



## Chrism Mass provides blessings

By FATHER DAMIAN RICHARDS  
SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

The diocesan Chrism Mass was celebrated March 30 at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina. The three sacred oils – Sacred Chrism, Oil of the Catechumens and Oil of the Infirm – were blessed by Bishop Jerry Vincke. The oils were taken back to the parishes by priests to be used in various sacraments.

Another highlight of the Chrism Mass was the diocese honoring the priestly jubilarians. This year, there were six priests honored with milestone anniversaries: Father LeRoy Metro on his 60th, Father Charlie Steier and Father Don Zimmerman on their 50th, Father Keith Weber on his 40th, and Father Fred Gatschet and Father Mark Wesely on their 30th.

Celebrating the priesthood is a big part of the Chrism Mass. All diocesan priests renew their priestly promises during the Mass. In those promises, the bishop asks his priests to resolve to be more closely conformed to Christ, to be faithful stewards of the Eucharist and to teach the faith, “moved only by zeal for souls.”

The bishop then asks the laity, his “dearest sons and daughters,” to pray for the priests so they might be faithful ministers of Christ, the High Priest. Finally, he asks the people of God for prayers for himself, that he “may be faithful to the apostolic office entrusted to me” and strive to be a “more perfect image of Christ the Good Shepherd.”

These are powerful pledges. Priests do everything they can to attend the Chrism Mass so they can be a part of the renewal of vows.



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Bishop Jerry Vincke blesses the oils during the Chrism Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina.



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Over 600 faithful from around the diocese participated in the Mass.

The bishop encourages laity to come to the Mass so the entire Church can offer prayers for each other.

CHRISM, PAGE 3



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

One of the three oils is presented to Bishop Vincke.

## JUBILEES FOR PRIESTS IN SALINA DIOCESE

By KATIE HAMEL  
THE REGISTER

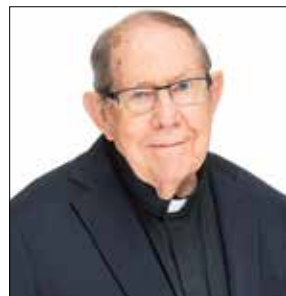
This year, six priests from the Diocese of Salina are celebrating milestone anniversaries. Celebrating 60 years is Father LeRoy Metro. Celebrating 50 years are Father Charlie Steier and Father Donald Zimmerman. Celebrating 40 years is Father Keith Weber. And celebrating 30 years are Father Fred Gatschet

and Father Mark Wesely.

### Father LeRoy Metro (60 years)

“The greatest surprise of my priesthood is that God calls us as priests to accomplish something we feel incapable of doing on our own, even when we feel the most unlikely instrument to achieve God’s purpose,” reflects Father Metro on 60 years of priesthood.

“The greatest blessing of being a priest is that it gave me the opportunity to be a part of peoples’ lives in a way I never thought possible.”



One of his favorite memories was directing retreats (the Search weekends) for young adults, as well as retreats at Manna House. “I often marveled at what God could accomplish in the lives of people.”

His hope for the future of the Church is a deeper respect for each other as members of God’s family.

JUBILEES, PAGE 10

### RELICS VISIT

Diocese of Salina hosts special traveling exhibit.  
Page 3



### WIN-WIN SITUATION

Basketball coaches lead school teams to state tournaments.  
Page 4



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## Six hot-button issues Pope Francis, Gen Z confront in new Disney doc

*I found the article below an interesting read on a variety of controversial topics. I hope the article helps you.*

**Bishop Jerry Vincke**

By **PETER PINEDO**

CATHOLIC NEWS AGENCY

"The true Church is at the peripheries," Pope Francis says in Disney's new documentary "The Pope: Answers," which was released April 5.

Directed by Spanish filmmaker Jordi Évole and available exclusively on Hulu in the U.S., the 1 hour and 23-minute-long documentary shares a conversation between the pope and 10 young people from around the world.

Filmed in a poor, working-class neighborhood in Rome, the documentary is entirely in Spanish but accessible to English audiences through subtitles.

Throughout the film, Francis maintains the Church cannot allow itself to become "a club of nice people," that is a group of people "who do their religious duties but lack the courage to get out to the 'suburbs.'"

Using the term "suburbs" to describe those on the peripheries of the Church and faith, Francis shared his belief that it is the Church's job to go out to those people at the very edges.

"We all like to be comfortable," Francis said, but that desire for comfort can lead

priests to forget they are the shepherd of a flock.

"If you want to see reality, go to the 'suburbs,'" Francis said, "To find out what social injustice is, go to the 'suburbs.'"

Among the group of 20- to 25-year-olds were Catholics, Protestants, atheists, agnostics, and one Muslim. Each has a unique problem with either the Church or God. They question the pope on some of the Church's most controversial teachings and difficult problems.

Throughout the film the pope listens to the young people calmly, responding gently and retaining a smile even as some of his answers evoke anger and indignation.

They discuss immigration, depression, abortion, clergy sexual and psychological abuse, transgenderism, pornography and loss of faith.

Here's a taste of the conversation on these hot-button issues facing the Church and the world.

### Women in the Church

One young woman, Milagros, describes herself as a feminist and asks why the Church objects to having women priests or even a woman pope.

"Therein lies a theological problem," Francis answers. "Women have a function within the Church because the Church itself is female ... The Church is a wife, Christ's wife. It is not his husband. Christ is the husband. That is our faith."

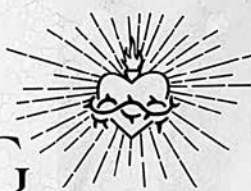
**ISSUES, PAGE 12**

## BISHOP'S CALENDAR

### May

- 1** Knights of Columbus State Convention, Topeka
- 3** Confirmation, 7 p.m., Clifton and Clyde, at Clyde
- 5** Adoration under the Stars, 8:30 p.m., Comeau Catholic Center, Hays
- 6** Confirmation, 10 a.m., St. Thomas, Stockton
- 7** Confirmation, 8 a.m., St. Joseph's, New Almelo
- 8** Year of Mercy, Gorham
- 9** Year of Mercy, Russell
- 10** Confirmation, 5 p.m., St. Mary, Ellis
- 12** Year of Mercy, Logan
- 12** Confirmation, 5 p.m., St. John the Evangelist, Logan
- 14** Graduation, 10 a.m., St. John's, Beloit
- 14** Graduation, 3 p.m., Sacred Heart High School, Salina
- 15** St. Isidore's Day, 11 a.m., OLPH, Concordia
- 15** Graduation, 7 p.m., St. John the Baptist, Hanover
- 16** Women Religious Appreciation Mass, 11 a.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina
- 17** Senior Priests Luncheon, 11 a.m., Victoria
- 18** Senior Priests Luncheon, 11 a.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina
- 20** Graduation, 2 p.m., St. Xavier, Junction City
- 21** Confirmation, 8 a.m., St. Agnes, Grainfield
- 21** Confirmation, 10:30 a.m., St. Joseph, Oakley
- 21** TMP-M Baccalaureate Mass, 2 p.m., Hays
- 21** TMP-M High School graduation, 4 p.m., Hays

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OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA • VOLUME 86, No. 4



# THE REGISTER

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA

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Phone: (785) 827-8746; Fax: (785) 827-6133; [salinadiocese.org/publications](http://salinadiocese.org/publications)  
Supported by an endowment established by Msgr. Raymond Menard (1912-2006), editor of The Register, 1944-1971 and 1975-2006

The Register (USPS 397-740) is published the fourth Friday of the month by the Catholic Diocese of Salina, 103 N. Ninth, Salina, KS 67401-2503 and is mailed to all registered parishioners in the diocese. A \$35 annual subscription is required for all others. Periodical postage paid at Salina, Kansas, and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Register, P.O. Box 980, Salina, KS 67402-0980.  
Next issue is dated May 26.  
Deadline for news is May 1.  
Deadline for advertising is May 1.

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# Relics travel around diocese

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN  
THE REGISTER

Parishioners in the Diocese of Salina were privileged to get the rare opportunity to view an international traveling exhibit in March.

The exhibit was part of the National Eucharist Revival, a movement in the United States to help people renew their worship of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist by gaining better understanding of this great mystery.

The first-class relics of St. Manuel Gonzalez Garcia and Blessed Carlo Acutis, patrons of the National Eucharist Revival, were accompanied in the exhibit by the Vatican International Exhibition — Eucharist Miracles of the World.

The exhibit was on display at three different locations during a three-day tour through the diocese — at Kansas State University's St. Isidore Catholic Church, Manhattan; at St. Joseph Church, Oakley; and at Fort Hays State University's Comeau Catholic Campus Center, Hays.

A native of Italy, Carlo died of leukemia at age 15. A devout role model for youth, Carlo called the sacrament of the Eucharist his "highway to heaven" and is known for his deep relationship with Jesus Christ through adoration and devotion to the Eucharist. He was beatified by Pope Francis in 2020.

St. Manuel, a native of Spain, is known as the



Angela Schmeidler, Hays, helps her 2-year-old daughter, Celestine, hold a medal to the relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis.

Bishop of the Tabernacle and his commitment to Eucharistic adoration. St. John Paul II beatified him in 2001, and Pope Francis canonized him in 2016.

In Hays, visitors pored over the international exhibition of the Miracles of the Eucharist in the student center, often bending to get a closer look at the panels.

The relics in front of the altar displayed a piece of heart tissue from Carlo and a bone fragment from St. Manuel, which visitors could venerate.

After viewing the relics in awe and quiet devotion, many people touched a rosary, other religious articles or a prayer card to

the case of the relics, asking for God's intercession of a blessing through the object.

Eric and Jackie Brown from Hays took advantage of the opportunity to see the relics and brought all three of their young sons to the campus center.

Jackie helped Anthony, 6, and Justin, 3, hold their prayer cards to the relics, while Eric looked on, holding 6-week-old Michael in his infant carrier.

"We were so pleased to be able to bring them here," Jackie said. "Eric and I met here while in college, we got married here, and Anthony was baptized here. The campus center is a really special place for us."

Someday, Jackie — the

director of religious education at Immaculate Heart of Mary — hopes to tell her sons all about the visit.

"We hung those prayer cards of Blessed Carlo and St. Manuel in their room," Jackie said, "and hope they will ask questions. We want them to learn all about saints."

Mike Kuhlman, the middle school religious education teacher in Oakley, said he made it a priority to see the exhibition when he heard it was coming to his hometown.

