



## Year of Mercy

**W**hat if we had symptoms of a terrible disease? I think most of us would see a doctor as soon as possible. There are lots of sicknesses and diseases in our world which can debilitate our life and ultimately lead to death.

But the greatest disease, by far, is the disease of sin — which leads to eternal death. Sin separates us from God and from one another. Sin harms our relationship with God and with others. Unforgiven mortal sin leads us to be separated from God for all eternity. God's response to sin and rebellion is mercy.

When I became the bishop of Salina, I had to come up with a "motto." I thought of something with our Blessed Mother, but ultimately chose "Rich in Mercy" based from Ephesians 4:6, "But God, who is rich in mercy."

Since I became the bishop, I felt more and more that we need to do a year of mercy. The goal is to be reconciled with God and important too, with one another. I am especially wanting to reach out to those who have strayed away from the faith and who haven't been to confession in a long time. Please invite people who no longer practice their faith to attend the days of mercy. There is too much unforgiveness in our world today. I remember what someone told me when I first got here, "Mercy needs to start somewhere, and it might as well start in the Heartland." The world will be saved by mercy. Mercy makes the world less cold and more just.

During the Year of Mercy, which begins on Ash Wednesday this year and ends on Divine Mercy Sunday in 2024, I plan on visiting every one of our 86 parishes to spread the love and mercy of God. As Pope Francis said, "The Church does not exist to condemn people but to bring about an encounter with the visceral love of God's mercy."

Each parish, the priest and parish council, is coming up with the agenda for my visit. My hopes for this year of mercy are that people will experience God's love for them in a very special way.

I also hope that not only we experience God's mercy, but that we can also become more merciful to our brothers and sisters. Pope Francis reminded us that "if we do not learn to forgive one another, we will always be at war. As the Lord has forgiven you, so should you do. But if you do not know how to forgive, you are not a Christian, because you do not do as the Lord did. Moreover, if you don't forgive, you cannot receive the Lord's peace, the Lord's forgiveness."

May the Year of Mercy bring much peace to our diocese and in our hearts.

In Christ's service,

*+ Gerald L. Vincke*

The Most Rev. Gerald L. Vincke •  
Bishop of Salina

**Bishop Jerry Vincke.**

MATEA GREGG,  
COMMUNICATIONS

### CALL TO SHARE

Annual appeal kicks off to support diocese's missions.

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### POPE BENEDICT

Catholics around the world mourn death of beloved pope.

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# Last words

**L**ord, I love you." Those words, according to his bedside nurse and his archbishop secretary, were Pope Benedict XVI's last spoken words before he died Dec. 31. It made me think of what I would say before dying.

Before Jesus died, he said, "Father, into your hands I commend my Spirit." Before Pope St. John Paul II died, he said, "I am ready to go to my Father's house." What will our last words be?

For Pope Benedict XVI, the root of his last words flowed from a relationship with the God who loved him more than anyone. He once said, "We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary. God loves us. This is the great truth of our life; it is what makes everything else meaningful. We are not the product of blind chance or absurdity; instead, our life originates as part of a loving plan of God."

I also want to share some of what Pope Benedict XVI wrote before he died:

*"If in this late hour of my life I look back at the decades I have been through, first I see how many reasons I have to give thanks. First and foremost, I thank God himself, the giver of every good gift, who gave me life and guided me through various confusing times; always picking me up whenever I began to slip and always giving me again the light of his face. In retrospect I see and understand that even the dark and tiring stretches of this journey were for my salvation and that it was in them that He guided me well."*

*"I thank my parents, who gave me life in a difficult time and who, at the cost of great sacrifice, with their love prepared for me a magnificent abode that, like clear light, illuminates all my days to this day. My father's lucid faith taught us children to believe, and as a signpost it has always been steadfast amid all my scientific acquisitions; the profound devotion and great goodness of my mother represent a legacy for which I can never give thanks enough."*

*My sister has assisted me for decades selflessly and with affectionate care; my brother, with the lucidity of his judgments, his vigorous resolve and serenity of heart, has always paved the way for me; without this constant preceding and accompanying me I could not have found the right path.*

*"From my heart I thank God for the many friends, men and women, whom He has always placed at my side; for the collaborators in all the stages of my journey; for the teachers and students He has given me. I gratefully entrust them all to His goodness. And I want to thank the Lord for my beautiful homeland in the*

*foothills of the Bavarian Alps, in which I have always seen the splendor of the Creator Himself shining through. I thank the people of my homeland because in them I have been able again and again to experience the beauty of faith. I pray that our land remains a land of faith, and I beg you, dear countrymen: Do not let yourselves be turned away from the faith.*

*"To all those whom I have wronged in any way, I heartily ask for forgiveness."*

*"What I said before to my countrymen, I now say to all those in the Church who have been entrusted to my service: Stand firm in the faith. Do not let yourselves be confused."*

*"Jesus Christ is truly the way, the truth and the life — and the Church, with all its insufficiencies, is truly His body."*

*"Finally, I humbly ask: Pray for me, so that the Lord, despite all my sins and insufficiencies, welcomes me into the eternal dwellings. To all those entrusted to me, day by day, my heartfelt prayer goes out."*

What do we learn about Pope Benedict XVI's life and death? It's all about relationships — with God, with Creation, with our family, friends and others.

In Christ's service,

*+ Gerald L. Vincke*

The Most Rev. Gerald L. Vincke •  
Bishop of Salina

**GERALD  
Vincke**  
BISHOP, SALINA DIOCESE



## BISHOP'S CALENDAR

### February

- 1** Catholic Schools Week Mass, 10 a.m., Seven Dolores, Manhattan
- 1** Catholic Schools Week Mass, 1:30 p.m., St. Francis Xavier, Junction City
- 2** Catholic Schools Week Mass, 11 a.m., Colby and Oakley, Sacred Heart Church in Colby
- 3** Catholic Schools Week Mass, 10 a.m., Hays, Ellis and Plainville, Immaculate Heart of Mary in Hays
- 5** Confirmation, 10:30 a.m., Christ the King, WaKeeney
- 8-9** Jesu Caritas, Salina
- 10-11** Kansas Catholic College Student Convention, Lawrence
- 11** St. Andrew's School auction, 6 p.m., Abilene
- 16-17** Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine Dedication, Oklahoma City
- 18** Confirmation, 4:30 p.m., Seven Dolores, Manhattan
- 19** Confirmation, 5 p.m., St. Thomas More, Manhattan
- 22** Year of Mercy, St. Francis, Norton
- 23** Year of Mercy, St. Joseph, New Almelo

PROMISE TO  
PROTECT



PLEDGE TO  
HEAL

PROMESA DE  
PROTEGER



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SANAR

If you have been abused or victimized by someone representing the Catholic Church ...

Please believe in the possibility for hope, help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out. Our victim 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.

To contact the  
Victim Assistance Coordinator  
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reportabuse@salinadiocese.org  
www.reportandprotect.com.

Catholic Bishop Abuse  
Reporting Service:  
800.276.1562  
reportbishopabuse.org

Si has sido abusado o fuiste víctima de alguien que representa a la Iglesia Católica...

Por favor confía en la posibilidad de esperanza, ayuda y sanación. Te alentamos a que te presentes y hables. Nuestra coordinadora de asistencia a las víctimas está disponible para ofrecer apoyo en tus necesidades, para ayudarte a presentar una queja formal de abuso ante las autoridades correspondientes y para hacer una cita personal con el obispo o su representante, si lo deseas.

Para contactar a la Coordinadora de Asistencia a Víctimas  
866.752.8855 ext. 1067  
reportabuse@salinadiocese.org  
www.reportandprotect.com.

Servicio de Denuncia de Abusos de Obispos Católicos:  
800.276.1562  
reportbishopabuse.org

## YEAR OF MERCY PILGRIMAGE SITES

Bishop Vincke has announced an opportunity for Catholics to obtain a plenary indulgence during the Year of Mercy (from Ash Wednesday 2023 to Divine Mercy Sunday 2024). You can do this by making a pilgrimage to one of the four designated churches in the Salina Diocese during the Year of Mercy and fulfilling the requirements.

Catholics wanting to obtain

this offered indulgence are required to fulfill the usual conditions:

- Having the interior disposition of complete detachment from sin.
- Receiving sacramental Confession and the Holy Eucharist.
- Praying for the intentions of the Holy Father.
- Praying a Divine Mercy Chaplet.

May God's mercy and love

fill our parishes, communities and diocese.

The four pilgrimage locations:

- Seven Dolores Parish, Manhattan
  - Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina
  - St. Joseph Parish, Damar
  - Sacred Heart Parish, Park
- Please check with the pilgrimage site directly for details before finalizing plans.

