



THE REGISTER

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA

MAY 26, 2023

A taste of *eternity*

PREPARE TO RECEIVE THE EUCHARIST

This year, the feast of Corpus Christi is June 11. It is even more significant this year because it kicks off the second phase of the Eucharistic Revival. To learn more, visit <https://salinadiocese.org/eucharistic-revival/>.

BY SISTER ANN SHIELDS

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Throughout the years preceding the establishment of the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi), many had written about the need to name a day solely focused on God's tremendous gift to us in the Eucharist.

Therefore, Pope Urban IV established this feast on Sept. 8, 1254. Yes, Holy Thursday is the day of the Last Supper, but it is filled with so many other events in those 24 hours that our attention is not focused solely on God's gift of himself in the Eucharist.

The Feast of Corpus Christi is a day to thank God for giving himself so totally to his people; it is a feast to ask for an increase of faith to believe in the lavish love of God. It is a feast to ask that more and more Catholics might come to true faith in the Eucharist — that they may see how great is our God; how great his love that he would give himself to us so personally, so intimately.

Ponder these two excerpts:

Pope St. John Paul II wrote often and well on the Eucharist. He called it “a taste of eternity in time.” During a General Audience on Oct. 25, 2000, he said, “The communion with Christ that we enjoy now while we are pilgrims and wayfarers on the paths of history anticipates that supreme encounter on the day when ‘we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.’” (1 John 3: 2)

Similarly, a great theologian of the Armenian Church, Gregory of Narek (10th century) wrote this: “It is not for his gifts, but for the Giver that I always long. It is not glory to which I aspire, but the Glorified One whom I desire to embrace. ... It is not rest that I seek, but the face of the one who gives rest that I implore. It is not for the wedding feast, but for desire of the bridegroom that I languish.” (XII Prayer) May such a prayer be ours as well.

EUCHARIST, PAGE 3

LONG TRADITION

Daughters of Isabella celebrate 100th anniversary.

Page 6



RURAL ROOTS

St. Isidore's Day event focuses on agriculture in diocese.

Page 10



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Who desires who?

Recently, I went to a parish to celebrate the Year of Mercy. After Mass, a friend of mine greeted me and said, "The No. 1 reason I came was not to see you, but to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. I need Jesus so much."

Praise God! In many ways, I even felt relieved when he said that. His desire to receive Jesus in the Eucharist was great.

His comments were a source of meditation for me throughout the following week. How much do I desire to receive Jesus? But then something came to my heart. His desire for Jesus in the Eucharist was great, but it's actually quite small compared to Jesus' desire to be in communion with him. No matter how much we love Jesus, his love for us is so much greater. The same thing when we go to confession. Our desire to have our sins forgiven is small

compared to how much Jesus desires to forgive us.

In all the Missionary of Charity chapels founded by St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta throughout the world, there are the words, "I thirst," taken from Jesus' words on the cross. Jesus was physically thirsty, but his deepest thirst is "you," to be in "communion" with every person created.

The Eucharist is the Sacrament of Love. Do we ever stop to think how much Jesus loves to be in communion with us when we receive the Eucharist? How much he loves to share his body and blood with us? How we quench his thirst when we receive him?

In a few weeks, we celebrate Corpus Christi

Sunday (June 11). We celebrate and honor the body and blood of Christ at each Mass, but on this day, we celebrate the Eucharist in a more special way.

This year, Corpus Christi takes on an even greater significance because it kicks off the

parish portion of the Church's Eucharistic revival. In this second phase, we aim to strength-

en liturgical life through faithful celebrations of the Mass, adoration, missions, resources, preaching and allowing the Holy Spirit to move in our hearts.

I am excited to see people encounter Christ more deeply in the Eucharist. I hope more people will fall in love with Jesus' presence in the Eucharist. I also hope more people will realize how much Jesus desires to be in "communion" with them.

One last thought: When we receive Jesus, God the

Son dwells within us, and we are tasked with taking him out into the world and letting others know how much Jesus "thirsts" for them. Perhaps you know someone who is on the fringes. Perhaps you know someone who has fallen away. Take Jesus there. Thanks.

In Christ's service,

+ *Gerald L. Vincke*

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

**GERALD
Vincke**
BISHOP, SALINA DIOCESE



BISHOP'S CALENDAR

June

- 3** Confirmation, 7 p.m., St. Mary, Queen of the Universe, Salina
- 4** Confirmation, 10:30 a.m., Ss. Peter & Paul, Clay Center
- 4** Confirmation, 3 p.m., St. Augustine, Washington and St. John, Greenleaf at Washington
- 6** Year of Mercy, Phillipsburg
- 7** Year of Mercy, Smith Center
- 11** Year of Mercy, Catherine
- 12-16** USCCB Special Assembly, Orlando, Fla.
- 17** Confirmation, 5 p.m., St. John's, Beardsley
- 18** Confirmation, 10:30 a.m., Sacred Heart, Atwood
- 18** Confirmation, 2 p.m., St. Joseph, Bird City
- 24** Confirmation, 5 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary, Hays
- 25** Confirmation, 11 a.m., St. Nicholas of Myra, Hays

PRIEST ASSIGNMENTS



Hammerschmidt

Effective June 1, 2023
Father Gale Hammerschmidt: Appointed pastor designate for Manhattan Catholic Schools while maintaining other official appointments.

EUCCHARISTIC REVIVAL

THE FOUR INVITATIONS OF THE YEAR OF PARISH REVIVAL

CATHOLIC DIOCESE of SALINA

01

REINVIGORATE WORSHIP

Beauty in the liturgy elevates the minds and hearts of those who attend Mass, helping them to match their interior disposition with the externals of what's being celebrated.