"We talk about Carlo a lot in class," Kuhlman said. "He is such a great role model for young people, someone these kids can relate to. It's an inspiration to see a



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

The crucifix, altar and tabernacle at FHSU's Catholic Campus Center were a beautiful backdrop for the relics display.

young man his age so devoted to the Eucharist."

Kuhlman had seen some relics before, but he didn't realize "there was going to be so much to this exhibition and that it was very educational."

Bill Meagher — director of youth ministry, religious education and family life for the diocese — said he learned about the exhibit through the USCCB Eucharist Revival program.

The diocese was able to partner with KVDM Divine Mercy Radio and have its Eucharistic Miracle display accompany the relics.

"We feel incredibly blessed that we were able to bring the relics of Blessed Carlo and St. Manuel to our diocese," Meagher said. "It was great to see everyone who got to venerate these relics, to look at the Eucharistic Miracles display and to spend time in prayer."

## CHRISM, FROM PAGE 1

Father Stephen Freeman, a blogger, wrote about the role of the priesthood in the Church. His explanation of the function of a priest explains why it is important for the diocesan priests to be at the Chrism Mass.

"The role of a priest is to make offerings to God," Father Freeman wrote. "But a priest does not offer up the sacrifice of the Mass by himself. A priest is part of a community."

"The Eucharist is an act of the whole people of God, not a performance by one person on behalf of others."

A priest offers Mass for the people. The people offer their prayers in the Mass.

"All Masses are acts of communion — the offering and sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to the Father, through the Son, by the



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina was filled with parishioners throughout the diocese for the Chrism Mass in late March.

Spirit, in the Church."

Even the oils consecrated at the Chrism Mass reflect this communion. The Sacred Chrism is used at baptism, confirmation and in

priestly ordination. The Oil of Catechumens is used in baptism. And the Oil of the Infirm in the anointing of the sick.

The bishop consecrates the oils.



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Bishop Jerry Vincke greets those in attendance at the special Mass.

The priests will then use these oils in the sacraments to unite the faithful to Christ — bishop, priests and laity giving thanks to God and making the Church present in the world.

The Chrism Mass is more than just getting fresh oils for the coming year. It is a chance for the body of Christ in the Diocese of Salina to unite around the bishop in prayer and rejoice in the saving power of Christ in the sacraments.



# A win-win situation for basketball teams

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN  
THE REGISTER

By day, they work hard at their professions.

By night, Bill Meagher and Lance and Leah Bergmann are just as busy, mentoring young men and women as Rule 10 coaches for some of the best basketball teams in the state at non-metro Catholic high schools. Rule 10 coaches are individuals who are not employed by the school for which they represent.

Meagher is the director of youth ministry, religious education and family life for the Diocese of Salina. He lives in Hays and makes at least one trip to the chancery in Salina each week as well as traveling throughout the diocese.

During the winter months, Meagher — the father of three children ages 10 to 13 — also serves as the head boys' basketball coach for Thomas More Prep-Marian in Hays.

Lance Bergmann is the jail administrator for the Mitchell County Sheriff's Office in Beloit. His wife, Leah, is director of financial aid at North Central Kansas Technical College-Beloit campus.

Lance also is head coach for the boys' basketball team for Beloit-St. John's/Tipton, and Leah coaches the girls' Blujay squad.

Like Meagher, the Bergmanns are busy parents. Their children range in age from 8 to 13, with two of them already competing in



COURTESY PHOTO

**Lance and Leah Bergmann, the husband-wife coaching duo for the Beloit-St. John's/Tipton boys' and girls' high school basketball teams, both qualified for state this season.**

junior high activities.

All three coaches love basketball and like any coach, they like to win. But they all will tell you that watching students in their Catholic schools grow in their faith is a lot more rewarding than winning basketball games.

"Both Lance and I are the style of coaches where we want to win, but we're more about guiding these kids to make them better servants and men and women of God," Leah Bergmann said. "We just use basketball as a great place to do that. There's a lot of joy and success, no matter what the final score of a game. At the end of the day, it's neat to see the men and women they become."

Meagher has much the same philosophy.

"We, as coaches, under-

stand that the game of basketball is a great way to teach our young men important life lessons and help them grow in their faith," he said. "We are constantly telling our guys to use the game to create the future they want. The No. 1 goal of our program is to create elite husbands, fathers and leaders."

Members of those teams have been leaders on and off the basketball court the past several years.

Qualifying for state certainly is nothing new for the Monarchs and Blujays.

The Monarchs have made it to their sub-state championship game all five years under Meagher's direction and qualified for state all but one of those years, finishing in the top four each trip.

This past season, TMP-M



COURTESY PHOTO

**Bill Meagher, head coach for Hays' Thomas More Prep-Marian High School boys' basketball team, mentors the Monarchs on and off the court.**

strung together 22 consecutive victories before losing its state semifinal game by one point on a basket at the buzzer in Class 2A action in Manhattan. The Monarchs then lost another close game in the third-place contest to finish fourth.

The semifinal loss especially was a tough one for the Monarchs, but something Meagher used as another life lesson.

"Every part of the game has great lessons for our young men and women," he said. "Whether you win or lose, valuable lessons will always be learned if you are accountable and willing to take ownership of mistakes."

Lance Bergmann has coached the Blujay boys since 2009 and reached state five times, finishing in the top three for three consecutive years from 2014 to 2016.

When the girls' program was looking for a coach in 2019, Leah had to think about it for awhile because she knew it would be more than just a one-year commitment for her.

"When I was in high school, I had three coaches in four years, and it was hard. We would just get to know their expectations, and they would leave," she said. "I didn't want that for these girls, so I agreed to coach for at least three years."

That was four years ago, and the Blujays have thrived since.

Both the St. John's/Tipton boys' and girls' teams won sub-state championships at Tescott this year, qualifying both teams for the Class 1A, Division II season finale in Great Bend. Although the boys' team lost a first-round game at state, Blujay fans were able to cheer on the girls throughout the tourney, where they finished fourth.

All in all, the Bergmanns said it was a successful season.

"We feel really fortunate," Leah Bergmann said. "Our schools are very family oriented, and they all see their school as part of their family. Their dedication to their schools is second to none."

## St. Andrew's school honored for patriotic project

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN  
THE REGISTER

The first try at a contest proved successful for students at St. Andrew's Elementary School in Abilene.

An annual all-school project that is spearheaded by the school's fifth-grade class won a state award from the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The DAR hosts numerous programs for youth, and St. Andrew's was honored in the DAR's Junior American Citizens contest that recognizes community service and patriotic activities.

The St. Andrew's project centers around a military theme.

Students raise money for the VIP veteran program. For a donation, individuals could request a flag to be flown with a veteran's name on it through the week of Veterans Day.

Money earned from that project goes to the Honor Flight for veterans program that honors veterans for their sacrifice by flying them to Washington, D.C., to see their memorials.

The students also gather addresses for local veterans, including members of St. Andrew's Parish, friends and family of the students and even those in nursing facilities.

The entire school participates.

The older students write



COURTESY PHOTO

**Students at St. Andrew's school in Abilene were honored by the Daughters of the American Revolution.**

letters, inviting veterans to the school's program on Veterans Day, and younger students contribute colored pages to include with the invitations.

More than 300 invitations were sent to veterans last fall.

"It's so nice that we're able to bring in parents and grandparents of the students," said Kristi Angui-

ano, the school's fifth-grade teacher. "They tell about their experiences, and it helps our students better understand the different branches of service and learn more about them."

During the program, the students honor individuals through the St. Andrew's Quilt of Valor program.

Quilts made by 4-H'ers from Nebraska and community member Vicky Simenson are given to a handful of people who have supported the school in some way.

Receiving quilts this year were Alex Hunter, a substitute teacher at the school; Keeman Simenson and Kevin Herrman, spouses of school employees; and Mark Biggs, a community

member fighting cancer.

Anguiano said the students always look forward to the Veterans Day project and that the DAR contest was a bonus this year, especially since their school fared so well.

Every student received a bracelet and a certificate and was recognized at a DAR meeting.

Two St. Andrew's students were individual category winners in the contest as well.

Fifth-grader Brooklyn Sluder won the poster contest, and fourth-grader Ava Straight was the stamp contest winner.

"We didn't know what to expect," Anguiano said, "so it was a pleasant surprise."



CONFIRMATIONS



**Basilica of St. Fidelis, Victoria — March 22, 2023**  
Front row from left, Leeya Martinez, Juliana Dinkel, Camri VonFeldt, Kenlee Winter and Sienna Schmeidler. Middle row from left, Benjamin Dome, Lauren Klein, Wyatt Dorzweiler, Jillian Schmidt and Levi Wellbrock. Top row from left, Wyatt Griffin., Yvonne Braun, Averi Windholz, Father James Moster, Brody Nowak, Bishop Jerry Vincke, Gracyn Schippers, Joseph Robben and John Braun.



**St. Francis Xavier, Junction City — March 8, 2023**  
Front row from left, Kennedy Moreland, Jay Ogo, Jacob Peterson, Yazmin Solis and Natalie Nutter. Middle row from left, Father Gnanasekar Kulandai, Adalina Gutierrez, Deyana Muna, Levi Engstrom, Dana Davis and Bishop Jerry Vincke. Back row, Eric Page, catechist. Not pictured: Grace Boland and Aerie Thurston.



**St. John's, Beloit — March 26, 2023**  
Front row from left, Eve Fuller, Faith Woods, Gianna Horinek, Olivia Wright, Gracie Hicks, Claire Hicks, Jonas Letourneau and Benedict Horinek. Back row from left, Father Jarett Konrade, Henry Holdren, William Cockroft, Jackson Cheney, Eli Johnson, Kaden Lomax, Tyson Gates, Nicholas Niewald, Father Andrew Rockers and Bishop Jerry Vincke.



**Seven Dolores, Manhattan — Feb. 18, 2023**  
Front row from left, Jaleyah De Leon, Luciano Corondo Robledo, Joey Hebert, Mailah Dillard, Anthony Ramirez, Leilany Rios and Father Ryan McCandless. Middle row from left, Seth Palomo, Aeron Innes, Garrett Strunk, Ethan Vargas, Hadley Minnich, Bailey Curtis, Ildefonso Green and Dean Chaffee. Back row from left, Deacon Ed Souza, Gabriel Yaussi, Timothy Theubet, Nolan O'Donnell, Emily Kirby, Samantha Troyer, Carlos Flores, Arturo Cantu Encarnacion and Seaver Vieyra.

