALINA — Dressed in white, Judy Kvasnicka made promises and received a veil, ring and book of prayers. She replied, “I am” to three questions posed by Bishop Jerry Vincke’s during the Mass of Consecration to a Life of Virginity for a Woman Living in the World on June 27 at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

“As a person may be drawn to marry a person in the world, a consecrated virgin feels drawn to marry Jesus in a very special way,” Bishop Vincke said in his homily. “This is different than religious life when one belongs to a religious community. Judy, you’re being consecrated not to an idea or a latest trend, but to a person, Jesus.

“Jesus is with you, and he desires you. He’s been longing for this day just as much as you’ve been longing for this day.”

Some aspects of the Consecration Mass are similar to a priestly ordination, such as the singing of the Litany of the Saints.

In addition, Kvasnicka renewed her intentions, the bishop prayed a prayer of consecration over her, presented her with a veil and ring, and finally presented her with the Liturgy of the Hours.

BISHOP VINCKE SAID THERE ARE three state of life vocations: ordained (priest/deacon/bishop), consecrated (religious brothers or sisters and consecrated virgins) and the laity (married or dedicated single).

“I think there is a lot of confusion about what is consecrated virginity,” Bishop Vincke said. “A friend innocently said (to Judy) a few weeks ago, ‘I want to talk to you while you still talk,’ thinking once this day happened, Judy would never be heard from again.”

As a consecrated virgin, Kvasnicka said her vocation is “to be” rather than “to do.”

“My primary ministry will be prayer: for the diocese, because in effect I belong to the diocese,” she said. “We pray for the bishop’s intentions specifically. We also pray for good marriages. Then we are encouraged to do something in the parish or diocese.”

“I could have taken a private vow, but I very much wanted the Church to be involved because I feel Church is so important.”

Judy Kvasnicka
Consecrated Virgin

An active in her parish, St. Mary, Queen of the Universe, in Salina, Kvasnicka teaches parish religious education, serves as a Eucharistic minister, is the parish librarian, works in the sacristy, lectors for weekday Mass and visits nursing homes and the homebound (pre-COVID-19).

Frequent Mass attendance is encouraged, as is several hours of personal prayer on a daily basis. Additional requirements may be set by a bishop, in addition to a formation process.

“You don’t just call up the bishop one day and decide to be a consecrated virgin,” she said. “It’s been more than that. I’ve really worked at it these last two years.”

She is the second known consecrated virgin in the diocese; the other is Jean Ross, 84, who made the consecration as a virgin of the diocese on Aug. 4, 1997. Later, on April 14, 2009, she was formally affiliated with the Capuchin Province.

THE LIFE OF CONSECRATED virginity is one of cooperative independence.

“In no way does the diocese (financially) support me. I will never see a penny from the diocese,” Kvasnicka said. “I have to be able to take care of myself. I have had a lot of years practice on that.”

She will maintain her job with the City of Salina.

“I’ve lived this life for decades, but it hasn’t been formalized,” Kvasnicka said. “I could have taken a private vow, but I very much wanted the Church to be involved because I feel Church is so important. It was an extra way to give witness and to make this vocation noticed.”

She is a member of the United States Association of Consecrated Virgins, and said she befriended



Photos by Karen Bonar

Judy Kvasnicka kneels on the steps in Sacred Heart Cathedral June 27 prior to making promises to live as a perpetual virgin. She is the second known woman to make these vows publically in the Salina Diocese.

several other consecrated virgins who previously lived in religious communities.

“I go back way to my youth, and I see all of these puzzle pieces fitting together,” she said. “I didn’t give it any thought through life, but it’s all fitting together perfectly.”

A SALINA NATIVE, KVASNICKA grew up in Sacred Heart Cathedral.

“It’s special that the consecration is happening at the Cathedral, my home parish,” she said.

A 1967 graduate of Salina High School (which became Salina Cen-

Please see **CONSECRATION** / Page 15



Bishop Jerry Vincke hands the Liturgy of the Hours to Kvasnicka. A primary vocation of a consecrated virgin is prayer, and Kvasnicka said a minimum of two hours of prayer is required daily.



During the Mass of Consecration to a Life of Virginity for a Woman Living in the World, a veil and ring are presented to Kvasnicka as the “presentation of the insignia of consecration.” The ring used was her grandfather’s.