02

PERSONAL ENCOUNTER

Creating space—for people in your parish to come face-to-face with the Living God. The heart of this invitation is to create opportunities for people to personally encounter Jesus in the Eucharist and each other.

03

ROBUST FAITH FORMATION

Studies show that the majority of Mass-going Catholics either do not understand or do not accept the doctrine of the Real Presence. This year, we are invited to change that by providing robust formation around this amazing reality!

04

MISSIONARY SENDING

Let's mobilize Catholics in the pews! Each parishioner will be invited to reach at least one person with the message of Christ's Eucharistic love. The world needs us to bring God's love and mercy out into our communities!

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA • VOLUME 86, No. 5



THE REGISTER
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA

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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 June 23.

Deadline for news is June 1.

Deadline for advertising is June 1.

Mailing label update

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The opportunity before us

There are many who think that our current culture is headed in a direction that will get interesting for Catholics. I'm not a fan of the gloom-and-doom talk, but if that is to happen, we can be assured God will bring good out of those times as he always has throughout history.

Challenging times always create the best opportunities to bring the light of Christ into the world. Feeling challenged and even uncomfortable is an opportunity we should get excited for. It is something that, if we embrace it with the right mindset, will be a benefit to us and help us bring many people to the faith and Christ.

It is a rare person who can make personal growth in easy times. Growth comes for us when we face resistance, challenge and difficulties. We can't feel sorry for ourselves when adversity happens in our lives, for we understand it is a gift from God, which helps us become who we were designed to

be. Flipping our mindset prepares us to grow and embrace the crosses God puts in our lives.

I have recently begun starting my day by reciting a little prayer I heard a while back. I saw it on a video, and I can't even tell you who the guy was who was praying the prayer. The man in the video said he starts each day with these words: "Good morning Lord; what would you have me do today? My life is yours. My time is yours. I give myself to you. Guide me today, Lord. I wish to do the things that you want me to do. I am yours to command."

The prayer immediately caught my attention because it was so simple, yet the words were those of someone who deeply trusts God with his day and life. The prayer has become a way to remind me I need to be open and eager for everything God gives me daily. We tend to feel sorry for ourselves anytime something doesn't go our

way or as planned. Thank God he doesn't give us our desire for each day but instead gives us what he knows is best for us. I understand some of God's greatest gifts to me will be disguised as the strangest days we have on Earth.

Difficult times also create a tendency to turn inward and to only associate with people who believe like us and in safe places. That is undoubtedly what Satan is hoping we will all do. He wants us to build our walls, turn inward, get out of the world, and let him have it for himself. If there was ever a time we needed to be out in our communities boldly proclaiming the Gospel to others, this is that time. This is the call and mission of the Parish Year for the Eucharistic Revival beginning this upcoming Corpus Christi Sunday.

So many hurting people in our world need the love of Christ. Jesus is asking us at every Mass to go out and serve our brothers and sisters.

First, we are nourished by the Eucharist. We are strengthened by the very body, blood, soul and divinity of Christ before he sends us out into the world to love and serve the lonely, the poor, the marginalized and even people who disagree with us. As members of the mystical body of Christ, we are all asked to become the hands and feet of Jesus and bring the light of the good news to the world.

Let us seize this great opportunity with eagerness and joy and do as we are commanded at the end of every Mass, "Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord." This time is not a moment to retreat inward but to leave the safety of our church and homes to seek out the lost, the least and the last, wherever they may be, and bring Christ to them. This great mission will not be easy, and we thank God that it won't. If it were easy, it would not be shaping us into the saints God calls us to be.

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

BILL Meagher
DIOCESE OF SALINA



Learning to wait until tomorrow

I was recently lulled into the false sense of security that parenting is easy.

We had a routine, and it was working. Every member of our little family was happy, healthy and content, including the dog.

And then the baby hit a growth spurt. Or maybe he's teething? Or he could just be a little cranky.

But with that, our entire routine was thrown into flux, and nothing was being accomplished as fast as I wanted or to the standard I expected.

On a particularly difficult day, I found myself crying in the kitchen because I realized I hadn't made the bed that morning. Nathaniel stood next to me in confounded disbelief. He could not begin to fathom how an unmade bed made me cry.

I cried because I was completely overwhelmed. I felt like there were too many demands, and I was doing many things poorly. I cried because I wasn't meeting the expectations I had set for myself. I cried because everywhere I looked, there seemed to be dirty dishes, dirty floors, hungry humans, half-written stories, unsent emails and more.

Everywhere I looked, there was work to be done. Everywhere I looked, there was evidence I had "failed" to complete the tasks that were set before me.

Nathaniel gave me a hug and encouraged me to go to bed. "It'll all keep until tomorrow. You need your sleep." To which I angrily thought, "Yes. But if I don't get it all done tonight, I'll still have

to do them tomorrow, and I'll still be overwhelmed."

But I went to bed, and I got a good night's sleep.

When I got up the next morning, I said my prayers. I visited with my husband, snuggled my baby and then I sat down to work.

I decided I needed to be gentle on myself. Sure, I might not work as efficiently as I once did. I might have a few more interruptions. And I most definitely might be a victim of "mom brain." (Guess how many times I stare at my computer screen and wonder what I was doing. A lot. The answer is a lot.)

But I'll do my best, and I'll get done what I can. The things I'm

unable to accomplish will all keep until tomorrow.

And also, I figure if I keep my priorities straight, I'll be OK. If I take the time to pray every day for however long I can, and if I make the conscious choice to love my family, my days will be better. And at the very least, I'll be fulfilling the roles God set before me.