AROUND THE DIOCESE



Members of the Thomas More Prep-Marian Junior High state championship chess team were, from left, EJ Gibson, Marcus Stahl, Evan Staab, Dylan Billinger, Mattias Marintzer, Carson Pinkney, Cade Schlautman, Colby Schmeidler and Zach Billinger.



Oakley's St. Joseph School students make Easter baskets each year and give them to the Wheatland VFW Auxiliary No. 2864 of Grinnell, who fills them with goodies and delivers them to the Logan County Manor, Logan County Hospital Assisted Living, Quinter Long Term Care and Assisted Living, Sheridan County Health Complex, and Fort Dodge Soldiers Home. Pictured is Carol Rietcheck, with Eli, Isaac and Olson Samuelson, Ryan Ottley and Lettie Rumback.

GOVERNOR'S SCHOLARS

By THE REGISTER  
A senior from each of the five Catholic high schools in the Salina Diocese has been honored as a Governor's Scholar.

The program recognizes the top academic 1 percent of Kansas high school seniors from accredited public and private schools in the state. Those honored this year from diocesan schools are Isabella Berndt, Salina-Sacred Heart; Jensen Brull, Hays/Thomas More Prep-Marian; Sergio Lopez, Beloit-St. John's; Casey

Sexton-Snow, Junction City-St. Francis Xavier; and Josh Townner, Tipton Catholic. The students have been invited by the governor to a luncheon and awards ceremony at Washburn University in Topeka the first Sunday of May. Students will receive a certificate of recognition presented personally by Gov. Laura Kelly.



# How a man, prayer, Holy Hour changed my life

If you are like me and you sometimes struggle to hear the voice of God in your life, I want to recommend something to you that I have found extremely helpful for my prayer and spiritual life. The best way I have found to quiet down my thoughts and begin to listen to God is by going to adoration. There is something about kneeling there, staring at Christ present in the Eucharist, that finally allows me to sit back and listen.

My own personal journey of adoration began as a young theology teacher and basketball coach. I encountered a man who changed my life in two important ways. His name was Coach Flax, and he was the athletic director at the school where I taught and coached. I had long admired Coach Flax as a coach, husband, father and man of faith. He was always a man of character who would never do the

wrong thing. If there was ever a living model of St. Thomas More, it was Coach Flax. Besides my dad, I don't know that anyone has influenced my faith as much as he did.

I always admired how he handled a stressful job full of difficult situations with such calmness and peace. I was young and fiery, and I would let pressure or stress eat me, but not Coach Flax. He had a faith and trust in God that I did not have at that time. I wanted to have his trust and peace in God, so I watched what he did and noticed two things. First, he prayed a daily rosary, and second, he spent at least one hour a week in the Perpetual Adoration Chapel.

He was looking for a substitute to cover his weekly Holy Hour one weekend, and I jumped at the chance. I showed up at 2 a.m. that

Sunday morning, unsure of what to expect. There I was, alone in the chapel. It was just me and Christ present before me in the Eucharist. I didn't know what to do, so I prayed a rosary, and when I finished that prayer, I just sat and stared at Christ. It felt so good to sit in Christ's presence. I could feel his love and his desire to spend time with me. I knew I did not have to say anything and that it was OK to just sit in his presence.

That morning became a journey for me that changed my life. Through spending time in adoration, over time, I was finally able to tune in and learn to hear the voice of God. I learned to shut out all the noise and distractions, hear God speaking to me, and know his voice. I was able to bring all my fears, struggles and

joys to him, and slowly, I learned to trust God with my life. For the first time, I finally understood the peace that surpasses all understanding that St. Paul wrote about to the Philippians. I also followed Coach Flax's advice about a daily rosary that year and have not looked back since.

My life would not have changed without this man faithfully living out his faith and his willingness to share it with me. In a world that desperately needs peace, let us boldly preach the gospel to others and invite those around us to visit the adoration chapel and turn to our Blessed Mother in the rosary. You may never know how much you can change a person's life just by telling them to pray the rosary and go to adoration.

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

**BILL Meagher**  
DIOCESE OF SALINA



## Your gift in action aids new Catholics with OCIA

You've likely heard the response, "I don't know why we do it this way; it's just the way we've always done it."

Those who are joining the Catholic Church and go through the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) have the opportunity to ask questions, see past the myths and fully immerse themselves into what it truly means to be Catholic. Those of us who have been Catholics since birth sometimes take for granted the beauty of the Mass, or might not fully understand the meaning behind things we have been doing our entire lives. There are also many questions and, honestly, objections to the Church. The Venerable Archbishop Fulton Sheen once said, "There are not even 100 people in this country who hate the Catholic Church, but there are millions who hate what they think the Catholic Church to be."

What a beautiful testament it is to our faith that we welcome individuals each year at Easter into our parishes, diocese and universal Catholic Church through OCIA. Formerly known as RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults), the name change to OCIA was approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in November 2021. The new name reflects the entire process to become a Catholic and is consistent with the translation effort for updated rites in the Church.

The OCIA includes several rites:

the Rite of Acceptance, when the unbaptized become catechumens; the Rite of Election, when they become the Elect; three Scrutinies during Lent; and, finally, the Easter sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist.

This year, our diocese had 122 individuals participate in the Rite of Election – 72 candidates and 50 catechumens. These are individuals who have asked those questions, dispelled the myths and

uncovered the beauty that is the Catholic faith. Recently, I visited with an individual who joined the Catholic Church 35 years ago, and he still

gets goosebumps every time he thinks about his experience in what was then RCIA. I pray the 72 candidates and 50 catechumens in our diocese have experienced this as well, and they can also be disciples on a mission.

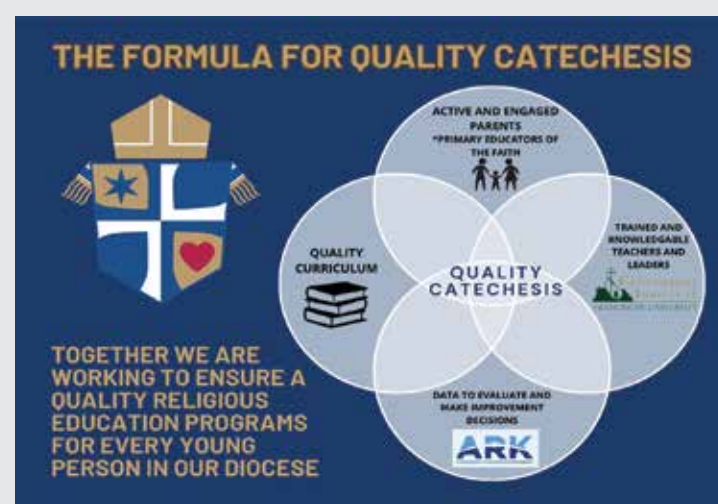
OCIA is one of the many ministries supported by your gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal. The appeal provides opportunities, like OCIA, for people to have encounters with Christ. These encounters only happen because of the generosity shown by so many across our diocese. If you have given to the 2023 Bishop's Annual Appeal – thank you. We couldn't touch lives through OCIA without you. If you haven't yet given to the Bishop's Annual Appeal or would like more information, visit [join.salinadiocese.org](http://join.salinadiocese.org).

*Corrina Hudsonpillar is donor advisor at Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina*

**CORRINA Hudsonpillar**  
CATHOLIC FOUNDATION



## ARK TESTING AT SCHOOLS



BY THE REGISTER

ARK testing is underway in the Catholic Diocese of Salina. The ARK test assesses our young people's religious knowledge and will be given to all young people in our parish education programs and Catholic schools. The test is designed to help parishes and religious education programs assess the knowledge and understanding of their students in matters related to the Catholic faith. The test covers various topics related to Catholicism, including the Bible, the sacraments, Church history, Catholic social teaching and moral theology.

The data from this test will be an essential tool in helping our pastors, directors of religious education, catechists and principals see where their young people are and where they can better help them grow in their knowledge of the Catholic faith and the teachings of the Church. Pastors and parish leaders can also use the feedback from the test to help them make decisions about curriculum, book series and other supplemental things they might want to add to their programs.

Seeing so many of our parishes and Catholic school leaders' eagerness to jump in, take the test, and receive the feedback the

test provides has been exciting.

As a basketball coach, I understand the pressure of the scoreboard and the instant feedback it gives. Unfortunately, we have begun to see testing as a scoreboard. It would have been understandable for our parish leaders to be nervous about taking the test and seeing the data, but that hasn't been the case in our diocese. We are blessed to have humble leaders in our schools and parishes who constantly look for ways to improve what they are doing for the young people of their parish or school.

Successful catechesis programs have a four-part formula. They have active and engaged parents, quality curriculum, trained and knowledgeable teachers, and the data to help their leaders make improvement decisions. The ARK test helps us complete that formula by giving us the data our parish leaders need to make improvement decisions.

You will see other things happening this year as we continue to work on ensuring each child in the Salina Diocese receives quality catechesis and opportunities to grow in their faith and become closer to God. We want each young person to have the opportunity to experience the richness and beauty of the Catholic faith.



# The realization of a new, unselfish love

When we found out we were pregnant, we were thrilled. Nathaniel maintained that level of excitement through the entire pregnancy, whereas I experienced nearly every emotion imaginable as we waited to meet our child.

But towards the end of the pregnancy, I started to have some resentment. I didn't resent my baby, but I resented the fact Nathaniel and I had only been married a short amount of time. I felt like we were cheated out of our time as a couple. We'd be celebrating our first year of marriage while having a one-month old child.

I was scared of the change and what that would do to our relationship. When I confided my fears to Nathaniel, he said, "We'll be alright. Nothing is going to change."

Well, he was both right and wrong. We are alright. In fact, we are better than alright. But he was also wrong because everything changed.

With the birth of Ignatius, a new life was literally brought into our home, and our marriage underwent a renewal. The tangible reality of the love between husband and wife sat nestled in my arms — his blue eyes wide open as he took in everything around us.

Sure, having a baby has introduced new challenges to our marriage. Sleep can be hard to come by. Having a baby, feeding a baby and clothing a baby are responsibilities that come with a financial obligation. (And I hear the financial burden doesn't quite go away for the next two decades.) We don't really leave the house anymore, or if we do, errands that took one hour before having a baby now take the whole day.