AROUND THE DIOCESE



Bishop Vincke stretches his hands in prayer over Kvasnicka during the prayer of consecration.



Wendy Backes pins a veil on Kvasnicka's head as part of the consecration rite.



Kvasnicka kneels in prayer following Communion during her consecration Mass.



At the close of the consecration Mass, Kvasnicka processes out of Sacred Heart Cathedral with a candle.

Consecration made on feast day of diocesan patroness

From page 14

tral High School in 1971). She then attended the old Brown Mackie College, Barton County Community College in Great Bend and completed her studies at Benedictine College in Atchison.

"I was in the first co-ed graduating class of Benedictine," she said.

Following her academic career, Kvasnicka entered religious life in the mid-1970s, with the Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus in St. Louis, where she worked with the elderly.

Yet, "all my life, I felt like there was something more," Kvasnicka said.

After 18 years in religious life, she was canonically released from her vows as a sister.

She remained in St. Louis for 30 years. About 13 years ago, she returned to Salina, went into social work and assisted her aging father.

"Before I left St. Louis, I read in the diocesan newspaper about consecrated virginity," she said. "I looked it up a bit, but for a couple years, it was put on the back burner."

ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO, Kvasnicka said she was in contact with Bishop Vincke and began the formation process.

"I did research and reading about consecrated virginity and thought, 'This is it! This is what I've been looking for my whole life.'"

"I never felt called to marriage. From the time I was young, I knew I would have a special relationship with Jesus."

During the Consecration Mass, Kvasnicka answered three questions: "Are you resolved to persevere to the end of your days in the holy state of virginity and in the service of God and his Church?"; "Are you resolved to follow Christ in the spirit of the Gospel, that your whole life may be a faithful witness to God's love and a convincing sign of the kingdom of heaven?"; and "Are you resolved to accept solemn consecration as a bride of our Lord Jesus Christ, the son of God?"

With a simple, "I am," she became consecrated to a life of virginity as a woman living in the world.

"I don't take vows of obedience



Photos by Karen Bonar / The Register

Following her promises as a perpetual virgin, Judy Kvasnicka receives the Eucharist from Bishop Jerry Vincke June 27 at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina. A Salina native, Kvasnicka made her promises on the feast of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

What is a consecrated virgin?

922. From apostolic times Christian virgins and widows, called by the Lord to cling only to him with greater freedom of heart, body and spirit, have decided with the Church's approval to live in the respective states of virginity or perpetual chastity "for the sake of the Kingdom of heaven."

923. "Virgins who, committed to the holy plan of following Christ more closely, are consecrated to God by the diocesan bishop according to the approved liturgical rite, are betrothed mystically to Christ, the Son of God, and are dedicated to the service of the Church." By this solemn rite (Consecratio Virginum), the virgin is "constituted...a sacred person, a transcendent sign of the Church's love for Christ, and an eschatological image of this heavenly Bride of Christ and of the life to come."

924. "As with other forms of consecrated life," the order of virgins establishes the woman living in the world (or the nun) in prayer, penance, service of her brethren, and apostolic activity, according to the state of life and spiritual gifts given to her. Consecrated virgins can form themselves into associations to observe their commitment more faithfully.

Source: Catechism of the Catholic Church

or chastity or poverty, although we're expected to live simple lives," she said. "(The bishop) becomes my spiritual father."

BISHOP VINCKE SAID GOD'S voice can be heard in silence.

"Not in the noise of the world, not in the myriad of opinions we hear today, but in that still, small voice, we hear the Lord," he said. "It's important for you to take time to be with him. You are in the midst of the world, but you are not of the

world. Jesus is your bridegroom. You must have this time alone with the lord to rejuvenate your soul."

Kvasnicka made her consecration on June 27.

"It warms my heart that you have chosen all of the days of the calendar year that you've chosen to be consecrated on the feast day of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the patroness of our diocese," Bishop Vincke said. "The image is such a beautiful one."

"It's Jesus as a little boy. He sees the angels Michael and Gabriel holding the wood of the cross, the spear, the nails ... all that lies ahead. What does Jesus do as a little boy? He does what all little boys do when they're afraid — they go to their mother."