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### Mailing label update

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# Appeal supports diocese’s mission

By KATIE HAMEL  
THE REGISTER

Funding 40% of the overall operating budget for the Diocese of Salina, the Bishop’s Annual Appeal – Call to Share is set to kick off the weekend of Feb. 11 to 12. This appeal is the primary way the Diocese of Salina funds its mission to help every person encounter Jesus and come to know his saving love and mercy so they can become disciples on mission. This year’s goal is \$2.4 million.

The ultimate dream of the diocese is that every individual can encounter the person of Jesus. There are many ways the diocese attempts to create the spaces for these kinds of encounters through its witness by faith, hope and love. Four examples of this include clergy, communications, youth ministry and religious education.



Clergy in the diocese bring the life-giving sacraments and proclaim the Gospel in 86 parishes across the diocese. Their mission is to serve the way Christ served, and there are many stages of this service, from seminarian to permanent deacon to active and retired priests. These men say “yes” to a personal call from Jesus to be his shepherds in a world that longs to know him.

Communications, which was once only accomplished by The Register, have now grown to include *faith* magazine, an interactive website, several active social media platforms, video production and a regular podcast, which includes the popular new series Three Bald Guys. These different avenues have created more touchpoints for people to engage with Catholic content.



The youth ministry program, which came alive under the longtime ministry of the beloved late Sister Barbara Ellen Apaceller, continues to flourish under new leadership. Out of love for their faith, youth leaders give up their summers to teach younger teenagers and grade-schoolers about God. These young people serve the elderly in communities

across the diocese. People across the diocese and of all ages are impacted by this ministry.

Similar to youth ministry in audience, but different in tactic, religious education is equipping students with the skills to defend their faith in a classroom setting, but also strives to ensure all students receive a well-rounded, quality education; that all students learn classroom integrity and sportsmanship on the field, court and track. But it’s not just the students who benefit from the Catholic school environment – it’s the parents, teachers, staff and even community.

These are just three examples of ways the diocese is expanding its ministries, nurturing relationships with others and creating opportunities for encounters with Christ. All these assist the faithful in the diocese to be disciples on mission.

## MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In the coming weeks, you will receive a letter from me about supporting the Bishop’s Annual Appeal – Call to Share. However, I wanted to take a moment to write to you through The Register as well.

The Register is a monthly diocesan publication, and this newspaper is just one example of many ways the Diocese of Salina is putting your generous gifts into action.

There is a line in the Gospel of John that says, “There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written.”

That same line holds true for the work of our diocese. There are so many other things we can do

because of your generosity. I see them every day when I am out among the people. The Holy Spirit is alive and well in our diocese. He is alive in the gifts that you bring to the altar.

Our mission is to help every individual encounter the person of Jesus and know his saving love and mercy so they too might become disciples on mission. We can only do these things with your help.

The goal for our 2023 appeal is \$2.4 million. I humbly invite you to prayerfully consider making a gift and joining in our mission. Help us help others encounter Jesus. Please know of my prayers for you, your families and all your endeavors and plans.

In Christ’s service,  
Most Rev. Gerald L. Vincke  
Bishop of Salina

But, more importantly, all these things are made possible by the faithful generosity of Catholics throughout the diocese. Ministries such as education for seminarians and deacons, care of active and retired clergy, the annual men’s and women’s conferences, special Masses throughout the diocese, support for Catholic schools and inspiring publications and communications efforts are made available to

all people throughout the Diocese of Salina because of the faith-filled generosity of so many.

To see the impact your gifts made on the people of the Diocese of Salina in 2022, visit <https://salinadiocese.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/CFDS-2022-impact-report-2.pdf> The success of the Bishop’s Annual Appeal is only possible because of the extreme generosity of

Catholics within the diocese.

The Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina is conducting the appeal on behalf of the Diocese of Salina. In early February, faithful throughout the diocese can expect to receive a letter and other materials that further explain the purpose of the appeal. Additionally, a special issue of *faith* magazine will be sent to every household in the diocese with inspiring and informative information on the heartfelt mission and purpose of the diocesan appeal.

How to make a gift:

- Online at [salinadiocese.org](https://salinadiocese.org).
- By check to: Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina, P.O. Box 1696, Salina, KS 67402-1696.
- Gifts of securities.
- Gifts of grain.
- Recommend a grant from your donor-advised fund.
- Direct a distribution from your retirement account.

If you have any questions, please contact Katie Platten, Foundation CEO, at [katie.platten@salinadiocese.org](mailto:katie.platten@salinadiocese.org); Heather Hartman, director of development, [heather.hartman@salinadiocese.org](mailto:heather.hartman@salinadiocese.org); or Corrina Hudsonpillar, donor advisor, [corrina.hudsonpillar@salinadiocese.org](mailto:corrina.hudsonpillar@salinadiocese.org).

## SEMINARIAN FAMILY MASS



A special Mass was celebrated Dec. 17 for seminarians in the Salina Diocese. At far left, Bishop Jerry Vincke with seminarians during Mass. At left, Father Andy Hammeke.

MATEA GREGG,  
COMMUNICATIONS



# New program added for marriage prep

By THE REGISTER

The Diocese of Salina is excited to announce it is adding another tool to its marriage preparation toolbox. The new program is called EverMore in Love. It is a program that offers engaged couples the opportunity for regular engagement with a mentor couple throughout their preparation. Many dioceses are seeing great results from this program, and we are excited to be able to begin offering it to our engaged couples.

It is important that, as a Church, we can help couples prepare for the sacrament of matrimony and ensure they have the tools they need to deal with a marriage's inevitable ups and downs. Pope Francis has written about the need to extend the engagement period and take time to prepare for the Sacrament of Matrimony thoroughly. He sees what is happening in families and knows that it takes time to develop a solid foundation for these future families to build upon. Engaged couples need time to learn how to communicate effectively with each other, forgive each other, put their future spouse first and trust God.

Pope Francis has also spoken about the need to accompany couples preparing for marriage. Accompanying means we are willing and excited to journey with



them as they prepare and will always be there for them. We want them to know they are loved and that the couple and their future family are important to us. The beauty of the EverMore in Love program is it offers that essential accompanying piece to the couples during their engagement. The program matches each couple with a mentor couple who will accompany them throughout their engagement and marriage preparation. The couples and their mentors will share meals, go to Mass together, discuss things they have experienced and answer the engaged couples' questions. The engaged and mentor couples will have

regular meetings to discuss different topics as they journey together toward their wedding. It is a chance for these young couples to gain valuable insights and perspectives from a couple that has experienced the good times together and some difficult times. Hopefully, the two couples' relationship will continue long after the wedding.

The program begins this spring by training mentor couples and asking them to return to their parishes and to work with engaged couples. The training is a two-day retreat that also serves as a great retreat for married couples looking to strengthen their own marriage. Bishop Jerry Vincke has asked all

the pastors in the diocese to suggest some couples from their parishes who they believe would be good mentor couples. He will be reaching out to these couples at the end of January to see if they would be willing to serve as mentor couples in their parishes and communities. We will begin by training 30 to 50 couples this year and then plan on training that same number every year after that. Our goal is to have multiple mentor couples in every parish.

Many of us want to change the world and improve what is going on in our current culture. Helping young couples prepare for marriage and giving them the tools to build a strong family is one of the most important ways we can do that. Healthy families are strong. They help us get through the most challenging times, and they help us celebrate the good times. They teach us to love others more than ourselves and how to sacrifice and serve. They teach us about unconditional love and how to forgive.

The best time to help families is in the beginning, as they prepare to enter into the sacrament of matrimony and become a family. Adding EverMore in Love and its accompanying piece to the other marriage prep programs the diocese has in its marriage prep toolbox will help better assist couples in preparing for the sacrament of marriage.

## New year, beginnings offered through sacraments

New beginnings are always great things for us. We as humans need fresh starts and the beginning of a new year, month or even day offers us that opportunity.

In our lifelong quest to grow and become better followers of Christ, we will sometimes fail and need to start again. New beginnings offer us a chance and reasons to try again after failure as we journey to become the best version of ourselves, the faithful disciple Jesus calls us to be.

The Church recognizes this and offers us new beginnings through the

sacraments. The sacrament of reconciliation is a beautiful opportunity to take all our struggles, failings and sins to Christ. We admit what we have done wrong and ask for God's forgiveness. We leave the confessional with a clean start and a new beginning as we strive to live holy lives here on earth. We have clean souls and the gift of grace to help us.