But those challenges are nothing compared to the joy and beauty Ignatius has brought into our marriage.

Nathaniel and I have both changed. I've thought a lot about how we have both changed. I've

wondered why our marriage seems different ... seems better ... than it did before our son was born.

I think it might be because we've been called to a deeper level of sacrifice. I know the world tells us sacrifice and suffering are meant to be avoided, but hear me out.

Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice. He died so that we might live. His ultimate sacrifice is the world's greatest gift, the greatest act of love.

When it was just me and Nathaniel, it was easy for us to both be selfish at times. And the times when we were selfish were the worst times in our marriage. Whenever I picked "me" over choosing "us," our marriage suffered.

And then we had a baby, and with a baby, you really can't be selfish anymore. When the baby wakes up in the middle of the night and needs to eat, you sacrifice sleep to feed the child. Raising

a child demands sacrifice.

Because of Ignatius, both Nathaniel and I are learning to be selfless. We've been called to make a fuller gift of self for the sake of the other. We've been challenged to love more fully, challenged to love like Christ.

We've also been challenged to step into our roles in a fuller capacity.

As I watch my husband become a father, I see a firmer resolve to protect and provide for our little family. I also see a softer side to him in the moments he interacts with Ignatius.

I was scared at having a baby so soon, but really it was the best thing for our marriage. God didn't ask me to split my love between my husband and child, he made my love bigger so there was enough for both of them.



KATIE Hamel  
CREATIVE EDITOR

*Katie*

Katie Hamel is the creative editor for the Diocese of Salina.

## Options exist for Natural Family Planning in diocese

BY ALLISON OCHOA  
SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

The Diocese of Salina is blessed to have multiple resources to assist women and couples in learning the Creighton Model Fertility-Care System (CrMS) and NaProTECHNOLOGY. Whether the need is for in-person meetings or a virtual resource, the following NFP Practitioners and Medical Consultants can

provide guidance and answers related to family planning or understanding one's reproductive health in light of Catholic teaching.

**NFP practitioners**

Lindy Meyer — Practitioner for 22 years and studying to be a FertilityCare Educator to train and teach new FertilityCare practitioners. Serves clients in person in Concordia and

Beloit and is available to meet virtually.

"Many times over my years of teachings I've sat with a new client and heard women say, 'Why has no one ever told me this before? My life would have been so different if I had been told this sooner.' Teaching FertilityCare is important to me because I want to eliminate that phrase. I look forward to a future where no woman ever has to say that because the information has been made readily available to her."

Samantha Baker — Practitioner for six years. Serves Ellis County and Norton.

"NFP/being a practitioner

is important to me because there is a lack of this moral knowledge growing up and even in marriage prep (my husband and I had no clue). The health side of Creighton specifically is important to me because this gives you real answers and treatment in a world out to destroy the family unit. It's nice to know you can find a provider who actually cares about and acknowledges your morals."

Cathy Eftink — Practitioner intern since 2020. Serves clients in Goodland and throughout northwest Kansas, as well as virtually.

"FertilityCare is important because it teaches women about their own bodies. In

today's world, it's important for women to know their own bodies so they can advocate for themselves, and it's best to know themselves so they can do this."

Brianna McLemore — Practitioner for six years. Serves northwest Kansas and is available to meet virtually.

"FertilityCare creates appreciation for God's design for fertility. It is good, holistic medicine that focuses on solving the root problem of a woman's menstrual cycle and a couple's infertility. It creates stronger women, stronger marriages and stronger families."

**PLANNING, PAGE 12**

YOU'RE INVITED TO A SPECIAL MASS FOR

Parents who have lost a child

May 10, 2023  
2:00 PM  
St. Joseph Church, Oakley

May 11, 2023  
2:00 PM  
St. Edward Church, Belleville

Register at [salinadiocese.org](http://salinadiocese.org)

YOU'RE INVITED!

JOIN BISHOP VINCKE AND PRIESTS OF THE DIOCESE AT A SPECIAL MASS TO HONOR

RELIGIOUS WOMEN

MAY 16, 2023

Mass: 12:05 PM  
Where: Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina  
Light luncheon to follow

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Pietra Fitness (PF) is a stretching and strengthening exercise class that incorporates Christian prayer rooted in the Catholic tradition. PF classes improve core strength, balance, and functionality. Class levels are chair, gentle, intermediate and advanced. PF caters to men, women, children, teens, elderly, athletes and pre-and post-natal mothers.

Consecrated to the Sacred

Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, PF integrates meditation on Bible verses and physical exercise to build up the mind, body and soul. The San Damiano crucifix is central to every class as a reminder that each person is a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Caring for our bodies allows us to perform God's work well. PF practices St. Benedict's principle "Ora et Labora", thereby enabling us to pray without ceasing.

In the Salina Diocese, classes are offered in Manhattan, 5:30 p.m. every Tuesday at St. Thomas More/ St. Isidore's. PF Pro instructors are available to conduct classes for retreats/ events. Also, you can bring PF to your parish or school by joining the Pietra Fitness Instructor Training (PFIT) program.

Visit [www.pietrafitness.com](http://www.pietrafitness.com). Email [pftraining@pietrafitness.com](mailto:pftraining@pietrafitness.com) to become an instructor.

In the Salina Diocese and neighboring areas, email [jhoe@pietrafitness.com](mailto:jhoe@pietrafitness.com). Scholarships are available for a male instructor in the Junction City-Manhattan-Wamego area.

2024 INSTRUCTOR TRAINING EARLY REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!



# Large crowd attends Ilibagiza talks

By KATIE HAMEL  
THE REGISTER

On March 25, the small town of Hoxie welcomed cold temperatures, a small shower of snow and internationally recognized speaker Immaculée Ilibagiza.

A crowd of 360 faithful from across the diocese gathered in the auditorium of Hoxie High School to hear Ilibagiza's testimony. The event was originally scheduled to occur at St. Frances Cabrini Parish but due to the extraordinary ticket sales required a larger location.

Parishioner Chris Niblock, along with fellow parishioners, spearheaded the effort to bring Ilibagiza to Hoxie.

"We had Immaculée originally scheduled for a Hoxie retreat in November 2022," Niblock said. "We ended up moving our retreat to March at her request, and we were so happy to host this retreat during the Lenten season. We were amazed by the generous people who stepped up to help us get the retreat planned."

Ilibagiza led a total of three sessions. In the first session, she shared her journey to forgive the people who murdered her family. Ilibagiza is a survivor of the Rwandan genocide.

In April 1994, a tribal conflict between the Hutus and the Tutsis resulted in the murder of 800,000 individuals. Hutu extremists sought to extinguish the Tutsi population. With the start of the genocide, her

father sent her to their neighbor for protection. Her neighbor was a member of the Hutu tribe. He was the enemy. And yet, Ilibagiza ran to the neighbor, and he offered to hide her in his small 3-foot by 4-foot bathroom until it was safe.

Ilibagiza complained at the small size of the bathroom jokingly.

"Be careful what you complain of ... when you think things are bad," she said. "They can always get worse."

Her neighbor brought seven more women to that same small bathroom.

For 91 days, eight women hid in the bathroom, physically on top of one another, desperately trying to keep quiet.

She recalls how the Hutu men and women she had grown up knowing suddenly thought she was a villain. People searched every home and every village looking to kill any member of the Tutsi tribe they could find.

One day, a group with machetes raided the home Ilibagiza was hiding in. She remembers the fear as 1,000 fiery needles that shot through her body as she listened to the men searching every room of the house, checking under every bed. It was only a matter of time before they made their way to the bathroom where the eight women were hiding.

A small voice in her head tempted her to open the door and end the torture. It was too painful to wait for death. But then a small



Immaculée Ilibagiza speaks to the crowd in Hoxie on March 25.

voice reminded her she could ask God to help her.

"Do you remember who he is? He is almighty, which means he can do anything. Anything means maybe they will open the door, and they will not see you."

As Ilibagiza battled the voices in her head, a man approached the door. The women inside held their breath in fear. They heard the man place his hand on the door. And then they heard him turn around and speak to the owner of the home. They heard him say, "You are a good Hutu man. I trust you." And then, they heard him walk away from the door, and the eight women remained hidden.

That moment caused Ilibagiza to turn to God in prayer. Her favorite prayer was the Rosary, as it was the only one that brought her peace. As time passed, she learned to pray with sincerity and eventually, she learned if she was going to love and trust God with

everything, she needed to learn to forgive the people who murdered her family.

It took a long time, but when the genocide ended, Ilibagiza walked out of the bathroom with a heart full of mercy and a desire to forgive the people who took her family from her. The entirety of her story can be found in her novel *Left to Tell*.

Her second talk focused on Mary and the Marian apparitions that occurred at Kibeho. Ilibagiza encouraged the attendees to never forget that Mary is everyone's mother. She said Mary looks at every person as a child, and we are each as distinct and beautiful as a

flower to the Blessed Mother. At the end of the talk, everyone was invited to present a flower at the feet of a statue of Mary. Ilibagiza invited the attendees to enter into conversation with Mary and ask her to bind their wounds and heal their hearts.

The final talk continued on Mary and the Kibeho apparition but focused primarily on the beauty of the Seven Sorrows Rosary, which was later prayed in unison by the 360 voices of the attendees.

"I am just so grateful to all who helped," Niblock said. "It is absolutely true that many hands make light work."

A special thanks goes to the committee members, Knights of Columbus, Ladies Sodality and so many others. Niblock's hope is more parishes throughout the diocese bring Ilibagiza in as a speaker or host these kinds of retreats for their parish families.

"I pray that those in attendance from other parishes know that it is truly possible to do this, and when it is placed on their hearts to host a retreat, they know they can reach out to us if they need encouragement or help," she said.

## It's BACK!

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**June 15-17, 2023**  
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(1-877-447-4383)  
[rachelsvineyard@salinadiocese.org](mailto:rachelsvineyard@salinadiocese.org)



# Stitch in time for 95-year-old seamstress

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN  
THE REGISTER

Aurelia Pacey was looking for a project to help her pass the time, but she wanted it to be a meaningful one.

After some prayer, she found the perfect fit.

A fellow parishioner at St. Thomas More Parish in Manhattan showed Aurelia a mission project featuring dresses made from pillowcases for young girls in need around the world, [www.dressagirlaroundtheworld.com](http://www.dressagirlaroundtheworld.com).

It didn't take long for Aurelia to uncover her 1949 Kenmore sewing machine and get to work.