I am a daughter of God, a wife and a mother. Living up to and fulfilling those roles are my first priority and greatest responsibility.

Everything else will keep until tomorrow.

Katie

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

KATIE Hamel
CREATIVE EDITOR



EUCCHARIST, FROM PAGE 1

Look at what God has given you in Christ. God desires union with each of his people. As we feed on his body and blood, if we receive it in faith, we can become more and more like him, actually grow in union with the source of all love.

We are not an audience at Mass. We are participants by faith, by our gratitude and by genuinely seeking deeper union with Christ. It saddens me to see so many coming to church with not a thought of the Lord before or after

receiving him. So take a long look at these questions, and begin to develop a good habit in at least one of these areas. When you have one step pretty much part of your preparation and participation, then take a second step. Honestly, if you do, you will be amazed at how God will honor your desire to draw closer to him.

Preparing for Mass:

- For what person(s), for what situation or for what need do I want to offer this Mass?
- Do I offer my thanks during

Mass to God for something he has done for me? When do I thank him for answered prayers?

- Look over the readings, before Mass if at all possible. What is God offering; what is he telling me about himself; what is he teaching me?
- Look over the opening and closing prayers in the missal for Mass — see what is being offered; see what is being asked and unite yourself with those promises, pledges and hopes. When you do this, you will find there is grace there for the challenges of daily life.
- At the consecration, I pray

in thanksgiving that God gave me himself; I pray in thanksgiving that he died for me.

- Elevation of the host — I thank you Lord for giving me life here and life eternal; I give my life to you in return.
- Elevation of the chalice — Thank you for your death on my behalf. I give you my death that it may glorify you.

Prayer after Communion

Soul of Christ, sanctify me;
Body of Christ, save me;
Blood of Christ, inebriate me;
Water from the side of Christ, wash me;

Passion of Christ, strengthen me;

O good Jesus, hear me;
Within Thy wounds, hide me;
Permit me not to be separated from Thee;
From the wicked foe, defend me;
In the hour of my death, call me,
And bid me come unto Thee,
That with all Thy saints I may praise Thee,
For ever and ever. Amen.

Anima Christi, From the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola (1522-1524)

Responsible adulting for a day

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN

THE REGISTER

Mayor Max Juenemann stood in front of his citizens and thanked everyone while telling them how “it takes everyone to make a successful and safe town and an enjoyable place to live.”

If Max looked a little young to be holding such a position, it might be because he is — or maybe not.

Max is a fourth-grader at Sacred Heart Grade School in Colby, one of nearly 50 students from Catholic elementary schools in Colby, Oakley and Plainville who were in charge of Young AmeriTowne of Kansas for a day in April.

YoungAmeriTowne is part of a financial literacy program for intermediate to middle-school age students. It is sponsored by Nex-Generation Round Up for Youth, Inc., a not-for-profit organization based in Lenora.

AmeriTowne is located inside the former Lenora High School building, which closed 15 years ago. Second-floor classrooms represent 10 different businesses or companies of a town.

Prior to making the trip to AmeriTowne, teachers go through a training at the start of the first or second semester, learning curriculum to present to their students for several weeks leading up to the big day.

Positions range from first responders such as police officers and firefighters to postal workers and business owners and managers and utility workers. The students can visit the bank if they need some funds or a loan and get their medical needs met at the town hospital.



PHOTOS BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN, THE REGISTER

Local AmeriTowne news anchor Kaydence Tremblay from Plainville-Sacred Heart interviews Superintendent of Schools Geoff Andrews.



Parker Kahle, Oakley-St. Joseph, receives help in the Container Shop from adult volunteer Paul Schrick.

Students get the chance to exhibit a lot of responsibility for a day while managing their finances.

Media is comprised of a newspaper and television and radio stations, and on this particular day, Plainville-Sacred Heart fourth-grader Kaydence Tremblay had fun interviewing Geoff Andrews, superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Salina.

The town also includes a snack shop, the town hall, a container assembling shop, a sign-making shop and a medical center.

Nex-Generation offers the AmeriTowne program through a license with the Young Americans Center for Financial Education in Denver. More than 2,200 students and nearly 500 teachers and volunteers have participated in the program since its inception in 2013.

“Our goal is to be able to provide students here in rural America with hands-on learning experiences to revitalize and sustain their communities,” said Jacque Beckman, executive director for Nex-



Dr. Kinsley Casey, Plainville-Sacred Heart, helps keep AmeriTowne residents healthy.



Jaxon Ohlrogge, Colby-Sacred Heart, checks out an electrical board for AmeriTowne's Energy Sources.



The AmeriTowne bank sits at the corner of Sunflower and Kansas Ave.

Gen and longtime youth services and training manager at Nex-Tech.

“I’m a graduate of Lenora High School,” Beckman said, “so it’s exciting to see it used for education purposes again.”



Policeman Cameron Brooks, Oakley-St. Joseph, arrests citizen Kaylyn Becker, Plainville-Sacred Heart.



St. John the Baptist, Beloit – April 23
First row from left, Benjamin Strathman, Joshua Clark, Malachi Knappert, Madden Bergmann and Blaise Walter. Second row from left, Eli Housh, John Paul Tighe, Lennon Gruber, Lilly Stillwell, Isaac Letourneau, Samuel Strathman, Cruze Martin and Deb Courville. Third row from left, Brandy Goddard, Father Jarett Konrade, Asael Diers, Merrick Knapp, Lewis Greenwood, Kapaun Griffeth, Natalie Krier, Peyton Emerson, Chiara Lueger and Father Andrew Rockers. Back row from left, Elizabeth Cadena, Francis Clark, Maria Woods, Brody LeSage, Holden Murrow, Emily Gengler, Alexis Litton and Max Dunstan.