"Jesus leapt into his mother's arms. As Jesus does this, Mary clutches her son's hand, 'I'm here, I will always be here for you.'"

Kvasnicka said she's excited to fully embrace her vocation.

"This is not an end, it's a beginning," she said. "People think I will walk out of church and it's all over, but for me it's just the beginning."

Please see related story on p. 8

Bishop: What I learned from the saints

FROM JULY 7-10, I was blessed to be on pilgrimage with our seminarians and Frs. Andy Hammeke and Joshua Werth, our diocesan vocation directors.

We left Salina and went immediately to Oklahoma City and got a tour of the museum dedicated to Blessed Stanley Rother. He was beautified in 2017. Father Rother was ordained a priest in 1963 for the diocese of Oklahoma City and Tulsa, which became the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City in 1972. He was assigned to several parishes for the first five years of his priesthood. In 1968, the Archdiocese had a surplus of priests (what a nice problem to have!) so it assigned Father Rother as a missionary priest to Guatemala. He spent 13 years there until he was martyred in 1981 because of his Catholic faith. He was 46 years old when he died.

The next morning, we drove to Pilsen, a Czech farming community where Father Emil Kapaun grew up. We heard an inspiring presentation of his life. He was ordained a priest in 1940. Four years after his ordination as a priest of the Diocese of Wichita, he entered the Chaplain Corps to serve the troops in World War II. After the war, he went back to parish life but re-entered the Chaplain Corps and served in the Korean War. It was during this time that he was taken prisoner and eventually died in the prisoner of war camp in 1951. He was 35



Bishop Jerry Vincke

Salina Diocese

years old when he died.

What can we learn from these two priests? When I worked in Rome, I learned that the No. 1 criterion for whether one would be declared a saint was heroic charity. Both Father Rother and Father Kapaun were ordinary men from ordinary homes who were living witnesses of heroic charity.

Father Rother applied to be sent to Guatemala to serve the poorest of the poor — not only physically but spiritually. He was the pastor of a poor village. What's fascinating is that Father Rother struggled with Latin during his seminary days but took the time to learn the Spanish and Tz'utuhil language of the people. He eventually preached in their language and converted the Gospel to their language. In addition to the parishioner's spiritual needs, Father Rother sought to aid their educational, medical and physical needs.

During this time, there was intense persecution and violence against the Church in Guatemala. His catechists and parishioners were beaten, tortured and put to death. Obeying his bishop's commands, he returned home for a short period of time. But after a time, he begged his bishop to return to Guatemala.

"This is one of the reasons I have for staying in the face of physical harm," he said. "The shepherd cannot run at the first sign of danger."

WHEN I WENT TO ROME this past January, I attended a meeting on the canonization of the saints. I was surprised to learn that several dioceses have people up for canonization. The officials at the Vatican office for the Saints said that Father Kapaun's case is the most likely to move forward.

While he was a prisoner of war, Father Kapaun served the other prisoners, doing the worst possible tasks that no one else wanted to do. Father Kapaun would literally steal food — not for himself — but for the other prisoners of war. He tended the sick and wounded with loving care. He reminded me of what St. Mother Teresa once invited all of us to do: "Love until it hurts."

In summary, Father Rother and Father Kapaun thought of others before themselves.

In the midst of racial tensions in our country, we can learn from Fathers Rother and Kapaun. They first looked at the dignity of the human person in front of them rather than their race or religion. Father Rother loved the indigenous people



Photo by Karen Bonar / The Register

The bishop took a pilgrimage with the seminarians from July 7-10. Front row (from left) are Bishop Jerry Vincke, Trent Logan, Kade Megaffin, Adam Zarybnicky, Brady Hutchison and Kyle Pfeifer; back row, Aaron Diabal, Luke Fries, Father Andy Hammeke, Father Joshua Werth, Deacon Brian McCaffrey and Jesse Ochs.

in Guatemala, while Father Kapaun served black people, Jewish and Korean with the same respect and dignity that each human person deserves.

I am reminded of St. Maximilian Kolbe's story. Before he was taken prisoner during World War II, he encouraged his religious community to "never forget love" whatever anyone did to them. He died as a martyr, "never forgetting love," with heroic charity.