That was in 2010 when she was just 82 years young.

At first, her family found pillowcases at garage sales. But Aurelia no longer uses pillowcases for her project. Instead, they cut material to size for dresses of three different lengths.

They are simple, sleeveless dresses. But each is made with special care from a craft Aurelia learned out of necessity as a young girl and perfected during her high school days in the 1940s.

It served her well while raising four daughters and two sons with her husband, Franklin, on a farm near Miltonvale.

Aurelia, now a 95-year-old widow, still makes four or five dresses a week. She has stitched together more than 3,000 dresses that have been delivered to numerous countries. Each dress includes a patch sewn on the inside that says "Made especially for you by Aurelia Pacey - Kansas, USA."

And she does all her work



**Dresses are pressed and hung, ready for delivery, while empty hangers await more of Pacey's finished product.**

on that 74-year-old Kenmore, one she purchased new when the family got electricity connected to their farmhouse.

"My husband wanted to get me a new Pfaff (machine) one time when this one was only about 2 years old," Aurelia said. "I said, 'No. I like this one.'"

"I still do," she said matter-of-factly.

Two of her daughters were almost giddy with excitement as they sat around telling their mother's story on a rainy March day in Aurelia's home in Manhattan.

They told how Aurelia gets plenty of help from others.

The intention was for her four daughters and two daughters-in-law to purchase fabric for Aurelia. That they did, but several organizations — including the Konza Prairie Quilters Guild in Manhattan and



PHOTOS BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN, THE REGISTER

**Aurelia Pacey, 95, enjoys a sewing project so much that she has no plans to stop anytime soon.**

Budget Shop in Manhattan — also have donated fabric. Aurelia's family supplies her with thread, elastic and bias tape.

The daughters cut the material to length and match the bias tape to each dress.

"It has to be extra-wide, double-fold tape," daughter Marie Green said as her mother and sister, Sue Chavey, both shook their heads in firm agreement.

Sue winds the bobbins for her mother, adapting them to her own Bernina machine and winds 10 to 12 bobbins at a time.

Aurelia's helpers used to search for thread to match the colors of the material.

"After a while, it was easier to go with white thread for everything," Sue said.

Dresses have been taken to India, South Africa and Nicaragua, as well as Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica — and several others. Aurelia also has sewn dresses for the St. Joseph Children's Mission in Chamberlain, S.D.

Photos of thank-you notes and girls wearing Aurelia's dresses hang on a wall of her sewing room.

One of her prized possessions on that wall of fame is a gift she received from her daughters and daughters-in-law for her 85th birth-



**A quilt made from scraps of material from Pacey's dress-making project hangs in the sewing room of her Manhattan home.**



**Pacey framed a thank-you note from some recipients of her dresses.**

day, a quilt made from remnants of some of Aurelia's pillowcase dresses.

Aurelia appears quite content these days, sitting near her sewing machine with an ironing board behind her. She didn't take long to ponder the question, "How long do you

think you will continue this project?"

The answer for this 95-year-old — pleased that her sewing is a unique way of making a difference — was simple.

"Oh," she said, shrugging her shoulders. "Until I'm gone."

## NIGHT OF HEALING IN PARK

Please join Father James Thomas, C.M.I., with Father Leo Blasi and other priests from the Diocese of Salina for a healing service for the sick and those in physical, emotional or spiritual need.

The Night of Healing Faith will be at 6 p.m. May 12 at Sacred Heart Church in Park. The evening will begin with Mass, exposition and adoration.

Confessions will be heard by the priests after Mass, starting at approximately 6:30 p.m.

Benediction and reposition will proceed the healing service, which will begin at approximately 7 p.m.

Light refreshments and conversation will follow. For more information, call the parish office at (785) 673-9775.

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invites you to participate in a  
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## JUBILEES, FROM PAGE 1

Father Metro was ordained June 1, 1963, at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina by Bishop Frederick Freking. He has since served at Seven Dolors Parish, Manhattan; Sacred Heart Parish, Colby; St. Peter Parish, Aurora; Notre Dame High School, Concordia; St. Phillip Parish, Hope; St. Columba Parish, Elmo; Sacred Heart High School, Salina; St. Patrick Parish, Gypsum; St. Patrick Parish, Lincoln; St. Mary Parish, Glasco; St. Thomas Parish, Stockton; St. Francis Parish, Claudell; St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Salina; St. John the Baptist Parish, Clyde; St. Mary Parish, Clifton; and St. Peter Parish, Aurora.

He also served as the diocesan director of vocations and as a chaplain at the Nazareth Motherhouse and Manna House of Prayer in Concordia. Father Metro retired in 2007.



**Father Charlie Steier**  
(50 years)

In reflecting on 50 years of priesthood, Father Steier shares that he had no idea how much you are called to sacrifice as a priest.

"You never know how much sacrifice; all you know is that you want to give."

Father Steier has been the pastor of three building projects, including St. Mary, Queen of Angels in Russell, St. Bernard Parish in Ellsworth and Christ the King Parish in WaKeeney. Ellsworth and WaKeeney projects were renovations to existing parishes. Whereas the Russell project was an entirely new building (as was the WaKeeney parish center). The Dedication Masses of these parishes are among his favorite memories.

He compares building projects to childbirth, reflecting that the time of preparation is both exciting and painful. But once the projects were complete, it made everything worth it.

"I'll never do it again though," he jokes.

But he shares that just as there is hardship in the remodel, there are also moments of beauty. He remembers one instance at St. Mary, Queen of Angels as they were installing the crucifix. A parishioner had made the cross, but the corpus of Christ had been made in Italy. This corpus was unique as it was carved all the way around and appeared very life-like. Father Steier shares that a parishioner held the corpus in his arms and gazed upon it with tears in his eyes.

"That moment was so quiet and so sacred. These are the great things that happen as it all comes together. All the individual parts to make up the whole."

He shares that the greatest blessings are the Eucharist, preach-

ing and the people. "These are what have sustained me," he shares. "I spend all week preparing my homilies, and I couldn't do it without the support of the people. The hardest part about being a priest is being transferred."

As for his hope for the Church, Father Steier says that his hope is rooted in the experience of his past. The first school he ever attended closed, as did his grade school and high school. Later, his college closed. Nearly three months after he was ordained, his home parish of St. Bernard in Clara was closed. Later, two parishes where he had served were also closed.

"What I'm saying is this: Our lives continue on. Our faith continues to grow in spite of changes that we wish didn't happen. Do I have hope for the future? Of course. Will it be what everyone wants it to be? No. But things move forward, and the Spirit works through everything." With this, Father Steier looks with gratitude to the service of the international priests serving in the diocese. "These priests leave their homes thousands of miles away to come here and serve. They are our saving grace. Without them, we would be in a world of hurt. They are remarkable in continuing parish life."

Father Steier was ordained on June 8, 1973, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Concordia by Bishop Cyril Vogel. Since then, he has served at St. John the Baptist Parish, Beloit; Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Hays; St. Joseph Parish, St. Joseph; St. Isidore Parish, Cuba; Ss. Philip and James, Phillipsburg; St. Francis Parish, Claudell; St. Mary Parish, Smith Center; St. Bernard Parish, Ellsworth; St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish, Kanopolis; St. Mary Parish, Holyrood; St. Mary, Queen of Angels Parish, Russell and St. Mary, Help of Christians Parish, Gorham. He is currently the pastor of Christ the King Parish in WaKeeney and St. Michael Parish in Collyer.



**Father Don Zimmerman**  
(50 years)

"It has been a privilege, and continues to remain so, to be a priest in serving God and his people. Having been born and reared on a farm in western Kansas, the oldest of seven, I responded to the invitation of my parents, 'One of you boys ought to be a priest.'"

Father Zimmerman said the standard procedure used to be that most young boys entered minor seminary for their high school years. But Father Zimmerman ended up hearing the call to the priesthood and remained in

seminary, even though he did think at times he could be a good husband and father.

Some of his happiest years were serving at St. Mary, Queen of the Universe in Salina as a member of team ministry alongside Father Joseph Scheetz, Father Bill Surmeier, Sister Barbara Ellen Apaceller and two other sisters of St. Joseph. Father Zimmerman enjoyed team ministry, which over time and at different parishes included many more people, religious and lay alike.

Father Zimmerman has happy memories from his assignments. But one of his most surprising moments was when he served in Ellis County.

"While there were many great things going on from the very start, I felt so very small. You see, in Republic County (previous assignment), I was the main priest there and anything that happened, involved me. In Ellis County, it was very, very different. I was fortunate to have Father Carl Kramer as a senior associate and Father Brad Sterett as a younger associate. These guys were loved very much by the Catholic community. And rightly so. In addition to that, there were many Capuchin priests and brothers around. For quite some time, apart from the daily Masses and weekend liturgies, the funerals, baptisms and weddings were done by these guys. It was very humbling, but it also taught me a whole lot about myself. That probably was the most surprising thing that has happened to me as a priest. Priesthood is a gift, as faith. And it is shared among a brotherhood of priests. At times I have had the inclination to operate as a lone ranger. While working with others can be messy and take a whole lot more time in the discernment of a project's direction, I have always found the end result as being most satisfying."

One of Father Zimmerman's favorite ministries to be involved in was a marriage program called Retrovaille, which aided couples to rekindle their love and marriage vows.

"I have been so very fortunate throughout the years to have had very close friends. Along with my parents and so many other family members, there have been many close friends and parishioners who have passed on. There are times where I yet feel their absence. At the same time, there are others who I yet call a friend and they too still accept me, with all my faults and inadequacies. I indeed am very fortunate and blessed," he said.

Father Zimmerman was ordained June 2, 1973, at St. Michael Church in Collyer by Bishop Cyril Vogel. He has since served at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Parish, Salina; St. Peter Parish, Aurora; St. Anthony Parish, Miltonvale; St. Peter Parish, Meredith; St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish, Kanopolis; St. Joseph Parish, Brookville; St. Mary Parish, Holyrood; St. Edward Parish, Belleville; St. Isidore Parish, Cuba; St. George Parish, Munden; Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Hays; St. Thomas More Parish, Manhattan; Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina; St. Andrew Parish, Abilene; Ss. Peter and Paul Parish, Clay Center; and St. Anthony Parish, Miltonvale. He now is retired.



**Father Keith Weber**  
(40 years)

"It has been a great blessing to bring God's love and compassion into people's lives — both when they are celebrating a success or dealing with a struggle," reflects Father Weber.