St. John the Baptist, Hanover – April 23
Front row from left, Sawyer J., Lucas J., Ethan W., Coy F., Kolbi M., Knox T., Wyat J., Henry B. and Ella J. Second row from left, Brooks B., Walker B., Creighton B., Kip B., Braxton G., Paxton S., Lyla D., Tucker P. and Sawyer L. Back row from left, Father Joseph Kieffer and Robin Adam.



St. Mary, Clifton – April 23
From left, catechist Ashley Schwab, Emeline Taddiken, Connell Gelino, Katherine Wurtz and Father Steve Heina.



St. Thomas More, Manhattan – April 16
Front row from left, Kennedy Vizcaino, Maisie Bryant, Elodie Boxberger, Robin Baumann, Marlee Kirk, Alexa Tiemann, Piper Holthaus, Eliza Suther, catechists Olivia Williams, Jacob Williams and Josefina Gantt. Second row from left, Ember Upchurch, Hadley Ellis, Gwen Grisamore, Everly Gladin, Penelope Billinger, Peyton Traxson, Blair Doering and Valentina Flores. Third row from left, A'lina Flores, Oliver Robinett, Nicholas Lindshield, Zane Fairchild, Jack Hinz, Gabriel Duethman, Jesse Snider, catechists Bethany Loomis and Laci Doering. Fourth row from left, Camden Sherley, Noah Ornelas, Lincoln Loomis, Braxton Kazar, Joonoh Kim, Grayson Mitchell, Charlie Bowman and Liam Pacher. Back row from left, Calvin Disbrow, Father Frank Coady, catechists Staci Robinett and Heidi White.



St. Bernard, Ellsworth – April 30
Front row from left, Easton Williams, Addilynn Johnson, Elliette Nienke and Avery Cole. Back row from left, catechist Tobina Norris, Father Joshua Werth and catechist Mary Soukup.



St. Michael, Chapman – April 30
From left, Father Peter O'Donnell, Addison Stearns and catechist Abby Anderes.



St. Edward, Belleville – April 23
Front row from left, Hazel Richecky, Eisely Pacht, Sistine Meinecke and Kinley Lambert. Second row from left, Denton Pacht, Sawyer Coonrod, Cash Cornwell, Asher Bowen and Mark Pacht. Back row from left, Deacon Steve Heiman and Father Henry Baxa. Not pictured, catechists Sarah Baxa and Philip Meinecke.

Hays D of I celebrates anniversary

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

People count. People matter.

Tom Krause said those two short phrases over and over on a Saturday evening in April in Hays.

Krause, a contributing writer for the popular Chicken Soup for the Soul series, was the keynote speaker for the 100th anniversary banquet for the Daughters of Isabella Circle 254.

Krause, a retired educator and coach from Missouri, kept the audience spellbound during his presentation with positive storytelling. The listeners not only heard, but actually felt, his passion for his subject.

But attendees were impressed with Krause before the meal even began. As people found their seats and chatted before the meal, he cruised the crowd, shaking hands with every single person in the room, introducing himself and asking everyone's name.

Circle 254 is comprised of parishioners from St. Joseph, St. Nicholas of Myra and Immaculate Heart of Mary churches in Hays but includes a few members from outlying smaller parishes as well.

The first circle of D of I was founded in 1897 in Connecticut as an auxiliary to the Knights of Columbus. So the national order was relatively new when Hays



DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN, THE REGISTER

Tom Krause speaks at the 100th anniversary celebration for the Hays Daughters of Isabella.

started the Circle 254 in 1923.

The Hays circle, which at one time had 400 members, has 188 registered and is always recruiting younger members to help keep the circle vibrant.

One such member in her 30s, Kimberly Robinson, drove in from another state to attend the 100th anniversary.

Robinson grew up in Hoxie and was attending Fort Hays State

University approximately 10 years ago when her grandmother, Alberta Rajewski — a member of the D of I circle in Victoria — asked her to a mother-daughter dinner.

Robinson was hooked, joined the Hays circle and soon began helping with various activities.

"I always wanted to be involved with a church group," said Robinson, who often took her young son, Theodore, along to help with bingo.

Robinson recently moved to Tyrone, Okla., from Hays but returned for the centennial anniversary celebration. She was glad for the chance to visit her grandmother in Via Christi and to hear a speaker she described as "very inspirational."

Donetta Robben, a longtime D of I member, agreed.

"He was engaging and made great moral points," said Robben, executive director of Divine Mercy Radio. "He encouraged all, no matter our age or occupation in life, that we truly can make a difference with positive helping and by encouraging others. I left on a high reflecting on how I could do this better."

Hitting on his "people count, people matter" point once again, Krause praised the D of I for making a difference in so many lives with its volunteerism.

"That's something you have done for a hundred years," he told the crowd. "You are a powerful force of goodness. And you don't do it because it's a chore. It's because you answered the call. When you volunteer and give them worth and hope, it's the work of angels."

"If you get nothing else from tonight, remember this," he continued. "People count. People matter. You count. You matter. You make a difference."

Memorial Mass comforts parents

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

We are all born into a family that is connected forever in one way or another.

Members of a different kind of family were solemn as they entered St. Joseph Church in Oakley for Mass on a spring afternoon in May.

Dark skies hovered on the western horizon with a hint of inclement weather in the air.