So many people that I talk with tell me that they have never experienced so

much division in our country. I would agree that there is a lot of polarization in our society. Certainly, the political field is a source of division. There is division in some parts of our country between police and people. There is division amongst Catholics on certain topics in the Church. There is division even on whether people should wear masks or not because of COVID.

"Where there is no love, put love and there will be love," said St. John of the Cross. May all of us strive for heroic charity.



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AROUND THE DIOCESE

Pilgrimage includes holy, agricultural sites

From page 1

tions directors and bishop.”

One highlight was spending time with Archbishop Paul Coakley in Oklahoma City. Megaffin said the seminarians had the opportunity to spend a relaxed evening with the bishops — current and former — talking and asking any questions about vocations and life.

“A lot of my family is from the diocese, and I remember seeing him when he was just Bishop Coakley at the Confirmation of many of my cousins,” Megaffin said. “I have him as the first image of a bishop or the priesthood. It was cool to see it as an image from a kid and now talk to him as I’m on the journey of discerning the priesthood.”

The presence of Archbishop Coakley was a bonus, Father Hammeke said.

“It was cool to be sitting with two bishops with their wisdom and experience,” he said. “Our guys were asking different questions and it was cool for our future priests to ask (the bishops) anything.”

IN ADDITION TO THE stops at sites relating to men in the process of canonization, or being declared a saint in the Catholic Church, the group also visited historic churches in Ellis County and a few agricultural sites.

“Agriculture is outside my area of expertise,” Deacon McCaffrey said. “I haven’t spent much time on the farm at all. I recognize the majority of our diocese is rural and agricultural. It’s going to be good for me to know a lot about this because parishioners will likely come from farming backgrounds. The more I know, the better I can relate and hopefully serve them.”

The group stopped at the Soldier Agricultural Vocational Education (S.A.V.E.) Farm, about eight miles outside of Manhattan. The group heard about the programs to educate and transition retired military members into a life of agriculture. “One of the guys we



Photos by Karen Bonar / The Register

Craig Bower from the Soldier Agricultural Vocational Education (S.A.V.E.) Farm near Manhattan, talks with the seminarians and Bishop Jerry Vincke (right) on July 9.

talked to talked a lot about how we need to care for the Earth,” Deacon McCaffrey said. To work with nature, not against nature. The bishop and I were talking a lot after, and it reminded us of *Laudato Si* (On Care for our Common Home). I don’t think this guy had it in mind. He was looking at farming through a Catholic and Franciscan lens. It was cool to hear from a farmer ways we can apply things Pope Francis talked about to things that go on in our diocese.”

Megaffin said while he did not grow up on a farm, his family has a farming background.

“I grew up a generation outside of it,” he said. “I have a peripheral knowledge of it, but it was a good reminder of my family’s roots and the roots of the diocese.”

ORIGINALLY, THE TRIP was slated for May, but the COVID-19 pandemic pushed the plans back, Father Hammeke said. Then, when



formal summer youth programs for the diocese were canceled, the trip was added to the seminarians’ summer schedule.

The men gathered for ongoing formation several times throughout the summer. The July trip was a chance for them to interact more casually with the new co-vocations directors, as well as get to know the bishop in a more relaxed setting.

The trip included tours of Stanley Rother sites in Oklahoma City, a tour of the Father Email Kapaun Museum in Pilsen, visiting the S.A.V.E. Farm near Manhattan and visiting historic churches in Ellis county, including those in Walker, Catharine, Pfeifer and Victoria.

With plenty of driving time in a bus, the atmosphere was relaxed.

“You get to see the bishop



Seminarian Adam Zarybnicky prays during a Holy Hour at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan. In addition to touring religious sites, the seminarians celebrated the sacraments and prayer time with the co-vocations directors and Bishop Vincke.

with events, but you might not have the chance to have down time that comes on a trip like this,” Father Hammeke said. “There is a value in getting to know the bishop as a human, feeling more comfortable around him.”

“They had the opportunity to ask the bishop what he expects from them, what he wants them to focus on in seminary, the kind of priests he hopes they’ll be.”

For Deacon McCaffrey, who will finish his final year of formation before an

anticipated 2021 ordination to the priesthood, the trip was invaluable.