The reception of the Eucharist is another sacrament that offers us a new beginning, forgiveness of sins, graces and nourishment for our bodies and souls. Jesus knew firsthand how hard it was to overcome our human weakness, resist temptation and follow

him. He left us his very self to strengthen us on our quest for holiness. Regular reception of the Eucharist at Mass is one of the most important things we can do in our lives. That is why one of the Church's precepts is for us to attend Mass every Sunday and all Holy Days. In her infinite wisdom, the Church understands we need that as a minimum, so we can deny sin, temptations and the traps that Satan has set for each of us.

Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament can also be part of our new beginning this year. We become like the people we hang out with the most and imagine the profound impact on our lives we would have if we spent regular time with Christ in adoration. Spend-

ing time before the Blessed Sacrament gives us a chance to praise God for all the blessings he has given each of us. We also bring our struggles and difficulties to Christ as we ask for guidance. Who better to ask advice than the one who created everything and sees all of space and time?

We must begin with ourselves if we want to make

the world holier. Let's make 2023 the best year yet for each of us on our journey toward holiness and being Jesus's disciples. Let's also pray for everyone committing to growth this year. May God's grace strengthen them on their journey.

*Bill Meagher is director of youth ministry and religious education in the Diocese of Salina.*

**BILL Meagher**  
DIOCESE OF SALINA



### A PRAYER FOR WORLD MARRIAGE DAY ON FEB. 12:

Almighty and eternal God,  
You blessed the union of married couples  
so that they might reflect the union of Christ  
with his Church:  
look with kindness on them.  
Renew their marriage covenant,  
increase your love in them,  
and strengthen their bond of peace  
so that, with their children,  
they may always rejoice in the gift of  
your blessing.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## CONGRATULATIONS

The Diocese staff would like to congratulate Nathaniel and Katie Hamel on the birth of their son, Ignatius Eugene, on Jan. 1. May God's blessing be upon you all.







# Catholic Schools Week is here

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN  
THE REGISTER

National Catholic Schools Week is always a busy and exciting week for the 15 Catholic schools in the Diocese of Salina.

Schools focus on the value that Catholic education provides to young people and its contributions to their church, their communities and the nation. This year's theme for the week of Jan. 30 to Feb. 3 is "Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service."

There are activities for students to recognize their families, parishioners and community members for their support.

One particular event students and staff always look forward to is a visit from the bishop one day during that week.

Bishop Jerry Vincke and Superintendent of Schools Geoff Andrews will be on the road for eight Masses in five days.

Bishop Vincke said he would have it no other way.

"Catholic schools are very important in our Church and in our diocese," he said. "The students learn about God's love for them. Catholic Schools Week is a special time for them."

Bishop Vincke visits schools throughout the year and often can be seen playing a game during recess with the youngsters. He said it's always a treat for him and never gets old.

"Personally, it always brings me a lot of joy to visit any of our Catholic schools," Bishop Vincke said. "It fills me with hope and joy to see how much love there is in the schools, and I'm so grateful to our parents, students, teachers and staff who make it all possible."

Andrews agrees that Catholic Schools Week is a special time of

year.

"Attending Mass with Bishop Vincke during that week is always a highlight," Andrews said. "It helps to build great community among our schools."

The first Mass for Catholic Schools Week 2023 is set for 10 a.m. Jan. 30 at St. Mary Queen of the Universe, Salina, for the two Salina schools (Sacred Heart Junior-Senior High and St. Mary Grade School). Bishop Vincke and Andrews will then travel

to Beloit for a 2 p.m. Mass at St. John the Baptist Church, where students and staff from three different schools will gather (St. John's Middle-High School and St. John's Grade School, Beloit, and Tipton Catholic High School).

Members of four different schools will converge on Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays

for a 10 a.m. Mass on the final day of the week (Feb. 3) — Thomas More Prep-Marian Junior-Senior High School and Holy Family Elementary School, Hays; St. Mary's Grade School, Ellis; and Sacred Heart Grade School, Plainville.

Other Mass schedules for the week are:

- Jan. 31: 8:30 a.m. at Hanover's St. John the Baptist Parish (St. John's Catholic School) and 1:30 p.m. at St. Andrew Church, Abilene (St. Andrew Elementary School).

- Feb. 1: 10 a.m. at Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Manhattan (Manhattan Catholic Schools) and 1:30 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier Church, Junction City (St. Xavier Catholic Schools).

- Feb. 2: 11 a.m. at Sacred Heart Church, Colby (Sacred Heart Grade School, Colby, and St. Joseph Grade School, Oakley).



## TMP seniors learn valuable lessons on Scout projects

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN  
THE REGISTER

Seamus Holmes and Jensen Brull decided to get into scouting for different reasons in first grade at Holy Family Elementary School in Hays.

Nonetheless, now seniors in high school at Thomas More Prep-Marian, Seamus and Jensen have both earned the rank of Eagle Scout.

From their inaugural year as Tigers in the Cub Scout program, Jensen and Seamus were members of the same troops and both recently reached the highest rank of the Scouts BSA (formerly Boys Scouts of America) by completing all the requirements for the prestigious recognition.

Seamus said he knew even before he went to school that he wanted to be in scouting because his two older brothers were Scouts. He remembers being in kindergarten and not understanding why he couldn't accompany Riley, two years older, to scouting events.

By the time he joined as a Tiger, Seamus hit the ground running. There was never much question that he would make it all the way to Eagle, "because it was a family tradition."

He decided to take on the

Check out the March issue of The Register for a spotlight on Eagle Scout Janis Curit from St. Francis Xavier High School in Junction City.

task of preserving the Kansas 40-and-8 Boxcar at Veterans Memorial Park in Hays, near the former American Legion building.

"I remember going to events at the Legion when I was young, and I always liked the boxcar," Seamus said. "But I never knew a whole lot about it. I liked the historical part of it so I chose that as a project."

Seamus said he thought it was interesting learning about the boxcars that carried up to 40 men or eight horses to and from France battlefields during World War I. Included in Seamus' Eagle project was repainting the boxcar to its original color, replacing decals and correcting the position of different banners around the outside of the car.

In addition to "good time management skills," Seamus said he also learned a lot about resilience and patience.

"Even when you plan things, when they don't work out, you just have to persevere until you work it out," he said.

Jensen agreed.



Seamus Holmes, TMP-Marian, Hays, stands in front of his completed Eagle project in Hays.



Jensen Brull, TMP-Marian, Hays

"It's a lot about project management," he said. "You have to get people on board and find those who have the talent, abilities and resources that you need to get the job done."

Jensen's project consist-

ed of making backstage advancements in the Dreiling Theater at TMP-Marian. Those included shelving modifications, building benches for actors waiting for their cue and installing moni-

tors for a backstage camera. He also secured funds from the Leo J. and Albina Dreiling Charitable Trust for a vertical mast lift for the theater.

Scouts begin their Eagle projects with a proposal. Besides the actual physical work, there is a lot of paperwork that includes budgets and finance management.

"I think some of the most important life lessons I have learned are from this experience," Jensen said. "Being able to interact with adults as my peers rather than as a child, to accomplish something big together, was a great experience."



# St. Xavier choir participates in Christmas event

By DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN  
THE REGISTER

The life of Father Emil Kapaun's legacy of faith and service and his advancement toward sainthood has been well-documented throughout the Catholic community. A native of Pilsen, Father Kapaun died in a prisoner of war camp during the Korean War while serving as a military chaplain.

Jo Ellen Whitehair is a native of Pilsen in the Wichita Diocese, who now lives in Abilene, which is part of the Salina Diocese. She is passionate about getting Father Kapaun's story out to as many people as possible, and she was excited to give some middle and high school students a chance to share in a piece of history.

So she invited the junior-senior high school choir from St. Francis Xavier Catholic School in Junction City for an evening of caroling at Zion Lutheran Church in Latimer in December. That church, moved to the small town of Latimer in 1949, was originally a military

chapel at the Herington Army Air Field — one of Father Kapaun's first assignments as a priest.

Whitehair said she came up with the idea of having a Catholic school choir sing at the church when she learned it would be opening up at Christmastime for caroling. The church is in the midst of a project to restore and preserve it after it closed in December 2021.

Whitehair said she heard a lot about Father Kapaun as a child, because her parents went to school in Pilsen and Father Kapaun would play ball with the students at recess.

"I love the idea of the Catholic school students singing in the former chapel where Father Kapaun served and is now being restored and preserved by people of the Lutheran faith," Whitehair said. "Father Kapaun was known to minister to all 'his boys,' regardless of their faith, and I see this an extension of his example."

Whitehair added she "also loves the idea of a Salina Diocese school performing in the Wichita Diocese,



COURTESY PHOTO

**Members of St. Francis Xavier Junior-Senior High School choir in Junction City sing carols at a special Christmas performance at a historical church in December.**

hopefully spreading Father Kapaun's story to a whole new group that may not be aware of his story. It was lovely that men of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths worshipped in that very building."