An hour later, thunder greeted them as they made their way to a reception in the Catholic school cafeteria. And claps of thunder could occasionally be heard throughout the gym during the reception.

One woman looked into the sky and called them sounds from heaven. She smiled, then joined others who were attending a memorial Mass and reception for parents in the Catholic Diocese of Salina who have lost a child.

As the microphone made its way around the tables during the reception, people became a little more comfortable with sharing their stories after listening to others.

"This is holy ground," said Rick Binder, director of the Respect

Life office for the diocese. "You all belong to a club none of us want to be a part of. The only thing we can do is trust in God. We hope that being able to celebrate Mass together is some comfort to you, and we want you to know that we care about your story."

In years past during this event, Binder said people have told him it is sometimes too painful to share their story. But after telling it to members of this child-loss club, it became easier to open up with their feelings about losing a child.

All was quiet in the gym during a photo slideshow of the children with the only sounds of overhead fans competing with the soft music on the slideshow.

During the story sharing, people spoke freely of how their children died — stillborn births and miscarriages, a variety of accidents and illnesses — and even dealing with the tragedy of a child taking their own life..

A similar Mass and reception took place the next day in the eastern part of the diocese, in St. Edward Catholic Church in Belleville.

At the end of both Masses, parents came forward to receive a rose and place it in a vase near a



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

A parishioner takes part in the memorial Mass.

statue of the Virgin Mary to honor and seek the intercession of Mary as the Mother of God.

Bishop Jerry Vincke talked during his homily about how God and Mary embrace parents who have lost a child because they know exactly what they are going through.

"Jesus, we trust in you," he said, "and we trust that our loved ones

who have gone before us have gone to someone who loves them even more than we do."

Binder echoed those sentiments.

"Mary knows your pain and suffering," he said, "and who better to trust the care of your children with than Mother Mary?"

At the Oakley reception, one mother spoke of the one thing she said has gotten her — and others like her — through the lifelong journey after the loss of a child.

"It takes a lot of healing, but we are thankful for our faith," she said. "Without faith, we wouldn't get through it."

Before going their separate ways, many folks stood around and visited with others, some they had never known before that day.

Some commented how sharing their stories — and tears and hugs — is comforting. It makes them realize they aren't alone.

The clouds were just as ominous as they left the gym, the wind had picked up, and the temperature had dropped considerably.

But some seemed to step a little lighter as they scurried to their vehicles, and it wasn't because of the weather.

School coordinator receives honor

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

The month of April is always a busy time for the Safe Environment Office and for parishes and schools around the diocese. This year was no different.

On April 20, Tracy Perrett, safety coordinator of Holy Family Elementary in Hays, was presented with the Safety Coordinator of the Year award.

There are many responsibilities required to be a safety coordinator. Some of those include monitoring the CMGConnect database, emailing instructions and reminders to those needing to take or renew their safe environment training, verifying and securing driving records, submitting data reports to the diocese, hanging posters and communicating information via bulletins.

“Being the safety coordinator is a huge undertaking,” Backes said. “But ultimately, the role of the safety coordinator is ensuring the safety of the students who have been entrusted in our care. Tracy does all that and more.”

Tracy has often said: “You



COURTESY PHOTO

From left, Rachel Wentling, Tracy Perrett, Wendy Backes, Father Nick Parker and Geoff Andrews at the Safety Coordinator of the Year award presentation.

can’t come in ‘my door’ unless you have SE training, a background check and are clear for driving.” And she isn’t joking.

Backes said Perrett’s kindheartedness and compassion are eminent above any other qualities, along with her passion, dedication and attention to detail.

“Many people don’t realize the importance of the role of the safety coordinator and what they are ultimately responsible for,” Andrews said after the

presentation. “I am grateful we have Tracy to carry out our mission.”

Perrett was presented with a certificate of recognition and a picture of St. Joseph, protector of Mary, Jesus, the Church and us all. Additionally, Tracy and



Wentling received a saint necklace as a token of appreciation for their

dedication and commitment to providing safe environments for the students at Holy Family Elementary.

• • •

April 21 was “Wear Blue Day” at the Chancery.

“Wearing blue connects us with millions of others across the country who support child-abuse prevention efforts, strong families and healthy children,” Backes said. “While the mission of the Safe Environment Office (promise to protect, pledge to heal) remains a daily focus, during Child Abuse Prevention Month, we shine an extra light upon the continuing efforts to protect children and the most vulnerable from harm.”

This year, as a follow up to last year’s events, the staff gathered to watch the movie, “Maria Goretti: The Story of the Patroness of Modern Youth.” St. Maria Goretti is the patron saint of youth, young women, purity and victims of rape.

“Protecting children is everyone’s job,” Backes said. “We must continue to work diligently to protect children from abuse in any form and in all circumstances, while constantly reviewing protocols and safeguards. Training our clergy, educators, employ-

DID YOU KNOW?

The Bishop’s Annual Appeal – Call to Share helps fund the work of the Safe Environment Office? Thank you for keeping children safe. To give, visit join.salina-diocese.org.



ees and volunteers is critical to identifying any concerning behavior and immediately reporting it. The more people who are trained to know the warning signs of child abuse, how to report abuse, and how to create safe environments for young people, the safer our children will be.”

The Diocese of Salina has taken great strides in fulfilling its promise to protect children, educate communities and bring healing to those who have suffered abuse. For more information on how to protect children, call (785) 827-8746, or visit salinadiocese.org/office/safe-environment-office.