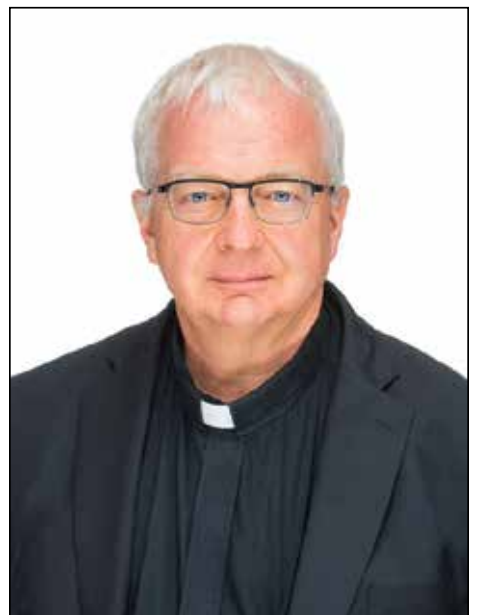
"Probably my biggest surprise is how different everyone's life journey is. It is amazing how God helps everyone no matter where the path of life takes them."

Known for his wide smile, welcome hugs and handshakes, he laughs as he says one of the joys of his priesthood is there are too many favorite memories that it is impossible for him to choose one to share.

His hope and prayer for both the Church and the diocese is for a deeper unity in faith.

Father Weber was ordained April 23, 1983, at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina by Bishop Daniel Kucera, O.S.B. He has since served at St. Mary, Queen of the Universe Parish, Salina; St. Francis Xavier Parish, Junction City; Seven Dolors Parish, Manhattan; St. Patrick Parish, Ogden; St. Isidore Parish, Manhattan; and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Salina. In addition, he has served as teacher/chaplain at Sacred Heart High School, Salina, and St. Francis Xavier Catholic School, Junction City.

He has also served in several positions at the Chancery, including co-vocations director, chief financial officer and chancellor.



**Father Fred Gatschet**  
(30 years)

In reflecting on the greatest blessing of his priesthood, Father Gatschet shares, "On a practical level, it would have to be that no two days are ever the same. If anyone were to ever complain about being bored in the priesthood, it would be his own fault."



CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4			5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
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- ACROSS**

1 Advertisement (abbr.)

5 Clogs

9 Given salary

13 Thirteen

14 Prejudiced person

15 Sit in a car

16 Object of false worship

17 Fat

18 Garden of \_\_

19 Sober

21 Palestinian body of water

23 Transgressions

25 Coin machine

26 American Football Conference (abbr.)

29 Cat cries

31 Rapid

34 For

35 Objects

37 Wise man

39 Audible

41 Pod vegetable

42 Reason for Easter

43 Easter \_\_

44 Florida City

46 Terminal abbr.

47 \_\_ sayer (prophet)

50 Range

51 Extremely high frequen-
- cy (abbr.)

52 Country in SE Asia

54 Location

56 Afflictions sent against Egypt

59 Resources

63 Bide

64 Sod

66 Injure

67 Island

68 Spooky

69 Biblical twin

70 Children's love

71 Leaky faucet noise

72 September (abbr.)
- DOWN**

1 Center of rotation

2 Prank

3 Bowed stringed instrument

4 Floor coverings

5 Sail

6 Ripe

7 He received Ten Commandments

8 Takes illegally

9 Cachet

10 Military officer

11 Thought

12 Lair
- 14 Easter hat

20 Mock

22 \_\_ Jones Industrial average

24 Cleaned the floor

26 Recess

27 Plague of Egypt

28 River

30 Bedaub

32 Signal flare

33 Fact

36 Island nation

38 U.S. Air Force

40 Places alone

42 King \_\_ Version

45 Easter promenade

48 Children's game

49 Provided housing

53 Needle worker

55 Sackcloth and \_\_

56 El \_\_ (Texas city)

57 Easter flower

58 Japanese dress

60 Soothe

61 Entrap

62 Indecent language

63 Irony

65 Tear

Answers on Page 14

JUBILEES, FROM PAGE 10

On the more important spiritual level, I always marvel at how people will immediately welcome a priest into the most meaningful moments of life such as the birth of a child or a tragic death. It is nothing that any given priest earns or deserves. It is because of Jesus standing behind us and using us as his instrument to get himself into these events of peoples' lives."

As for the greatest surprise of the priesthood, Father Gatschet says priests do a lot more than simply celebrate the sacraments. There are many other duties and responsibilities that go on behind the scenes.

"Here at the Cathedral, I have to decide when to sell agricultural commodities harvested from land we own, oversee maintenance and repair projects, deal with people who come to the door looking for various kinds of help, go to peoples' homes for house blessings — and even occasionally to drive out demons. I guess it kind of goes back to what I said earlier in that there is no shortage of things that come up in the 'average' day of a priest."

In his years of ministry, Father Gatschet has dedicated his service to the Hispanic immigrant community. He was (and continues to be) regularly called upon to assist with Hispanic funerals, weddings, Quinceaneras and so on. One day as he was vesting for Mass, an English-speaking couple approached him needing assistance. As he spoke with the couple, the altar server, a young boy new to town from Mexico, listened to him with wide eyes before finally saying, "Padre! Usted habla inglés también? (Father! You speak English, too?)" Father Gatschet shares, "Yes," I told him in Spanish, 'What did you think? I had to learn Spanish like you are learning English.'

'No, Padre,' he said in Spanish, 'You are Mexican. You speak Spanish, and you like our food.' So, at that point I was pretty much satisfied that I had made some significant inroads into the Hispanic community."

His hope for the future of the Church is "that all Catholics will take heart at the love that so many young people have for their faith, and that more of these young people will open their minds and hearts to hear if Jesus is calling them to be a priest or sister." He believes the Church should take hope in the millions of young people who are on fire for their faith, evidenced by the large numbers of attendees at events like World Youth Day, SEEK and NCYC. He shares that there "is a new Pentecost happening among young people."

Father Gatschet was

ordained May 22, 1993, at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan by Bishop George Fitzsimons. He has since served at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina; Comeau Catholic Campus Center, Hays; and St. Joseph Parish, Hays. He has also taught at both Thomas More Prep-Marian in Hays and Sacred Heart High School in Salina.

Father Gatschet serves at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina and St. Joseph Parish in Brookville. He is also the vicar general for the Diocese of Salina.



Father Mark Wesely (30 years)

Father Wesely believes the greatest surprise of the priesthood is how much people care for and love their priest. He said people's relationship with God is expressed in the care they give to their priest.

As for the greatest blessing of the priesthood, he shares, "The greatest blessing is being able to help people open their hearts to Jesus. But another blessing is the inspiration that people provide in so many different ways." He shares how parents taking care of their children are an inspiration. "A child's cry is the song of angels. We can't understand what they are saying but imagine how Jesus must hear the sounds of children. He says, 'Let them come.' The gift of life gives glory to God."

He said one of the wonders of the priesthood is being able to witness the body of Christ and every individual playing his part.

"Jesus is the head, and we are the body. The way all that has worked out is miraculous."

His hope for the Church is that "we reflect to the world the wonder of our Father's love in simplicity, service and patience."

Father Wesely was ordained June 5, 1993, at St. Andrew Church in Abilene by Bishop George Fitzsimons. Since then, he has served at St. Mary, Queen of the Universe Parish, Salina; Seven Dolors Parish, Manhattan; St. Francis Parish, Bird City; St. John Nepomucene Parish, Beardsley; St. John Parish, Herington; St. Philip Parish, Hope; St. Columba Parish, Elmo. He is the pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish, Minneapolis; St. Patrick Parish, Lincoln; and St. Mary Parish, Glasco.

Sister receives radical abolitionist award

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

It started out as an inspiration, and it grew into a nationwide movement that spurred Catholic sisters across the United States into action.

Sister Margaret Nacke was honored March 25, along with other leading abolitionists from around the country fighting to end modern-day slavery, at the Greek Annunciation Banquet Center in Columbus, Ohio, during the Liberator Awards Ceremony.

Nacke, Sister of St. Joseph, Concordia, has been involved with anti-human trafficking initiatives for the past 12 years. It began when she asked herself what Catholic sisters are doing to address human trafficking. She initially involved two other

sisters, Anne Scholz, LCWR, and Jean Schaffer, Sister of the Divine Savior. From there, U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking was formed in 2013 and will celebrate its 10-year anniversary this year. Since that fateful day, Nacke has engaged in ventures that involve Adult Life Transitions with persons in the U.S. and abroad. As chair of the Survivor Services Working Group Committee of U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking, she has been instrumental in creating programs that advance education about trafficking including the prison ministries.

"It was humbling," Nacke said of receiving the award. "I appreciated the affirmation and support. We're all in this together."



# PLANNING, FROM PAGE 7

Lori Harlan — Practitioner for 12 years. Serves Manhattan, Fort Riley, Junction City, and is available to meet virtually.

“FertilityCare means offering women and couples a way to understand reproductive health and make informed decisions. We are rooted in the desire for a true culture of life, and that begins with understanding how our bodies allow God to create life. I want a new generation of women and men to be empowered by the knowledge of the beauty and science of the human body.”

Megan Lyon — Practitioner for three years. Serves the northeast part of the diocese at her meeting location in Aurora.

“FertilityCare is important to me as it provides women and couples pertinent education to appreciate their fertility as a great gift, con-

trary to what the world teaches us. It’s not abnormal for me to hear during a follow up, ‘Nobody ever told me that.’ This education helps grow beautiful families, following God’s plan for our bodies.”

Dr. Maria Rapp — Practitioner for 11 years. Serves Salina and the surrounding communities and is available to meet virtually.

“FertilityCare is important to me because as a doctor who works with health, I know how important it is to understand how the body works if you want to take care of it properly. I enjoy teaching all ages about body health, so this fits right into my regular lifestyle. I also love the Catholic Church and its wisdom in not approving of birth control pills. People need to know the truth.”

Pamela Schroeder — Practitioner intern since 2022. Serves clients in

Colby and travels to the Comeau Catholic Campus Center for in-person meetings bi-weekly.

“FertilityCare is important to me because there is a need to increase our appreciation for and knowledge of the human body and human reproduction. This allows me to meet with women and couples and affirm their dignity, assisting them in their fertility journey through which they care for their bodies, temples of the Holy Spirit.”