When Katie Moeller was first approached to have her choir sing at Latimer during the Christmas season, she said she would have to give it some thought.

December is one of the busiest months for Moeller,

who is in charge of general music, band and choir for grades PreK to 12 at St. Xavier.

The same holds true for her choral students, who have Christmas concerts and a variety of other school activities to attend.

But when Moeller heard about the military connection to the evening's activities, she was hooked.

"I come from a military family," said Moeller, whose great-grandfather served in World War II and her

grandfather in the Vietnam War.

For the Latimer performance, Moeller chose songs from the periods relating to WWII and the Korean War, including "I'll Be Home for Christmas," and songs she grew up hearing her grandfather play.

"I felt like my grandfather was with me in the moment," Moeller said.

Moeller said she hoped her students would look at it as something more than just another performance. She needn't have worried.

Between song sets, short talks were given about the restoration project, the history of the military chapel, Father Kapaun and the Latimer Zion Lutheran Church.

And then the choir was treated to a chili supper.

"It was really fascinating learning about the history of the church and Father Kapaun," Moeller said. "By the end, the students knew this was really significant. They realized that they weren't just giving a performance but that they were a part of something special."

## BRIEFS

By THE REGISTER

The scholars bowl team at Hays' Thomas More Prep-Marian High School kicked off the new year in style, capturing its fifth consecutive league title Jan. 9.

Members of the Monarchs' Mid-Continent League championship squad were senior Anna Stark, sophomores Henry Corsair, Caleb Marintzer and Gordon Schroeder and freshmen Zechariah Dickman and Elizabeth Quakenbush.

The Monarchs will compete in several more tournaments this semester before setting their sights on regionals, where they will host a Class 2A event Feb. 2. The top three finishers from each of the four regionals advance to state competition.

Another Salina Diocese school hosting a regional this year will be Beloit-St. John's (Class 1A, Division II).

Two diocesan schools will be looking to defend their state titles of a year ago.

Salina-Sacred Heart, which won the 2A state crown in 2022, will compete in a 2A regional at Inman in February. Tipton Catholic — the Class 1A, DII state champion last year — will travel to Ransom for a 1A, DII regional this year.



DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN, THE REGISTER

**Players and coaches from Salina's Sacred Heart High School and Hays' Thomas More Prep-Marian High gather for prayer with clergy at midcourt before the start of the boys' game between the two schools earlier this month. The Knights and Monarchs met for their annual basketball competition Jan. 6 in the Sacred Heart gym.**

## Superintendent a common sight at school activities

By THE REGISTER

Superintendent of Schools Geoff Andrews makes a lot of visits to the 15 Catholic schools around the diocese during the school year.

It doesn't matter what the event or activity — assemblies, homecomings, sporting events — Andrews says he

enjoys them all.

One week in January, it was basketball on back-to-back nights.

On Jan. 5, Andrews traveled to Beloit to watch Salina-Sacred Heart play Beloit-St. John's/Tipton. The next night, he was in Salina to watch Sacred Heart play host to Thomas More Prep-Marian

High from Hays.

"One of my favorite things is to watch our Catholic high schools compete against one another in activities," Andrews said. "It really made for a fun and inviting atmosphere. I hope that schedules work out where we are able to do this for years to come."



# Charities provides aid after disaster

By OLIVIA AYERS

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Just more than a year ago, on Dec. 15, 2021, a fire erupted in western Kansas that caused the evacuations of more than three towns. Russell County was one of many areas affected that day.

Jessica Dockendorf's family resides in Russell County, owning a ranch just 2 miles south of Fairport. Reflecting on the events of that day, Dockendorf said she was home with her children when she received an urgent call from her husband, who works for the fire department outside of Catherine.

"It was late morning, early afternoon," Dockendorf said. "My husband was 20 miles west of our house when he called and said 'You need to get out and get somewhere safe because we are going to lose everything.'"

Dockendorf, her children, and their animals were able to seek refuge from the fire in a nearby alfalfa field. They waited for six hours as the flames roared through Russell County, destroying nearly



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everything in its path.

"We thought that would be the safest spot because the field was not as dry and still green," Dockendorf said. "It was also close to the Saline River, so we knew if the fire got close enough, we could swim in the water. We had no clue how fast the fire was moving. We could barely see and had to dodge power lines and cattle in the middle of the road."

Finally, Dockendorf received a call from her husband, who was able to go back to their property and assess the damage.

"He called me and told me that the camper, shed and chickens were all gone," Dockendorf said. "Our house was still standing and we kind of had a roof. If we would have stayed, we would've had no place to go."



COURTESY PHOTO

The Dockendorf family in Russell County had significant damage from a wildfire in December 2021. A new chicken coop has been built on their farm with the help of Catholic Charities.

The family was without power for nine days after the fire. They had to set up generators, rely on their fireplace and wear coveralls to keep warm. Finally, there was a glimmer of hope when a friend encouraged the family to reach out to Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas for support.

The Dockendorf family was able to receive support from the Disaster Relief program, providing them the funds to rebuild their destroyed chicken coop, allowing them to begin restoring what was lost. Dockendorf said she did

not know the assistance she received from Catholic Charities was something that was even available or accessible to her.

"I did not even know the help we received from Catholic Charities was out there," Dockendorf said. "It meant a lot because I'm a little person, not a big rancher. For Catholic Charities to help us meant a lot, especially because we had just rebuilt everything."

Reflecting on the past year, Dockendorf is grateful for what she has and is holding onto the things that matter most.

"There was definitely



One of the family's ducks rests in the coop.

something looking out for us that day," Dockendorf said. "The house and everything else is replaceable; the family is not."

## From Ukraine to Kansas, from war to peace

By SARAH JENKINS

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

It's an improbable setting for a story of occupation, invasion and war. The reason a Ukrainian mother, daughter and granddaughter came to be telling that story on a warm autumn afternoon in Concordia is even more improbable.

Elena and her daughter Tatiana sit on lawn chairs in the sunshine while 3-year-old granddaughter Sofia draws with chalk on a nearby sidewalk. Using a translation app on their phones, together they recount the painful journey that began eight years ago.

Elena is absolutely clear: Russia's war against her native Ukraine began in 2014, with the invasion of Crimea, followed swiftly by the occupation of the Luhansk region, including the city of Alchevsk where she lived and worked.

"We had to go to territory controlled by the Ukrainian authorities," Elena said.

That meant leaving their home and going to the city of Severodonetsk, roughly

50 miles north and beyond the area controlled by Russians and pro-Russian separatists.

It was there that Tatiana met and married her husband, and in 2018 she moved with him to the seaside city of Mariupol, where their daughter Sofia was born in 2019.

The struggle for control of Eastern Ukraine continued through those years. Called the War of the Donbas, the death toll for civilians and military troops from February 2014 to February 2022 is estimated to be more than 14,000.

Then on Feb. 24, 2022, Russia invaded.

"There was an attack on Luhansk and Donetsk regions. But the front line was far away from the city of Severodonetsk," Tatiana said. "The front line was in Mariupol" — where Tatiana and her family were.

That was when Tatiana made the decision to leave.

"My mother was safer in the city, so Sofia and I went there."

She said her husband

stayed in Mariupol with his parents.

By early March, "We were already disconnected from (Mariupol) and we did not know how our friends were doing there and, of course, how Sofia's father was doing," Tatiana said.

At the same time, the situation in Severodonetsk was worsening.

Then, Tatiana said, "We learned Russian (troops) were already on the outskirts."

By that time, it had become difficult to leave Severodonetsk.

"It was only possible to evacuate by rail," Elena said. "People's private cars could no longer pass by, buses were being detained, the roads were mined."

And the nearest railway station was Kramatorsk, some 70 miles to the west. Ultimately, they found a minibus run by church representatives and joined the flood of refugees at the rail station. Finally, the little family of three found seats on one of the twice-a-day evacuation trains headed to

Lviv in far western Ukraine.

With them were just two suitcases, stuffed with warm clothes for the cold weather of Ukraine in March along with all their identification documents.

In peacetime, the trip from

Kramatorsk to Lviv would take 18 hours. In war, it took three full days.

"We stopped many times," Tatiana said. "There was shelling, and we would stop and wait for it to ease."