Ellis County tour of churches set for July

By DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

The whole idea started as a way for advocating

wellness for area bicyclists. But the Tour die Kapellen – German for tour of the churches – has quickly

become just as popular for the accompanying bus tour. The fourth annual event celebrating the Volga-German heritage of Ellis County with a tour of four historic Catholic churches in the county is set for 10 a.m. July 8.

Proceeds from the event, coordinated by the Hays Area Bicyclists, are given to one of those four parishes each year for improvements for their church. St. Fidelis Basilica in Victoria, St. Catherine Church in Catharine and St. Francis of Assisi Church in Munjor were the first three recipients. This year’s proceeds will go to the Holy Cross

Shrine in Pfeifer.

More than 75 bicyclists have already registered for the event, which last year added a bus tour for non-bicyclists wishing to take part. More than 300 are anticipated to participate this year.

Registration for the bus filled up quickly last year, so committee members encourage anyone wishing to board the bus – whose capacity is 50 passengers – to register soon.

Kay Werth, president of the Hays Area Bicyclists, is excited about a new addition to this year’s event, an archway for bicyclists to ride through to the finish.

The committee was able to purchase the archway and a team tent with funds from a grant through the Schmidt Foundation.

Werth is particularly looking forward to greeting one of the bicyclists. Bishop Jerry Vincke has agreed to not only give a blessing on the participants that morning but to also take part in the 15-mile ride. The event features different routes and distances ranging from 15 to 100 miles.

Bicyclists from several states have participated in the past, and the committee expects more of the same this year.

BIKE, PAGE 12

FIDELISFEST

SATURDAY, JUNE 3RD, 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.

SAVE *the* DATE

Annual Seminarian Fundraising Dinners

THREE EVENTS IN 2023!	08 . 08 . 23	SALINA, KS
	08 . 09 . 23	COLBY, KS
	08 . 10 . 23	HAYS, KS

MORE INFORMATION TO COME

Charities helps provide drive in life

BY OLIVIA AYRES

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

As much of the world would agree, the value of spending time with family and loved ones is immeasurable. Being able to be near the ones we hold dear is a priceless gift.

This sentiment certainly rings true for Theresa Kerr, a Salina resident, whose daily reality was drastically altered after a complicated back procedure.

Kerr, who is employed at Lowe's, is incredibly close to her family and routinely enjoyed traveling to visit them. Currently, she suffers from permanent nerve damage resulting from surgery for a pinched nerve in her back. Kerr also deals with frequent numbness in her hands and legs. These medical hindrances make it difficult and dangerous for her to drive her vehicle.

"There are times when I

can't feel my gas or brake pedals. It's a challenge every day," Kerr said. "Emotionally, it's depressing and frustrating. Of course, you wonder, 'Why me?'"

There is currently no medical intervention that can cure Kerr's nerve damage. With vehicle modifications she would be able to safely control her steering wheel and driving pedals. Unfortunately, these driving modifications can be costly, and extensive testing is required to qualify.

Feeling overwhelmed by the onslaught of expenses ahead, Kerr came to Catholic Charities for support. Through the financial and housing assistance pro-

gram, she received the funding to pay for the qualification testing to obtain these necessary driving attachments. Kerr expressed that completing this crucial step brings her one step closer to being able to drive independently.

"When I get these attachments installed in my car, I will be able to go places again," Kerr said. "I will be able to see my family and

manage my life again. I went to Catholic Charities because they were the first on my list, and I'm glad I did. They made me feel so welcome. They looked at my application, then looked up at me and said, 'This is going to be no problem.' It

was like a huge load was lifted from me."

While Kerr is still working to pay for the driving modifications themselves, completing the qualification testing was a milestone she said would not have been possible without the help of Catholic Charities.

"To have Catholic Charities be my first stop and to have received aid is overwhelming," Kerr said. "It

was a crack of sunlight through the clouds saying that things were going to get better. I appreciate everything they have done for me because I don't know if all of this would be possible without them."

If you or someone you know is in need of financial or housing assistance, visit www.ccnks.org/financial.

Olivia Ayres is the communications coordinator for Catholic Charities.



Contact information:
P.O. Box 1366
Salina, KS 67402-1366
(785) 825-0208



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JOB OPENING

Respect Life Ministry Coordinator

If you have a passion for the protection of life, participating in the Respect Life mission and education, are organized and able to promote events, provide education, etc., then we have a part-time opportunity for you.

Contact Kim Hoelting, HR Director, Diocese of Salina at (785) 342-0819 or Corey Lyon, Chancellor at the Chancery; (785) 827-8746, Ext. 118, for more information.



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HAYS, KANSAS

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Daniel O'Leary, PhD, Presenter

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785-243-4428

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. . . one weekend at a time



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1-877-I-GRIEVE
(1-877-447-4383)
rachelsvineyard@salinadiocese.org

Scholarship Winners Announced

By Corrina Hudsonpillar

One of the many functions of the Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina is managing endowment funds and investment savings accounts – including scholarships. The Catholic Foundation is pleased to announce the winners of three of these scholarships for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Msgr. Clement A. Kruse Scholarship is awarded to individuals who are active registered members of a Catholic parish in the Diocese of Salina. The scholarship was established after the passing of Msgr. Kruse in 2006. Msgr. was ordained a priest on June 7, 1941. He was named Monsignor in 1982. He served on the Diocesan Board of Consultants and served parishes in Grainfield, Sharon Springs, Hoxie/Seguin, Damar and many other parishes in the Diocese of Salina.

The Susie Deges Memorial Scholarship was established in memory of Susie Deges, a young woman whose life was tragically

cut short on the eve of her high school graduation. Susie held leadership positions at a local and diocesan wide CYO level. This scholarship is awarded to an individual that is not only an active registered member of a Catholic parish in the Diocese of Salina but is also active within their parish CYO group.