Tina Schrick — Practitioner for 35 years. Serves clients in Colby.

## NFP medical consultants

Dr. Amy Hogan has served as a Creighton Model FertilityCare System Medical Consultant for 20 years. She practices family medicine at One Body Clinic in Salina.

Through NFP, “Women and couples are given an insight to

their bodies that God made. With that understanding, they can then find ways to help their cycles be made better. When cycles are better, women are healthier. They can then achieve their fertility goals.

We are blessed to help couples achieve pregnancies sometimes after years of hoping, trying and waiting. We walk with couples through ups and downs of family life. It is a medical ministry where God’s love is seen and palpable.

I hope women and couples will be encouraged to realize their true beauty in how God made them. The body is made good. When we recognize how God has made us, we honor and glorify Him.”

Dr. Monica Bachamp serves as a Creighton Model FertilityCare System Medical Consultant through Femme Clinique in Salina.

# CATHOLIC SCHOOLS JOB BOARD

## Colby

Sacred Heart Grade School

Start: August 2023

- Third-grade teacher
- Fifth-grade teacher

## Hays

TMP-Marian Junior/Senior High School

Start: Immediately

- Alumni coordinator

Start: August 2023

- Sixth-grade math teacher + one other subject
- Sixth-grade English teacher + one other subject

## Junction City

St. Francis Xavier Schools

Start: Immediately

- Administrative assistant

Start: August 2023

- Second-grade teacher
- Fourth-grade teacher
- 7-12 science teacher

## Manhattan

Manhattan Catholic Schools

Start: August 2023

- Kindergarten teacher

- K-8 counselor

- K-4 music/5-8 band teacher

## Plainville

Sacred Heart Grade School

Start: August 2023

- Fourth-grade teacher

## Salina

Sacred Heart Junior/Senior High School

Start: August 2023

- Part-time Spanish teacher

- English as a Second Language Arts teacher and debate/forensics coach

St. Mary’s Grade School

Start: August 2023

- K-6 library media specialist

## Tipton

Tipton Catholic Junior/Senior High School

Start: August 2023

- 7-12 math teacher

- 7-12 science teacher

To request a full job description, inquire about wage/benefits or send in a resume, call Kim at (785) 342-0819 or email kim.hoelting@salinadiocese.org.

# ISSUES, FROM PAGE 2

A few young women smirk, but the pope goes on, saying, “There are two constituting streams within the Church. Two principles. So, the ministry is for men. On the maternal side, which is far more important, are women. The promotion of women is aligned with their own vocation as women ... otherwise, women would be diminished.”

## The dignity of life

Milagros also objects to the pope’s description of abortion as “hiring a hitman” and argues that abortion is a woman’s right.

“I think Jesus would walk with that woman. He wouldn’t judge her like they would during Mass at a church,” Milagros says.

With tears welling up in her eyes, Milagros hands the pope a green bandana with the words “Keep abortion legal, safe, free” written in Spanish. She shared she would keep that bandana in her backpack as a symbol and wanted to give it to him “lovingly and respectfully.” The pope accepted the gift with a smile, kissing Milagros on the cheek.

Though he agrees that the Church should never condemn a woman for having an abortion, Francis stands firm in his position on abortion.

## Child sexual abuse

Tearing up, one young man in the group by the name Juan, shares that when he was 11 and 12, he was sexually abused by a teacher at a Catholic school in Spain.

“There is so much hypocrisy (in the Church),” Juan says through tears. “What about pederasty in the Church?”

“It’s usually said that lives should be protected, there’s a right to live ... But then, when it comes to other aspects ... many people from within the Church reject the victims or stand on the perpetrator’s side,” Juan says. “You must be

aware that there are many priests and bishops below you who are bad people.”

Francis responds, saying: “There are men and women who destroy. The abuser destroys a child, and if it’s a church person, the hypocrisy and double life are horrific.”

“I can’t possibly convey the empathy I feel for a person who has been abused, but it pains me deeply,” Francis says. “We’ve been clear about this, we’ve disciplined the seminaries, we’ve punished the abusing priests or even the abusing laypeople.”

Another member of the group, Lucia, objects: “I don’t think enough is being done, considering the people who have survived this have to wait for years for some type of reply, and alone ...”

“It’s a serious social problem,” the pope says. “We’re beginning to raise social awareness. That is key.”

## Sex and pornography

Another, Alejandra, challenges the Church’s position on pornography. She shares that to earn a living she creates pornographic content on a social media site, asserting it is the best job she has had because it allows her to stay home to care for her child.

The pope responds by reminding the young woman of the obligation to use social media responsibly.

“There should be a distinction between the richness of social media and the morality of what you do ... The morality of social media depends on what you use it for,” the pope says. “Pornography diminishes, it doesn’t help you grow. Those who use pornography are diminished in human terms.”

Francis adds he believes sex is often greatly misunderstood, even by Christians.

“I think we Christians haven’t always had a mature catechism regarding sex,” he says. Responding to the group’s

discussion of pornography and masturbation, Francis says that neither are true expressions of the fullness of human sexuality.

“Sex is one of the beautiful things God gave human beings. To express oneself sexually is something rich. Anything that diminishes a true sexual expression, diminishes you as well, it renders you partial, and it diminishes that richness,” the pope says.

## Gender ideology

Another member of the group, Celia, describes herself as non-binary, asking the pope if he knew what that meant. He responds that he understands.

“I’m non-binary, and I’m a Christian,” Celia continues. “I’ve been meaning to ask you if you see some space inside the Church for trans people, non-binary people, or LGBT people in general.”

The pope responds, “Every person is a child of God, everyone. I don’t have the right to kick anybody out of the Church. My duty is to always welcome.”

## Reaching the peripheries

Celia pushes further, asking what the pope’s opinion is on “church people or priests” who use the Bible to promote what she described as “hate speech.”

Reaffirming his stance that the Church exists on the peripheries, the pope answers that every person is welcome in the Church and those who use the faith as a justification for hate are “infiltrators.”

“In general, those who judge are inconsistent. There’s something within them, they feel liberated by judging others, when they should look inside at their own guilt,” Francis says. “But the day the Church loses its universality — the blind, the deaf, the good, the bad, everybody — it will stop being a Church.”



# Catholic Charities launches Hays project

By OLIVIA AYERS  
SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Nearly 40 years ago, in 1983, Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas opened its first outreach facility in Hays with a small, rented office and one staff member. Since that blessed day, the office has grown to serve 16 counties in the western region of the diocese, providing financial and housing assistance, personal

care and basic needs, pregnancy and adoption services, and counseling services. Scripturally speaking, the number 40 means something. It brings to mind such qualities as newness, preparation for an important work, transformation, nourishment, growth, and ultimately, new life. Its use denotes a complete period of time that transitions to



COURTESY PHOTO

The location in Hays was donated by Verlin and Elaine Pfannenstiel.

another. For Catholic Charities, this meaning comes full circle as it announces the beginning of a building renovation project in Hays — 40 years after the location’s original opening. The new location at 1011-1015 Centennial Boulevard will offer a larger capacity, providing the Hays staff with the resources to better serve those struggling across northwest Kansas. This monumental renovation would not be possible without the generosity of Verlin and Elaine Pfannenstiel, who donated the building to Catholic Charities. The Pfannenstiels, who reside in rural Hays, felt called to donate the building after learning Catholic Charities’ needs

were outgrowing their current Hays location. In donating the building, the Pfannenstiels believe they are aiding in providing a place of refuge for those across northwest Kansas facing unprecedented struggles. “Providing the building was a way for us to serve the Lord,” Elaine said. “We are here to serve others. Our faith teaches us to care for those in need. When we are called, we must respond.” While this building donation is a pivotal step in creating a new home for the Hays location, there is still much work and renovation to be done. It is the support of the community that will make the vision of the project a reality.

“The Hays building project will allow us to warehouse greater amounts of food and hygiene items for rural families across northwestern Kansas,” said Eric Frank, Catholic Charities director of development. “We want this building to increase community awareness so we can meet the needs of our neighbors in need that may not live near a larger city and have access to life-saving resources. Moving forward, we will need even more support. The donors in Hays and surrounding areas can make this a reality.” “For many years Catholic Charities has provided many and much-needed services in Hays and northwest Kansas,” Verlin said. “This commitment to this project guarantees these services will continue for years to come.” To learn more and donate to the Hays building project, visit [www.ccnks.org/haysproject](http://www.ccnks.org/haysproject). Olivia Ayers is communication coordinator for Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas.

## FIDELISFEST

SATURDAY, JUNE 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2023

A Fundraiser for The Basilica of St. Fidelis

Victoria, Kansas



**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

4:00 - 5:00 PM	CATHOLIC MASS THE BASILICA
5:00 - 6:00 PM	CHURCH TOURS THE BASILICA
4:00 - 7:00 PM	GERMAN WEDDING DINNER V.E.S. CAFETERIA
4:00 - 8:00 PM	KEEPSAKE STORE, BAKE SALE, & KID'S' GAMES V.E.S. GYM
5:00 - 11:00 PM	BEER & BRAT GARDEN BEHIND THE FRIARY
8:00 PM	RAFFLE DRAWING - \$3,000 IN PRIZES! V.E.S. GYM

**FREE DANCE & ENTERTAINMENT:** BEHIND THE FRIARY

KATHY AMREIN & MARGARET GIFFORD  
KARL MEIS  
BERNIE SCHULTE  
BOB DREILING  
TOM PFEIFER  
LOCAL JAM SESSION

**MEAL TICKETS**

**\$15 ADULTS**

**\$7 CHILDREN 6-12 YRS**

**FREE CHILDREN 5 AND UNDER**

A limited number of tickets will be sold at the door during the event.

Please purchase tickets for dinner in advance at the Parish Activity Center or call 785-735-2777.



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[hector.soler@kofc.org](mailto:hector.soler@kofc.org)



BAPTISMS

**Anne Marie Baalman**, daughter of Cass and Alicia Baalman, was baptized March 26, 2023 by Father Vincent Thu Laing at St. Martin of Tours in Seguin.

**Michael John Brown**, son of Eric and Jaclyn (Feldt) Brown, was baptized April 1, 2023, by Father Nick Parker at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays.

**Daniela Jazlyn Cano**, daughter of Adriana Guzman, was baptized March 25, 2023, by Father David Micheal, HGN, at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays.