UKRAINE, PAGE 11



### Director of Operations

Catholic Charities has been growing steadily and is seeking to add a director of operations. The board and executive director are looking for a positive, analytical, process-minded leader to serve all three Catholic Charities offices across the 31-county region. Our director of operations will have the skills, sensitivity and personal confidence to tap into the power that each member of our team brings to our mission: providing compassionate service for all people in need throughout northern Kansas. With overall supervisory responsibility, this role is accountable for oversight of the agency's day-to-day activities, ensuring the organization is managed and performing efficiently and effectively, with an emphasis on facilities, technology, infrastructure and human resources. This is an outstanding opportunity for a highly motivated professional to help grow our faith-based mission and serve our most vulnerable brothers and sisters. For more details, please visit [www.ccnks.org/careers](http://www.ccnks.org/careers) or call Hannah Nichols at (785) 825-0208.

JOB OPENING



# Susie Deges Scholarship Fund Announced – Honoring Susie’s Legacy for Young Catholics

By Corrina Hudsonpillar  
Catholic Foundation for  
Diocese of Salina

“That girl is going somewhere.” When Father Kevin Weber thinks back to his high school classmate Susie Deges, it is only with the fondest memories. Memories of what might have been, as she was the type of person who seemed to succeed at anything she tried. You can still see pride in her father Leon Deges’ eyes as he talks about Susie’s accomplishments and the future she did not get to see. A future that was cut short the night before her high school graduation due to accidental carbon monoxide poisoning that left everyone thinking about what might have been.

The list is long when talking about the accomplishments of Susie Deges’ eighteen years here on this earth. Susie was senior class president at Wheatland High School in Grainfield, varsity cheerleader, district



Susie Deges, 1983

treasurer of the Future Homemakers of America and degree officer of the local FHA chapter. She was not only active in her school but active in her parish – St. Agnes Catholic Church in Grainfield. Her faith was very important to her. Susie shared her musical talents with her church community. On Sundays she was either the cantor and/or playing the organ or guitar. Her involvement in her faith did not stop there. She was also active in her local CYO serving as president – even chosen as the President of the Salina Diocese CYO.

On the morning of May 15, 1983, the rural communities of Grainfield, Park and Gove were looking ahead to the graduation ceremony to be held later that day for Wheatland High School Class of 1983. The feelings of excitement and anticipation quickly turned into shock and sadness. No social media or cell phones to text from in those days, so phone calls from landlines were used to communicate news– good and bad. Father Kevin recalls when he heard the news about Susie. He was doing chores on the farm before the family was heading to mass and his mother came outside to tell him. It’s the kind of news you just cannot believe you are hearing.

The graduates gathered in the local pizza place to try to process their emotions, grieve together and discuss how they would

make it through the day. Roses would be placed in the chair where Susie would have sat amongst her classmates and friends. As class president, Susie was to give a speech during the ceremony. Susie’s sister Sheryl was a junior at Wheatland High School and had been previously chosen as one of the students to help lead the graduates in. Now Sheryl had an even bigger task as she gave her sister’s speech at the ceremony. When asked how she could find the strength and composure to stand in front of the mourning graduates, their families and the community, she stated, “God helps you through these things. Susie was with me.”

A day after Susie was to graduate, a wake service was held at St. Agnes Catholic Church. Bishop Daniel Kucera was in attendance. Her funeral service was held on May 17th with seven priests officiating – Reverends Raymond Karier, William Surmeier, Alvin Werth, Bob Schneider, Bob Reif, John Walsh, and Kerry Ninemire.

Upon news of her passing, memorial contributions from parish CYOs across the diocese poured into the chancery reflecting the reach of her impact and the lives she touched. These contributions formed the Susie Deges Memorial Fund. Over the years the funds have been utilized to obtain youth ministry speakers for the diocese. Recently Leon and Ellen Deges spent some time with Katie Platten, CEO of the

Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina, and shared memories of Susie and their dreams for the future of this memorial fund.

Starting with the 2023-2024 school year, a \$1,000 scholarship will be given from the Susie Deges Memorial Fund to honor Susie’s life and to help other young Catholics to achieve their educational dreams. Said Leon, “I want to help a young faithful Catholic, an active CYO participant, get the opportunity to attend college – an opportunity that Susie never got.” If you know a high school senior in the diocese that is active in their local CYO and would continue Susie’s legacy, they can complete a scholarship application at [www.salinadiocese.org/diocese-of-salina-scholarship-application/](http://www.salinadiocese.org/diocese-of-salina-scholarship-application/) or scan the QR code below.

Leon and Ellen Deges have been building up this fund and invite you to join them



Susie's Senior Portrait

in growing this fund to help young Catholics in their quest for an education for years to come.

**The Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina is also accepting contributions to the Susie Deges Memorial Fund for scholarships.**

Maybe you or a family member were impacted by Susie’s involvement in her faith or school? Perhaps her story has touched you in a way that you would like to help a young Catholic student get the college education Susie missed? Contributions to the fund are accepted in all amounts and will honor Susie and help carry on her legacy for future young Catholics.

If you would like more information on contributing to the Susie Deges Memorial Fund, or information on the funds available at the Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina – please contact Katie Platten at [katie.platten@salinadiocese.org](mailto:katie.platten@salinadiocese.org) or 785-342-9826.



Susie Deges Scholarship Application Link



Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina Staff

Front row from left, Torrie Gregg, Katie Hamel, and Laurie Trautwein. Back row from left, Corrina Hudsonpillar, Katie Platten, and Heather Hartman.

MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

## Resolutions for the New Year

By Corrina Hudsonpillar  
Catholic Foundation for  
Diocese of Salina

Struggling to keep that New Year’s Resolution, or maybe you didn’t even bother with one this year? What if your New Year’s Resolution could be something that takes minimal time yet positively impacts the lives of your family, and maybe others, for years to come? And don’t worry, this is a resolution that you can work on at any time during the year!

Did you know that less than 40% of Americans have a

will? While it’s not the most pleasant thing to discuss, the importance of having an updated will cannot be overlooked. The list of reasons someone doesn’t have a will might be lengthy – everything from “I’m not old enough” to “I don’t have enough money or assets to bother with it”. We can always find several excuses when it’s something we are avoiding.

As with anything, the first step can sometimes be the hardest one to make. Maybe you don’t know where to even start. If 2023 is the year you want to begin getting your affairs in order, there are some

simple steps you can take to get the ball rolling.

The Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina is here to help you in creating your Catholic legacy. We are developing a list of resources for members of our diocese. If you are an investment advisor, accountant, estate attorney, etc. – we would like to include you on this list of resources. Send us an email - [development@salinadiocese.org](mailto:development@salinadiocese.org) – with your contact information.

**Have you left a gift in your will to the church?**  
**BUILD YOUR CATHOLIC LEGACY!**

- Your parish
- Catholic schools
- Clergy/Seminarians
- Catholic Charities
- Diocese of Salina
- Your favorite ministry



# Pope Benedict remembered

BY PETER SBLENDORIO  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Larger-than-expected crowds congregated at the Vatican for a public viewing of Pope Benedict XVI's body, officials said.

About 65,000 people attended St. Peter's Basilica on the first of three days of Benedict's body lying in state there, the Vatican said.

Officials had estimated 25,000 to 30,000 people would attend Monday. Benedict's body was adorned with a bishop headpiece and a red cloak, with his head resting atop two pillows.

Benedict, who led the Catholic Church from 2005 to 2013, died Dec. 31 at age 95. His resignation in 2013 made him the first pope to do so in nearly 600 years.

"I wanted to pay homage to Benedict because he had a key role in my life and my education," said Filippo Tuccio, who traveled from Venice to



VATICAN MEDIA

Pope Benedict XVI lies in state.

attend the viewing.

"He was very important for me: for what I am, my way of thinking, my values."

Pope Francis led the funeral Jan. 5 at St. Peter's Square.

Francis became the pope after Benedict

retired due to old age and declining health.

"This resignation wasn't a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength, a

greatness because he saw that he was no longer up to the challenges of being pope," said Cardinal Walter Kasper.

## THE LIFE OF POPE BENEDICT XVI

### Growing up

Joseph Ratzinger was born in Marktl am Inn, Germany in 1927. The son of a cook and a policeman, he always felt his life was immersed in the paschal mystery from his birth on Holy Saturday and his baptism the next day in the newly blessed Easter waters.

Although the Ratzinger family attempted to avoid involvement with the Nazi Party during World War II, they were not completely successful. Young Joseph was drafted into the German army for a while, but deserted near the war's end and spent time in an American prisoner-of-war camp.

Joseph studied philosophy and theology; was ordained, along with his brother Georg, in 1951; and earned a doctorate in theology in 1953. For years, he was a professor of theology at various universities in Germany. He quickly became renowned for the depth and breadth of his intellect.

### Cardinal Ratzinger

In March 1977, Pope Paul VI named Father Joseph the archbishop of Munich and Freising; he was elevated to the College of Cardinals in June of the same year. His most prominent position prior to the papacy was that of prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. It is in this role that Cardinal Ratzinger was responsible for defending the orthodoxy of Church teachings.