The Marymount Memorial Education Trust Scholarship is awarded to individuals that are attending an accredited Catholic College as a full-time student and are active registered members of a Catholic parish in the Diocese of Salina. Originally established as a scholarship for individuals attending Marymount College, it expanded to include any accredited Catholic College upon the closing of Marymount College in 1989.

Applicants are asked to submit an essay describing "What does your Catholic faith mean to you?". Additionally, they are evaluated on their dedication to volunteering, their need for financial assistance, and overall completion of the application. The Catholic

Foundation appreciates the Catholic individuals in our diocese that evaluated these scholarships based upon these criteria and the rubrics established for each. "The Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina would like to congratulate these incredible men and women on their accomplishments. They are true examples of disciples on a mission," stated Katie Platten, CEO for the Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina.

If you would like more information on establishing a scholarship fund, contributing to an existing fund, or

information on the funds available at the Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina – please contact Katie Platten at katie.platten@salinadiocese.org or 785-342-9826.



Marymount Memorial Scholarship Winners:

Ally Cochran – University of Notre Dame
Kiera Cochran – Creighton University
Jazlyn Fenner – Benedictine College
Gabriel Friess – Benedictine College
Maria Mick – Benedictine College
Jazzmin Wahlmeier – Benedictine College
Michelle Zarybnicky - Benedictine College

Susie Deges Scholarship Winner:

Jackson Hartman -- Kansas State University

Msgr. Clement A. Kruse Scholarship Winners:

Kaitlyn Countryman – Kansas State University
Kelsie Gack – Kansas State University
Lindsey Gack – Fort Hays State University
Madelyn Seiler – Kansas State University
Joshua Towner – Kansas State University

Scholarship recipients are chosen by an unbiased panel of judges.

Salina Diocese Catholic High School History



Sacred Heart

Established in 1908

First Graduating Class in 1912
2023 Graduating Class: 26 Students
Salina, KS

Tipton Catholic

Established in 1919

First Graduating Class in 1922
2023 Graduating Class: 6 Students
Tipton, KS



St. John's

Established in 1879

First Graduating Class in 1925
2023 Graduating Class: 15 Students
Beloit, KS

St. Francis Xavier

Established in 1871

First Graduating Class in 1921
2023 Graduating Class: 3 Students
Junction City, KS



Thomas More Prep - Marian

Established in 1908

First Graduating Class in 1911
2023 Graduating Class: 43 Students
Hays, KS

Across the Diocese: Generations of Catholic Education

By Katie Hamel



My dad, James Greenwood, was a student at Thomas More Prep-Marian in the mid-80s. Awhile back, I was with him at TMP-Marian to see my cousin perform in a musical. (She was phenomenal!) When we pulled into the parking lot, my dad got out of the car with a huge smirk as he looked down at the long driveway we'd come in.

He then proceeded to tell the story of his first day of senior year when he drove his younger brother and a friend (who were both freshman) to school. When they got to the drive, he put his yellow jeep in neutral and made them push him the rest of the way in. "Those were the good ole days," he said. I bet my uncle would probably disagree with that.

If you can't tell from the story, my dad was a little ornery back in the day. Truth be told, he still is.

After he graduated, he joined the Marine Corps. When he got out, he met my mom. They got married, and after 28 years of being together, have twelve children (five daughters and seven sons). I'm the oldest of the twelve, and the baby is my little brother Levi. He'll be starting preschool next year.

My dad's Catholic faith came from his parents, but his formative years were spent in the hallways of TMP-Marian.

He was surrounded by religious men and women who taught him, as well as peers who were also Catholic. Like most young people, he didn't

appreciate his Catholic education and upbringing until well after the fact. But as I watched him wander the halls of his teenage years, I saw his nostalgia for the days of his past.

When we moved to Beloit, my parents made the decision to send us kids to the Catholic school. They sacrificed so that we could go to St. John's. I graduated from there in 2014, and little Levi will graduate in 2035, with ten Greenwood graduations in between there! By the time it's all said and done, my parents will have been a part of the Blujay family for 30 years. It'll be longer if any grandkids go there! I can't speak for my siblings, but I know that for me, it wasn't until after I had left Beloit that I appreciated what my hometown, school and parish had taught me. The thorough education I had received at a Catholic school laid the foundation for who I was to become. My college years, career years, and now wife and mom years are all building on the faith my parents gave me that was molded by my many years in Catholic education.

Your gifts to the Bishop's Annual Appeal made this possible. Your gifts supported my dad when he was a student at TMP. They supported me in my years, and they will support my younger siblings. And, maybe one day, they'll support my own children.

Thank you for making Catholic education possible in the Diocese of Salina.

Congratulations to the 2023 Grads!

Rural Life Office hosts special day

BY DAVID AND LINDA EDELL
SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

The Rural Life Office sponsored St. Isidore Day on May 15. Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Concordia served as this year's host. The celebration of St. Isidore, patron saint of farmers and ranchers, began nine days earlier with an online novena.

Each night's prayer session was led by one of the following: Father Brian Wirth, Father Brian Lager, Father Quentin Schmitz, Bishop Jerry Vincke, Sister Janet LeDuc, Sister Marilyn Wall, Deacon Ed Souza and Deacon Walt Slingsby.

The Novena began each night with a Rosary followed by a different prayer theme. Between 20 to 35 people, including many from the Sisters of St. Joseph in Concordia, participated each night.