“By the end of the trip, it made me even more excited to get ordained and get back into the diocese and start serving,” he said. “We had two examples of heroic priests at the beginning of our trip, and after learning what heroic priesthood can look like, we went back to tour sites around the diocese. It made me excited to get ordained and start serving.”

Now accepting applications for century farm award

By The Register

CLAY CENTER — On Sunday, Aug. 16, the Salina Diocese Catholic Rural Life Commission will sponsor the annual Catholic Rural Life Day, starting at 3 p.m. at SS. Peter and Paul Parish in Clay Center.

The highlight of the observance is the presentation of the Msgr. John George Weber Century Farm Awards. Any Catholic family who has been in charge of a farm, owned, or operated a farm for 100 years or more is eligi-

ble for the award.

The 2020 awards are primarily for the parishes in the East Deanery, however, any Catholic family in the diocese who meets the criteria for the Century Farm Award may apply.

The award ceremony will be followed by refreshments and socializing.

The stories of the families for the Century Farm Award reflect the growth of the faith and the Church in the diocese. The family story affects and reflects the story of their local

parish as well.

The Rural Life Commission serves the mission of the Church by promoting the care of God’s creation and the welfare of the people who depend on it.

For additional information, please visit salinadiocese.org/rural-life, or call Father Rich Daise at (785) 462-2179.

Applications may be mailed to: Rural Life Commission c/o the Rev. Richard Daise 585 N. French Avenue Colby, KS 67701.

Application deadline is Aug. 1.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Junction City youth receive First Communion



Courtesy photo

Youth at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City received First Communion on June 14. Front row (from left) are Lucas Liebau, Suri Meijia, Ava Lugo, Cianna Robinson, Nora Nutter, Daden Bamba, Harper Luke and Jone Hall; second row, Finn O'Brien, Dominic Zamorano, Louden Benson, Taegan Black and Caleb Phillips; third row, Landon Rice, Julian Buen, Konrad Kolembe, Delaney Bamba, Ava Schmidt and Charley Engstrom; back row, Santiago Sanders, Cade Jones, Ben Phillips, Zsachsarry Buen, Susannah Phillips, Yareli Chavarria and Father Gnanasekar Kulandai, HGN.

Norton youth receive First Communion



Courtesy photo

Youth at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Norton received First Communion June 28. Pictured (from left) are Jonathan Otter, Sophia Berry, Brody Horwart, Karlene Hogan and Cole Barrett.

Downward trend evident in youth

From page 9

D.C. Drifting away from religion happens most often between the ages of 12 and 22, he said. "Often, it's a drifting away from religion," Gray said. "It's not unique to Catholicism. Nearly all religions in the United States are experiencing the same thing." Pinpointing a reason or cause of the downward trend in religious affiliation is tricky. "The average person might think it's something the bishop is doing, but the Church is part of a bigger social and cultural reality," Gray said. "Young people don't see religion as being as important to their lives as they did in the past. Many of those reasons have nothing to do with religion. It is what's going on among American adults. "People are part of digital communities rather than brick and mortar communities. They don't join bowling leagues or PTAs, it's a different social reality."

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DEATHS

Daniel Leon Corbett, 59, of Chapman, died June 6, 2020. Graveside services were held June 12 by Father John Wolesky at Indian Hill Cemetery, Chapman.

Noreen Marie Crabill, 94, of Norton, died June 5, 2020. Funeral Mass was celebrated June 9 by Father Jose Kumbumkal, CMI, at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Norton.

Ralph M. Kinderknecht, 90, of Ellis, died May 27, 2020. Funeral Mass was celebrated May 30 by Father Dana Clark at St. Mary Church in Ellis. Burial was in St. Mary Cemetery, Ellis.

Frances "Francie" Rohleder, 91, of Hays, died June 4, 2020. Funeral Mass was celebrated June 8 by Father Nick Parker at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays.

Sister Beth Stover, 78, of Concordia, died June 7, 2020. Funeral Mass was celebrated June 11 by Msgr. Barry Brinkman in the Motherhouse Chapel. Burial was in Nazareth Motherhouse Cemetery.