### Papacy

As the 265th leader of the



TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

After taking the name Pope Benedict XVI, German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger greets the crowd in St. Peter's Square in Vatican City on April 19, 2005.

Catholic Church, Joseph Ratzinger took the name Benedict. It is the name of the founder of the Benedictine Order. St. Benedict is the patron of Europe, and the

name Benedict means "blessing."

### Retirement

On Feb. 11, 2013, Pope Benedict stunned the Vatican and the



GETTY IMAGES

Pope Benedict XVI was 95 years old when he died Dec. 31, 2022.

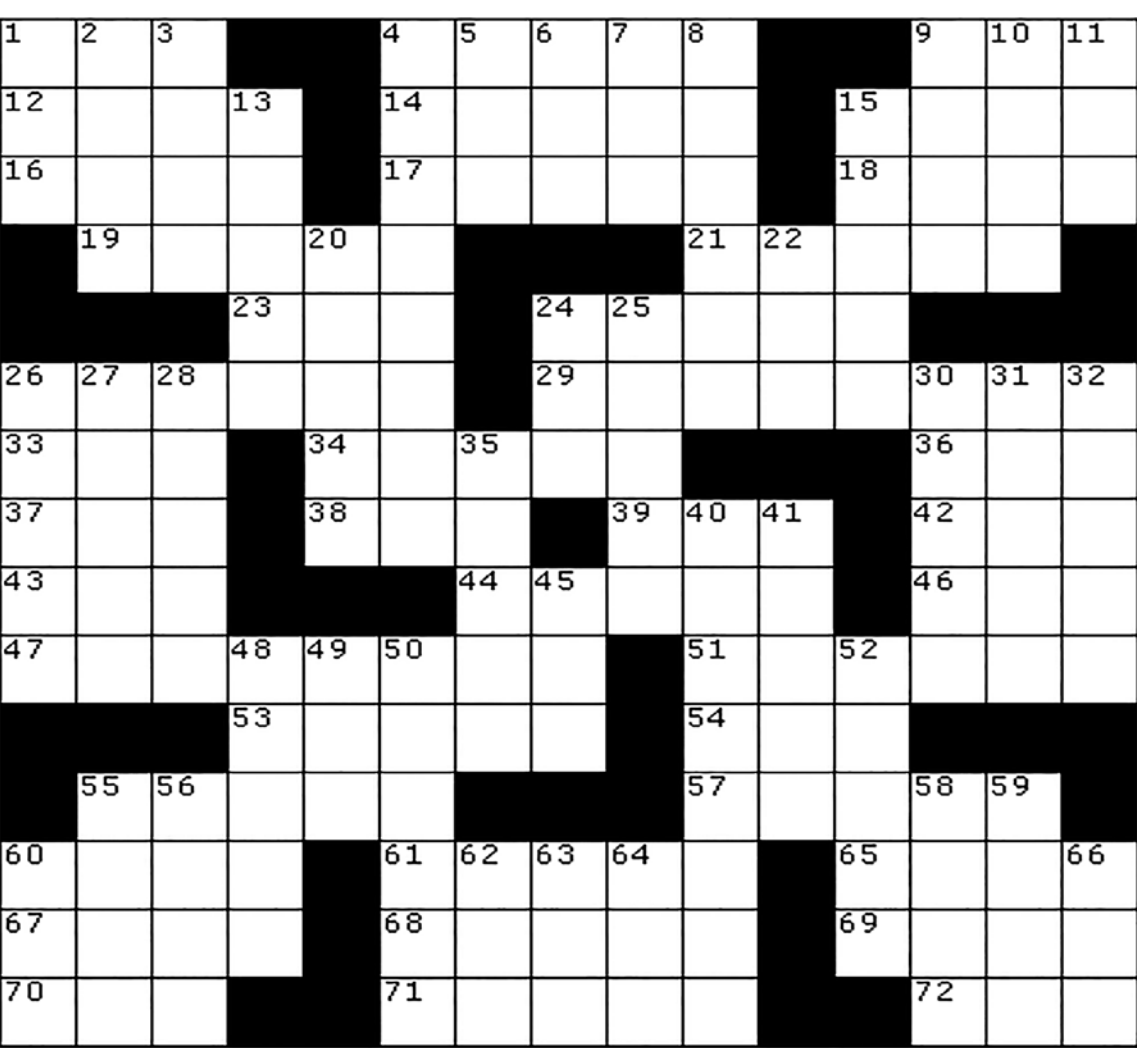
world when he announced his intention to resign the papacy. After his retirement, Pope Emeritus Benedict resided in a monastery in Vatican City, living a life of quiet prayer and study.

### Funeral

The funeral Mass for Pope Benedict XVI was Jan. 5 in St. Peter's Square. Tens of thousands of pilgrims gathered in the square to pay their last respects. Hundreds of cardinals, bishops and priests were in attendance. Pope Francis celebrated the solemn and simple funeral Mass according to Pope Benedict's wishes.



CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**

1 American Cancer Society (abbr.)

4 First

9 Slide on snow

12 Gnaw

14 Happen again

15 Secret of Samson's strength

16 Center

17 Last letter of Greek alphabet

18 Girl's name

19 Inexpensive

21 Governed

23 Tree

24 Pulls

26 Scorch

29 Small passerine bird

33 Tax agency

34 Acclaim

36 Regret

37 Telegraphic signal

38 Grain

39 Pull

42 Reduced (abbr.)

43 Adam's wife

44 Psychology abbr.

46 Accomplished

47 Scorns

51 Celestial "tailed" bodies
- 53 Orange yellow

54 Lavatory

55 African nation

57 "The Jungle" author

Sinclair

60 Gritty paper

61 Washed-out

65 Adam and Eve's garden

67 Sisters sibs.

68 KJV possessive pronoun

69 Tenet

70 Aurora

71 Preserved

72 Decay
- DOWN**

1 American College of Physicians (abbr.)

2 Fashionable

3 Cain's brother

4 Biblical predictions

5 Rapid eye movement

6 Sorbet

7 Stein

8 Where Noah's ark landed

9 Lucid

10 Love is patient, love is

11 Wrath

13 Parable of the \_\_\_ and weeds
- 15 Shampoo brand

20 Tribe of Israel

22 Good grief!

24 Cell stuff

25 Very bumpy road

26 Two \_\_\_ (has two faces)

27 Desire

28 Sackcloth and \_\_\_

30 Exchange

31 Length of forearm

32 Groups of animals

35 Pariah

40 Blocked

41 Shout

45 Compass point

48 Small lakes

49 Cold

50 Cheats

52 Motor inn

55 Corn syrup brand

56 Son of Seth

58 Smell

59 A Roman emperor

60 South by east

62 Expression of surprise

63 Division (abbr.)

64 East northeast

66 Mesh

Answers on Page 14



UKRAINE, FROM PAGE 8

In Lviv, they were among nearly 200,000 “internally displaced persons” who had fled eastern Ukraine for the relative safety of the area on the Polish border.

There they found a large camp set up for the refugees, with hot food, tea and accommodations.

They knew that to stay, they needed to find a house and jobs.

What Elena and Tatiana could not know was there was already an avenue for escape.

Sister Anna Marie Broxterman has been focused for decades on issues surrounding immigration. In the 1980s, she was one of the Sisters of St. Joseph who welcomed a family from Guatemala as part of the Sanctuary movement and has been an active participant in the sisters’ Border Experience in El Paso.

So as she watched the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the refugee crisis, she wondered if there was any way the Sisters of St. Joseph could help. In April, she started researching how Ukrainian refugees could come to the U.S., and by May the sisters’ Immigration Committee embraced her idea to sponsor one or two Ukrainian women and their children — but her idea almost hit a snag: The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service requires anyone who wants to sponsor an immigrant “must include the name of the beneficiary.”

Sister Anna Marie didn’t know the names of any of the women desperate to get out of Ukraine — but she did know two Ukrainian men.

In 2019, she had met Alex Yanevaskyy, who is married to a niece of another Sister of St. Joseph, and his colleague Dmytri Shakhor when the two Voice of America journalists produced a documentary that featured the sisters’ Border Experience.

Through Dmytri, she found a Lviv-based organization called Women’s Perspective and an English-speaking woman named Iryna Trokhym, who was happy to be Anna Marie’s eyes and ears in Lviv. Iryna was certain she could identify one or two mothers with children who wanted to go to the U.S.

As it turned out, it wasn’t that easy. Even in an escalating war, it would be a scary proposition.

But then Iryna found Elena and Tatiana.

“As the mother of a young child, I wanted a good future for my daughter,” Tatiana says. “I know that in Ukraine at the moment there is no future for children.”