**Maggie Miu Chen**, daughter of Xiabing and Qiaomei Li, was baptized April 3, 2023, by Father Donald D. Zimmerman at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

**Xiaobing Chen**, son of Shanhua and Sufan Chen, was baptized April 3, 2023, by Father Donald D. Zimmerman at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

**Keller Lea Clark**, daughter of Collin and Alexandra (Keller) Clark, was baptized March 26, 2023, by Father Henry Saw Lone at Sacred Heart Parish in Atwood.

**Elxander Riam Ford**, son of Enrique and Elizabeth Ford, was baptized April 8, 2023, by Father Frank Coady at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

**Eliza Romeo Ford**, son of Enrique and Elizabeth Ford, was baptized April 8, 2023, by Father Frank Coady at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

**Emy Brett Gennette**, daughter of Ty and Heather Gennette, was baptized March 12, 2023, by Father Barry Brinkman at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Concordia.

**Liv Joli Gennette**, daughter of Ty and Heather Gennette, was baptized March 12, 2023, by Father Barry Brinkman, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Concordia.

**Decker Lee Henry**, son of Derek and Danae Henry, was baptized March 12, 2023, by Father Barry Brinkman, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Concordia.

**Katherine Ann Kuhlman**, daughter of Matthew and Brandy Kuhlman, was baptized March 18, 2023, by Father Vincent Thu Laing at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Hoxie.

**Qiaomei Li**, daughter of Jinxiang and Cuier Lin, was baptized April 3, 2023, by Father Donald D. Zimmerman at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

**Daisy Valentine Lujan**, daughter of Christopher Lujan and Jessica Horinek, was baptized March 25, 2023,

by Father Henry Saw Lone at Sacred Heart Parish in Atwood.

**Leah Ann McDiffett**, daughter of Steven McDiffett and Marla Bramhall, was baptized Feb. 5, 2023, by Father Mike Leiker at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan.

**Acelynn Azahara Avalos Rodriguez**, daughter of Abraham Avalos and Diana Rodriguez, was baptized March 25, 2023, by Father David Micheal, HGN, at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays.

**Jayven Torres**, son of Rosaura Torres, was baptized March 25, 2023, by Father David Micheal, HGN, at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays.

**Riley Ann Wehling**, daughter of Nicholas Wehling and Andrea Zandt, was baptized Feb. 12, 2023, by Father Mike Leiker at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan.

**Adilynn Marie Wright**, daughter of Nathen and Renee (Horinek) Wright, was baptized March 13, 2023, by Father Henry Saw Lone at Sacred Heart Parish in Atwood.

**Eleanor Jo Young**, daughter of Elliot and Kelsey Young, was baptized March 5, 2023, by Deacon Wayne Talbot at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

RURAL LIFE DAY

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

The Rural Life Office will celebrate St. Isidore's Day this year at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Concordia on May 15.

The celebration will begin with a Mass at 11 a.m. Bishop Jerry Vincke and priests from across the diocese will be officiating the Mass. In the past, this has been a moving service for those in attendance. There will be a lunch, provided by the Altar Society of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, in the parish hall following Mass.

Each year, the celebration includes a blessing of animals and fields in the host parish area. Also, Candy Thomas of Salina, a regional soil health specialist in the state office of USDA-NRCS, will have a demonstration on how different farming practices affect the soil using a rain simulator.

Thomas has served in an advisory role on the board of directors since 2013. Thomas believes NRCS goals align closely with those of

No-till on the Plains in helping people improve and sustain the land. NRCS has developed many tools and standards to help farmers improve soil health and soil conservation.

There will also be a trip to the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Concordia, for a tour of their organic garden. Lyle Pound, the Motherhouse gardener, will speak to the three aspects of organic gardening: ground cover, composting and mulching.

The event will conclude at approximately 3 p.m. with a prayer service at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse grotto. In the event of rain, it will be in the chapel.

Additionally, during the week leading up to St. Isidore's Day, May 6 to 14, there will be a virtual Novena offered to St. Isidore via Zoom. Visit the Rural Life office of the Salina Diocese website for more information and required registration, <https://salinadiocese.org/office/rural-life/>.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

1	A	D	V	T				5	J	A	M	S		9	P	A	I	D			
13	X	I	I	I			14	B	I	G	O	T		15	R	I	D	E			
16	I	D	O	L			17	O	B	E	S	E		18	E	D	E	N			
19	S	O	L	E	M	N		20	D	E	A	D	S	E	A						
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26	A	F	C				29	M	E	W	S		30	S	W	I	F	T			
34	P	R	O				35	I	T	E	M	S				37	G	U	R	U	
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				56	P	L	A	G	U	E	S		58		59	A	S	S	E	T	S
63	W	A	I	T					64	S	W	A	R	D		66	H	A	R	M	
67	I	S	L	E					68	E	E	R	I	E		69	E	S	A	U	
70	T	O	Y	S					71	D	R	I	P			72	S	E	P	T	

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 May

We pray that Church movements and groups may rediscover their mission of evangelization each day, placing their own charisms at the service of needs in the world.

Diocesan prayer intention for May

We give thanks to God for all who joined the Church this Easter. May they be filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and always walk in God's light. May their lives be full of God's love and mercy on their journey toward spending eternity in heaven with God.

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DEATHS

**Diana Mathilda Catlin**, 92, of Miltonvale, died March 15, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 18 at St. Anthony Church in Miltonvale. Father Kerry Ninemire presided.

**Alice A. (Burns) Birnbaum Edmunds**, 83, of Wilmington, N.C., died Feb. 14, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated Feb. 24 at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Father Ryan McCandless presided. Burial in Sunrise Cemetery in Manhattan.

**Maxine E. Girard**, 90, of Concordia, died March 3, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 10 at Chaput-Buoy Funeral Home in Concordia. Father David

Metz presided. Burial in St. Mary Cemetery in Clifton.

**Steven Roy Hamel**, 65, died March 23, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 1 at Bachelor-Surber Funeral Home. Father Henry Baxa presided. Burial in Mount Calvary Cemetery in Clyde.

**Jolene Leiker**, 57, of Hays, died March 15, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 21 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays. Father David Micheal, HGN, presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery in Hays.

**William "Bill" Paul Mathewson**, 92, died Feb. 21, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 10 by Father Frank Coady at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan. Inurnment at Ss. Peter and Paul Cemetery, Seneca.

**Norma Jean Petty** died Jan. 15, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated Jan. 20 at Holy Ghost Catholic Church in Sharon Springs. Father Carlos Ruiz presided. Burial in Sharon Springs Cemetery.

**Matthew Pfeifer**, 36, of Hays, died March 17, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 22 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays. Father Nick Parker presided. Burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Hays.

**Sandra Sanders**, 68, of Hays, died March 3, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 9 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays. Father Nick Parker presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery in Hays.

**Everett L. Schrant**, 88 of Gorham, died March 14, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 17 at St. Mary Help of Christians Church in Gorham. Father Michael Elan presided. Burial in St. Mary's Cemetery in Gorham.

**Herman A. Strafass**, 93, of Manhattan, died Feb. 24, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 6 at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Father Ryan McCandless presided. Burial in Pilsen Cemetery in Pilsen.

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**WEDDINGS**

**Skyler McGann and Logan Dale** were married March 25, 2023, at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays. Father Nick Parker witnessed their vows. Parents of the bridegroom are Peter and Marla McGann. Parents of the bride are Shawn Dale and Cody Thomas. Witnesses were Austin McGann and Kenzie Augustine.

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To submit a funeral, baptismal or wedding announcement, email

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# Life as a Camino during a few weeks in Europe

BY JOEL BICKNELL

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

There have been a lot of changes in my life recently. One of the most notable ones being my move from Amarillo to Salina. Salina Catholic Schools has always been home to me, and coming back to serve as the development director for Salina Catholic Schools has allowed me to be more available to my family. It has also helped me to double down on my faith and prayer life.

I've learned to surrender to simplicity. I've learned to view my life as a journey, a path God wants me to walk. I am merely a pilgrim.

These lessons I've learned are ones I am continuing to learn. But one of the more notable turning points for me was the summer of 2022 when I made the commitment to walk the Camino, also known as the Way of St. James. The Camino is a pilgrimage where people from around the world journey to walk. There are many routes one can take, but I journeyed from Porto, Portugal, to Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

The 14 days I spent as a peregrino, a pilgrim, dramatically transformed my life.

I was anxious in the days leading up to it. I was doing the journey alone, and my Portuguese and Spanish were basic at best. But with my family's support and encouragement, I boarded the two-day flight to Portugal.

The Camino was an all-in experience. I experienced the pure joy of walking in the rain with fellow pilgrims and the agony of sore knees



COURTESY PHOTO

Joel Bicknell recently walked the Camino in Portugal and Spain.

and toe blisters. I experienced the peace of solitude, as well as authentic community as I drank beer and ate Padron peppers in roadside cafes with people who are now lifelong friends.

More than the experiences, I learned the many ways God reveals himself to us. I encountered him in reverence through sitting in small chapels along the route; in exhaustion as I drank water from spring wells; in exu-

berance as I double-timed 15 miles with an Italian soldier; in connection as I ate empanadas and shared stories with a makeup artist from Lake Tergensee near the Austrian border; and lastly, in communion as I wailed Bon Jovi's Living on a Prayer with a Spanish cover band and pilgrims from throughout the world. I can assure you; it was an intensely spiritual experience.

The whole two weeks felt

like a deeply personal conversation with God. But no words can truly capture the experience I felt at the conclusion of the pilgrimage.

I knelt in front of the bones of St. James at the Cathedral in Santiago de Compostela. As I shared Mass with parishioners and pilgrims, I cried in a spirit of surrender to the truths of our faith. I felt a sense of unity with God's will. God was present among us. I had no doubt.

The thought of returning home brought anxiety. I wondered if everything I had experienced and encountered on the Camino would be present in my "normal" life. Would it affect my prayer life? My family? My work?

Surely, there would be resistance. I am weak in my humanness. But even if I forgot the lessons I had learned, I found comfort knowing God will never stop inviting me back to the flock.

There's no denying the Camino changed my life. I learned to walk as a pilgrim through the day-to-day of my life. I learned to embrace the experiences and lessons that bring me closer to God.

The Camino makes tangible the reality that each of us is a pilgrim in the ordinariness of our everyday lives. God gave me a path to walk, just as he does for each person. I look forward to continuing to surrender to his will for my life.

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