She was born Oct. 16, 1941, in Beloit to Paul and Marie (Grennan) Stover and baptized Margaret Elizabeth. She entered the novitiate on Sept. 8, 1959. On March 19, 1960, she received the habit and was given the name Sister Ellen Dolora; she later returned to her baptismal name. She pronounced first vows on March 19, 1961, and final vows on March 19, 1966. She was a Sis-

ter of St. Joseph for 60 years.

Sister Beth received her bachelor's in chemistry from Marymount College in Salina in 1964, and a master's in hospital administration from St. Louis University in 1975.

She served as a medical technologist and lab supervisor at St. Joseph's Hospital, Concordia, from 1965-71. She was then the administrator of St. Joseph's Hospital in Concordia from 1975-87. Sister Beth was elected as Vice President of the Congregation from 2008-12 and served on the Leadership Council from 2012-16. She retired to the Motherhouse in 2016.

Sister Beth was preceded in death by her parents and two sisters.

She is survived by her sisters Mary Ellen Truex, Odessa, Texas, and Jane Morch, Wichita.

Memorials for Sister Beth Stover may be given to the Sisters of St. Joseph Health Care/Retirement Fund or the Apostolic Works of the Sisters; P.O. Box 279, Concordia, KS 66901.

Patricia (Pat) Mary Wild, 93, of Manhattan, died May 24, 2020. Funeral Mass was celebrated June 17 by Father Gnanasekar Kulandai, HGN, at St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City. Burial was in Union Valley Cemetery, Barnard.

Wayne Edward Windholz, 72, of Victoria, died April 11, 2020. Due to restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, private graveside services will be held. A memorial Mass and joyful celebration of life will be held at a later date. Burial was in St. Mary Cemetery in Gorham.

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AROUND THE DIOCESE

Seguin First Communion



Courtesy photo

Lilly Beckman made her First Communion at St. Martin of Tours Church in Seguin on May 31. She is pictured with Father Vincent Thu Laing.

Hoxie First Communion



Courtesy photo

Youth at St. Frances Cabrini Parish in Hoxie received First Communion on May 17. The picture is a composite since a group picture was not possible with social distancing. Top row (from left) are Father Vincent Thu Laing and catechist Beverly Rucker; middle row, Aubrey Diercks, Emily Haffner, Jenna Herl and Pricilla Meraz; bottom row, Axel Escobedo, Trayce Joslyn, Hadley Juenemann and Brett Koster.

Bird City Communion



Courtesy photo

Youth at St. Joseph Parish in Bird City received First Communion on June 14. Front row (from left) are Taya Dale, Adrian Garcia and Adleigh Pochop; back row, Dennis Wright, Dana Wright and Father Joseph Asirvatham, HGN.

Colby First Communion



Courtesy photo

Youth at Sacred Heart Parish in Colby received First Communion on June 21. Front row (from left) are Alyvia Kraft, Brinley Wiegert, Journey Carney, Fiona Schroeder, Brynnley McLemore and Georgia Luedke; middle row, Anthony Schippers, Lakeen Felhoelter, Elizabeth Hills, Braelyn McKee, Ikia Chavez and Liam Baalman; back row, Father Richard Daise, Carson Newell, Maria Schroeder, Abigail Jamison, Cambria Rhymer and Deacon Tom Schrick.

St. Joseph, Hays, First Communion



Courtesy photo

Youth at St. Joseph Parish in Hays received First Communion on June 14. Front row (from left) are Brianna Lang, Macie Linenberger, Lincoln Vehige, Lily Pfeifer, Hannah Flax and Ava Dintino; back row, Father Brian Lager, Ethan Fross, Greyson Zimmerman, Jarett Leiker, Stella Hickert, Mason Lonnon, Garret Billinger and Father Ryan McCandless.

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AROUND THE DIOCESE

The Register wins three awards from Catholic Press Association

By Allison Ochoa
Catholic News Service

SALINA — The Register received three awards during the 2020 Catholic Press Awards from the Catholic Press Association of the United States and Canada. The awards were announced during the organization's annual Catholic Media Conference on July 2.

The Register, the newspaper of the Diocese of Salina, was awarded first place in the Best Front Page — Broadsheet category; first place, the Best In-Depth News/Special Reporting (Diocesan Newspaper) category for its coverage of Suicide Prevention Awareness Month; and second place in the same division for its series of articles on Cultivating Mental Health Awareness.