The women did have some concerns. After all, they would be putting their fate in the hands of strangers.

There was a Zoom call between Elena and Tatiana in Lviv and Anna Marie and Sister Jean Rosemarynoski in Concordia, with Iryna as the translator.

“That helped us to talk to them,” Tatiana said. “We realized that these are real people and we can consider moving to a completely different continent.”

And so they did, traveling first to Warsaw, Poland, then to Amsterdam, then Atlanta and finally Wichita. That was Aug. 26.

Two months later, Tatiana said, “I have a little vision of the future for my child in another country, and God bless America for making that possible.

“We wake up every day and enjoy every day. Airplanes fly in the sky, life goes on, everything around us grows, and this is so beautiful. In Ukraine today, it is impossible to breathe a full breath.”

*Editor’s note: Elena and Tatiana asked that their full names not be used in order to help keep family overseas safe.*

RUNNIN’ REVS HOOPS



Seminarians vs. Sacred Heart Students and Alumni at a basketball game Dec. 17.



# Life

Simple.  
Sacred.

“Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in God’s own image, destined to live for ever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.”

— POPE FRANCIS  
to the Bishops of Ireland,  
Scotland, England and Wales,  
July 17, 2013

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*Please join the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia  
in prayer for the sanctity of all human life.*

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# Abortion industrial complex in Kansas delivers dark announcement

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

The abortion industry in Kansas announced in late December it has begun administering chemical abortions through telemedicine.

“True to form, the abortion industry is once again putting its own profits and convenience ahead of safeguards for the health of women and girls,” said Danielle Underwood, KFL director of communications. “This time, abortionists are heartlessly pursuing their goal to perform larger numbers of abortions by withholding direct and needed physical care of an onsite physician. Once again, this has sadly become another ‘I told you so’ moment as women and babies in Kansas will be the ones who suffer from these actions.”

“Pro-life Kansans have issued urgent, repeated warnings since 2019 that the abortion industry planned to push for the overturn of reasonable, existing limits on abortion and make our state an ever-growing regional destination for abortion. These predictions become truer by the day,” Underwood said.

With the abortion industry succeeding in forcing the overturn of Kansas’ in-person doctor requirement in November due to the legal precedent set by Hodes and Nauser v. Schmidt, abortion extremists moved quickly to expand abortion offerings to residents and nearby states, going so far as to advertise in Kansas visitors guides.

Peer-reviewed science

has shown abortion pills are dangerous. Large cohort studies have found chemical abortion resulted in four times the rate of complications compared to surgical abortion. Well-documented dangers include life-threatening blood loss, undiagnosed ectopic pregnancy, and inappropriate use of chemical abortion pills due to underestimated gestational age from lack of proper medical oversight in telemed-assisted chemical abortions.

Pro-abortion advocates claim women in rural areas are disadvantaged without telemedicine abortions, but studies show one in 20 women suffer a failed chemical abortion, placing rural women at greater risk from these procedures due to emergency care being far away. Days later, these women may require hospital admission for immediate surgery, blood transfusion, or intravenous antibiotics to save their lives, causing disproportionate suffering and frightening escalation of adverse events.

Kansans for Life is considering every possible course of action, including legal remedies, and plans to continue to pursue legislation that would ensure women are provided critical information about risks of abortion pills and medical interventions available to potentially reverse their effects, as well as other protective measures.

“While Gov. Laura Kelly

## THE SYNOPSIS

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Comprehensive Health of Planned Parenthood Great Plains (CHPPGP) launched telehealth medication abortion services in Kansas in an effort to expand care options. CHPPGP operates three health centers across the state where abortion remains protected after Kansans overwhelmingly rejected a ballot measure that would have eliminated any right to abortion in the state’s constitution.

Patients receiving a medication abortion via telehealth will be seen in-person at a CHPPGP-operated health center in Kansas to complete consent requirements and an evaluation, but the telehealth physician may be in any state where abortion is legal.

Statement from Emily Wales, president and CEO, CHPPGP:

“Despite this devastating time for reproductive rights, Kansas remains a place that respects patients and their personal health care decisions. Offering medication abortion through telehealth allows CHPPGP to meet the needs of more patients, in an even more timely manner, by greatly increasing the number of physicians available to deliver care. This is a win not only for Kansans but for patients

in surrounding states traveling for care, who have suffered as politicians prioritized scoring points over the rights of patients. We are proud to meet the moment by offering health care to all, regardless of where they live.”

Statement from Dr. Iman Alsaden, chief medical officer, Comprehensive Health of Planned Parenthood Great Plains:

“As an abortion provider in an area where there have been few offering this care, my team and I have faced harmful bans over the past year. We have treated countless patients – many of whom have traveled through the night – who are confused why they now must overcome obstacles to care that should be available in their communities. By offering medication abortion via telehealth in Kansas, we can now see patients we might not otherwise have been able to treat because of a lack of provider coverage in this region. It’s an important step in expanding access in a state like Kansas that has proven it values every person’s ability to make their own health care decisions.”

Physicians providing medication abortions via telehealth must be licensed to provide care in the state of Kansas.

has previously opposed providing this critical information to pregnant women and girls, KFL has and will continue to pursue passage of Abortion Pill

Reversal (APR) legislation,” said Jeanne Gawdun, KFL director of government relations. “Women have a right to this potentially lifesaving information.”

**Thinking about selling your farm or ranch land?**

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## WEDDINGS

**Santos Lopez Jr. and Velia Morales Hernandez** were married Jan. 7, 2023, at Immaculate Heart of Mary in Hays. Father Nick Parker witnessed the vows. Parents of the groom are Santos and Ofelia Lopez. Parents of the bride are Juan and Maria Morales. Witnesses were Joseph Lopez and Lorena Morales.

**Steven Ray Thompson and Alana Noelle Bucholtz** were married Oct. 8, 2022. Father Gnanasekar Kulandai witnessed the vows. Witnesses were James Melton and Annemarie Bucholtz Charland.

**Caleb Billesbach and**

**Ashton Jueneman** were married Oct. 15, 2022, at St. John the Baptist in Hanover. Father Joseph Kieffer witnessed the vows. Parents of the groom are Mark and Beth Billesbach. Parents of the bride are Kenny and Donna Jueneman.

**Adam Kramp and Franses Schmidt** were married Dec. 10, 2022, at St. Nicholas of Myra in Hays. Father Damian Richards witnessed the vows. Parents of the bride-groom are Howard and Rebecca (True) Kramp. Parents of the bride are Allen and Ellen (Hass) Schmidt. Witnesses were Todd Kramp and Lydia Simpson.

**Eli Jayden Berry**, son of Tyre and Martha Berry, was baptized Nov. 13, 2022, by Father Gnanasekar Kulandai at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Junction City.

**Briggs Lee Bittel**, son of Logan and Courtney (Waldschmidt) Bittel, was baptized Dec. 11, 2022, by Father Dana Clark at St. Mary's Church in Ellis.

**Brilee Pearl Blackwood**, daughter of Drew Phillip and Ashley Dawn (Seifert) Blackwood, was baptized Nov. 26, 2022, by Father David Metz at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Concordia.

**Garrett Bryan Bruna**, son of Nathan and Samantha Bruna, was baptized Oct. 23, 2022, by Father Joseph Kieffer at St. John the Baptist in Hanover.

**Archer Lee Carlson**, son of Jacob and Shelby Carlson, was baptized Sept. 24, 2022, by Father Joseph Kieffer at St. John the Baptist in Hanover.

**Paxton Evan Dykes**, son of Nathan and Amber (Larson) Dykes, was baptized Jan. 1, 2023, by Father David Metz at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Concordia.

**Willow Marjorie Harris**, daughter of Zachary and Mazee Palmero, was baptized Dec. 4, 2022, by Deacon Wayne Talbot at St. Thomas More in Manhattan.

**Cora Lynn Haug**, daughter of Derek and Madison Haug, was baptized Jan. 1, 2023, by Deacon Wayne Talbot at St. Thomas More in Manhattan.

**Rylee Jo Lawrence**, daughter of Austin and Cindy Lawrence, was baptized Oct. 9, 2022, by Father

## BAPTISMS

Joseph Kieffer at St. John the Baptist in Hanover.

**Koe Daniel Miller**, son of Dawson and Samantha Miller, was baptized Dec. 10, 2022, by Deacon Mike Robinson of Ss. Peter & Paul Church in Clay Center.

**Damian James Oberle**, son of Joseph and Alexandra (Greenwood) Oberle, was baptized Nov. 27, 2022, by Father Jarett Konrade at St. John the Baptist in Beloit.

**Caeli Joanna Orlowski**, daughter of Kacper and Carleigh Orlowski, was baptized Jan. 1, 2023, by Father Fred Gatschet at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina.