"It is very flattering to be recognized with these awards," said Karen Bonar, editor of The Register.

The Best Front-Page — Broadsheet award focused on the design of the newspaper's front page. The selection committee analyzed three consecutive issues of The Register and its competitors to make their determination.

"Last year at the CPA's Catholic Media Conference, I met a lot of people and told them I was from the Diocese of Salina, and they didn't know where that was," Bonar said. "I feel like Kansas, from a national scope, tends to get overlooked unless we have a major news story, but the lives of the people in our diocese and state are just as important as those who live on the coasts. I think the recognition of this work brings about an awareness of Kansas and it puts a spotlight on rural issues."

THE BEST IN-DEPTH News/Special Reporting met the organization's criteria of reporting that focuses, "on the initiative of the newspaper to present facts of an event or situation of importance that may be otherwise unknown to the reader. The category recognizes reporting, through one's own initiative and work, which will be judged on news value, evidence of research and quality of reporting, writing and local focus."

Bonar explained that the recognition of both series of articles — those covering suicide and the other examining mental health awareness in a rural setting — was gratifying as she had intended for them to go hand-in-hand.

*The Register's
Catholic Press Assoc. Awards*

First Place: Best Front Page — Broadsheet

First Place: Best In-Depth News/Special Reporting (Diocesan Newspaper) for "Suicide Prevention Awareness Month."

Second Place: Best In-Depth News/Special Reporting (Diocesan Newspaper) for "Cultivating Mental Health Awareness."

Read the stories at
salinadiocese.org/publications

"Writing a series about the topic of suicide was something that had been on my heart for over a year," Bonar said. "I wanted to address it because there has been such a change in our approach to dealing with suicide and society's views on it as well as the Catholic Church's view on it.

"Mental health awareness is another issue — a rural issue — that deeply affects our quadrant of the state," she continued. "I wanted to discuss it and point out that we have farmers, soldiers and young people who are suffering from mental health problems. I wanted to bring awareness and compassion to these issues."

BONAR SAID THE opportunities to explore issues like suicide and mental health awareness in a series of articles is generally limited because of logistics, but she appreciates being able to shed light on them as often as possible.

"As such a small staff — essentially a staff of one — there are so many hats I have to wear, so I love to be able to sink my teeth into a topic and dive deep," she said. "I am grateful to Bishop (Jerry) Vincke for letting me talk about these topics and spend time working on these stories that others might have thought of as taboo. I am also extremely grateful to the families who opened up and talked with me. They trusted me with these deeply personal experiences. It takes a lot of courage and strength to share these stories, and I could not have written them without the trust those individuals placed in me."

The Register has been a member of the Catholic Press Association since 2018.

Bonar has been the Editor of The Register since March 2016. Prior to her appointment with the Diocese of Salina, she was an award-winning investigative/in-depth reporter at the Hays Daily News.

St. Joseph, Hays, RCIA candidates join Church



Courtesy photo

RCIA Candidates were received into Full Communion with the Church on May 31 at St. Joseph Church in Hays. Pictured (from left) are Haley George, Levi Wilkens, Father Ryan McCandless and Brent Weichers. Not pictured: Johnny Fuller Jr.

Ellis youth receive First Communion



Courtesy photo

Youth at St. Mary Parish in Ellis received First Communion June 14. Front row (from left) are Elijah Wagner, Lane Shannon, Abel Wasinger and Dayson Moeder; second row, Myles Vine, Presley Eaton, Charly Amrein, Bodhi Amrein, Adalyn Nilhas and Caleb Schield; back row, Father Dana Clark.

NFP helps couples develop virtue

From page 8

was a professor of moral theology at the Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit from 2001 until her retirement in 2019.

"Those who use natural family planning to plan their family size develop the virtues needed to be good parents; they develop sexual self-control and patience and generosity — and they almost never divorce," according to Smith.

"The Church's teaching on contraception is not just a doctrine that states what not to do," Smith said. "Many people would benefit from knowing that it is a doctrine that explains how extraordinarily important is the act of having children."

A package of articles, videos, suggested liturgies and prayers, Church teaching, NFP resources and other features available on the USCCB website at <https://bit.ly/2BFCQfd>.



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