**Saúl Ramos**, son of Luis and Nefertiti Ramos, was baptized Dec. 3, 2022, by Father Frank Coady at St. Thomas More in Mahattan.

**Colter Wade Steinfort**, son of Wade and Kailee Steinfort, was baptized Dec. 18,

2022, by Father Joseph Kieffer at St. John the Baptist in Hanover.

**Owen Everett Tegtmeier**, son of Jeffrey and Megan Tegtmeier, was baptized Oct. 2, 2022, by Father Joseph Kieffer at St. John the Baptist in Hanover.

**Freya Rose Wolfe**, daughter of Christopher and Megan Wolfe, was baptized Dec. 4, 2022, by Father Gnanasekar Kulandai at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Junction City.

**Gwyneth Kathleen Wolfe**, daughter of Christopher and Megan Wolfe, was baptized Dec. 4, 2022, by Father Gnanasekar Kulandai at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Junction City.

**Louis Thomas Grall Wolfe**, son of Christopher and Megan Wolfe, was baptized Dec. 4, 2022, by Father Gnanasekar Kulandai at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Junction City.

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

The Holy Father entrusts the Apostleship of Prayer to publicize his prayer intentions for the good of the world and the Church.

### Pope's prayer intention for February

We pray that parishes, placing communion at the center, may increasingly become communities of faith, fraternity and welcome towards those most

in need.

### Diocesan prayer intention for February

We pray that this new year may be a year of peace in our world. Lord, teach us to see everyone as you see them and to treat them with the dignity and respect they deserve as your creations. May we all choose to forgive, trust and value those around us.

### SEND US YOUR INFORMATION

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DEATHS

**Edward L. Augustine**, 87, died Oct. 26, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Nov. 8, 2022, at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Father Gnanasekar Kulandai presided. Burial in St. Mary Cemetery in Junction City.

**Tobias "Toby" Cade Becker**, 21, died Dec. 13, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 20 at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan. Father Frank Coady presided. Burial in St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery in Purcell.

**Eldon Emmanuel Cailteux**, 98, of Clyde, died Dec. 29, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Jan. 6 at St. John

the Baptist Catholic Church in Clyde. Father Steven Heina presided. Burial in Mount Calvary Catholic Cemetery.

**Gilbert S. "Shorty" Dreiling**, 84, died Sept. 29, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Oct. 3 at Our Lady Help of Christians in Antonino. Father Curtis Carlson presided. Burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

**Richard Lee Gengler**, 69, died Nov. 23, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Nov. 30 at St. John the Baptist in Beloit. Father Jarett Konrade presided. Burial in St. John's Cemetery in Beloit.

**Gerald "Jere" Gieber**, 87,

died Nov. 11, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Nov. 14 at St. Edward Church. Father Henry Baxa presided. Burial in Belleville City Cemetery.

**Mary Philomene (Martin) Goeckel**, 88, of Hanover, died Oct. 23, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Oct. 28 at St. John the Baptist in Hanover. Father Joseph Kieffer presided.

**Leroy G. Gottschalk**, 86, died Dec. 11, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 16 at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays. Father Damian Richards presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery in Hays.

**Eugene G. Helget**, 93, died Dec. 24, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 31 at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan. Father Donald D. Zimmerman presided. Burial in Sunset Cemetery in Mahattan.

**Darlyne M. Kieffer**, 89, of Concordia, died Dec. 14, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 17 at Our

Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Concordia. Father David Metz presided. Burial in St. Concordia Cemetery in Concordia.

**Cecil Nicholas Koster**, 97, died Dec. 7, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Cawker City. Father Jarett Konrade presided. Burial in Prairie Grove Cemetery.

**Mary Ann Krier**, 69, died Dec. 24, 2022. Wake service was Dec. 29 at St. Boniface Church in Tipton. Father Daryl Olmstead presided. Burial in St. Boniface Cemetery in Tipton.

**Ronald Vincent Odette**, 78, died Dec. 18, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 30 at Chaput-Buoy Funeral Home in Concordia. Father David Metz presided. Burial in St. Concordia Cemetery in Concordia.

**Patsy L. Ostmeyer**, 87, died Dec. 17, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec.

22 at Immaculate Conception Church in Grinnell. Father Luke Thielen presided. Burial in Immaculate Conception Cemetery in Grinnell.

**Thomas J. "Tom" Pitner**, 89, died Dec. 5, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 14 at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays. Father Dan Scheetz, Father Damian Richards and Father Daryl Olmstead presided. Burial in Goodland Cemetery.

**Sonja (Blackwood) Risitter**, 74, died Dec. 26, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Clyde. Father Steven Heina presided. Burial in Mount Calvary Catholic Cemetery in Clyde.


**John M. Schmitt**, 73, of Concordia, died Nov. 27, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 3 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Concordia. Father David Metz presided. Inurnment in Pleasant Hill Cemetery in Concordia.

**Mary Lou Schoenberger**, 67, died Dec. 1, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 17 at St. Mary's Church in Ellis. Father Dana Clark presided. Burial in St. Mary's Cemetery in Ellis.

**Kenneth "Kenny" D. Skeels**, 84, of Concordia, died Dec. 8, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 10 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Concordia. Father David Metz presided. Burial in St. Concordia Cemetery in Concordia.

**Josephine M. Wiesner**, 91, of Concordia, died Nov. 17, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Nov. 26 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Concordia. Father David Metz presided. Burial in St. Concordia Cemetery in Concordia.

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# Did I make the right choices as Dad was dying?

Sometimes people will contact the National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) wondering if the decisions they made on behalf of a dying family member were the right ones. The NCBC provides a free Ethics Consultation Service where individuals can ask questions and seek guidance about ethics and medical decisions.

Some who call are interested in reviewing the details of how a loved one died, along with the advice they were given by doctors, nurses, hospice workers, family members and friends. While their loved one may have died months or even years earlier, they may still be unsure or unsettled about the treatment decisions they made.

End of life situations are not easy to sort out. Important practical details and medical facts may no longer be available or may have been forgotten with the passage of time. Sometimes family members may have disagreed or were feuding about how best to proceed, or may not have wanted to seek out expert advice or guidance, so the decisions they made might have been hasty.

A friend once spoke to me about a young man who had shared with her some details about his father's death. He told her that as he looked back on it, he had doubts that he had made the right

decisions as his dad became more debilitated. He felt he had failed his dad because of the limited kinds of care he ended up authorizing on his behalf. My friend sought to reassure him he really shouldn't be troubled about it, because she couldn't imagine he would have done anything but his best under the circumstances, and so his dad likely had received very good care.

When she recounted the story to me, I asked, "But how would you actually know his dad received good care and that the son really did make the right choices? Objectively speaking, the son may be right that some of the decisions were poorly made or selfish or otherwise flawed." I asked her whether her first instinct may have been to try to soothe his feelings and emotions, rather than considering the specific medical and ethical concerns he was raising.

I continued and offered: Maybe he really does need to

discuss the facts of the case as best he remembers them. Perhaps he might benefit from bringing some of his concerns to the Sacrament of Confession. Assuming his concerns have some basis, even while acknowledging

the uncertainties in his own decision making, such a step would help him find needed healing. By turning to the infinite mercy

of God, and "clearing the decks" with the Lord in this manner, he would be strengthened to move forward in a new way without continually having to look over his shoulder and wonder endlessly about whether he did right by his dad. Finding a sense of peace and resolution in this way is important, and his father, now long deceased, would, we could presume, want to see that kind of healing for his son as well.

My friend was intrigued by my comments and acknowledged her first inclination had been to try to palliate and

calm the situation by mostly talking around the issues and concerns he had raised. On further reflection, she could see the value of dealing more directly with those concerns so he could find a real measure of closure.

Dying well, of course, is a profound grace, not only for the person who passes on, but for all who are left behind. To die well does not imply we have to use every medical treatment that may be available. We are required only to use those medical treatments or procedures that are deemed reasonable or "ordinary."

I typically recommend these resources from the NCBC: (1) some of my writings on End of Life Decision-Making available at Tiny.one/EOL-decisions, (2) a

newly-released video, entitled The Gift of Dying Well, available at Vimeo.com/bioethicsvideos, and (3) the NCBC's Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decisions available at Tiny.one/NCBC-Guide.

Our efforts to lovingly support our family members through the dying process and to make careful and morally correct decisions on their behalf as they decline in health are important. Those committed efforts are signs of our desire to be faithful to the beautiful bonds of love connecting us to our dear ones and to the Lord of life.

*Tadeusz Pacholczyk earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the director of education at the National Catholic Bioethics Center.*

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