COURTESY PHOTO

Father Rich Daise blesses horses at the St. Isidore Day event in Concordia.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help hosted the Feast of St. Isidore Mass. Bishop Vincke presided over the service. Joining were Father Rich Daise, Father Steve Heina, Father David Metz and Father Jerome Morgan, retired. There

were approximately 50 people present. During and after Mass, there was a blessing of seeds and animals.

Following Mass, a meal was served by the Altar Society. During the meal, a brief history of the parish was presented. Having been the original home of the diocese (of Concordia, established in 1887), the parish has an honored

place in diocesan history. It served as the cathedral for the diocese until the Diocesan See was transferred to Salina in 1945.

After the meal, Candy Thomas, Salina, a regional soil-health specialist in the Kansas state office of USDA-NRCS, performed a demonstration on how different farming practices affect the soil using a rain simulator. It was illuminat-

ing to see how differing farming techniques can dramatically affect soil health.

Thomas concluded the demonstration by reading from a USDA publication titled "Conquest of the Land Through 7,000 Years." The passage, written by Walter Clay Lowdermilk in 1953, concerns the Eleventh Commandment – "Thou shalt inherit the Holy Earth as a fruitful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosions, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, that thy descendants may have abundance forever."

It was a fitting end for the demonstration that unequivocally demonstrated how good stewardship of the soil can enhance farming operations.

RURAL, PAGE 14

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS JOB BOARD

Colby

Sacred Heart Grade School

Start: August 2023

• Third-grade teacher

Hays

TMP-Marian Junior/Senior High School

Start: Immediately

• Project coordinator for Development Office

Junction City

St. Francis Xavier Schools

Start: Immediately

• Administrative assistant/secretary

Start: August 2023

• Second-grade teacher

• Substitute teachers

• 7-12 science teacher

• K-12 counselor

Manhattan

Manhattan Catholic Schools

Start: August 2023

• First-grade teacher

• K-8 counselor

• K-8 music/band teacher

Salina

Sacred Heart Junior/Senior High School

Start: August 2023

• Part-time Spanish teacher

• Language Arts teacher and debate/forensics coach

• 1/4 time seventh-grade religion teacher

Tipton

Tipton Catholic Junior/Senior High School

Start: August 2023

• 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.

School personnel learn resilience training

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

As superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Salina, Geoff Andrews is a firm believer in professional development and is always looking for ways to enhance the commitment to educate the whole student.

He and several other diocesan school employees gathered to exchange ideas and learn about some new education tools at this year's NCEA national conference in Dallas. The National Catholic Education Association is one of the largest private education association gatherings in the nation.

Thirteen from the Salina Diocese attended the annual event in April. While it takes extra effort for teachers and administrators to prepare to be away from their schools, especially this time of year, they are a resilient bunch.

And they were pleased they got to hear the keynote speakers talk about resilience training at the conference.

Those speakers were Joy Roberts and Julie Widman, co-founders of Friendzy, a resource that classroom teachers can use to build healthy relationships in their classrooms.

Rachel Wentling, principal at Holy Family Elementary School in Hays, said she had done an online webinar training with those presenters but it was even more impactful to hear them speak in person.

"We know resilience is a primary pre-

dictor of future success," Wentling said. "The more resilient you are, the more likely you are to succeed."

"Everything we do in our social, emotional and physical curriculum with Friendzy and our virtue-based discipline is with resilience in mind," she added. "We're all going to make mistakes, but we need to learn from our mistakes. No one is perfect. When we look at resilience, we're working toward excellence, not perfection."

Andrews said not only was it "a great opportunity to learn about best practices in our Catholic schools," but he welcomed the chance to network with other professionals in similar positions.

"I really liked all my sessions," he said. "But the thing I really loved was some meet-and-greet time."

Andrews said there was something for everyone at the conference.

"Whether they were a grade-school classroom teacher or someone who worked in the front office, there were sessions from which they could take away something," he said.

Andrews said even though the trip to Texas came at one of the busiest times of the school year, he thought it will prove beneficial.

"I hope everyone met some people and built on some relationships to bring back to our Salina Diocese," he said. "We have the greatest jobs in the world, to teach our students and to pass on our Catholic faith."

CROSSWORD

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1 Napped

6 Fraud

10 Hospital (abbr.)

14 A tenth part

15 Region

16 Voiced

17 Orphan __

18 A Biblical mother

19 Tropical edible root

20 Genuine

21 Behave (2 wds.)

23 Set

24 __ Jima

26 Jewish teachers

28 Spoils

32 Mother

33 Boxer Muhammad

34 Pottery coating

36 Branch of learning

40 Jesus turned water into wine here

42 Crude

43 A Biblical mother

44 Little Mermaid's love

45 Devourers

48 Before (prefix)

49 High __

51 Palestinian body of water

53 Fresh

56 Environmental protec-
- tion agency (abbr)

57 Rodent

58 Cheated

62 Anger

66 Small particle

68 Make tight

69 Goofed

70 Charge card

71 Spring flower

72 Contending

73 Retain

74 Hurting

75 Excite
- DOWN**

1 Sky light

2 What you stand in

3 Bunsen burner

4 An apostle

5 Ball holder

6 Equal

7 Cliff

8 Air (prefix)

9 Concerning the mayor

10 Spicy

11 Toothbrush brand

12 A Biblical Mother, originally

13 Clever plans

21 You must be __ again

22 Levee

25 Petite
- 27 Phoenician god

28 Walking step

29 Winged

30 Short

31 A Biblical mother

32 Cried like a cat

35 Tangle

37 Representatives

38 Biblical weed

39 Popular stadium

41 Book after Gospels

45 Shedding outer layer

46 Marsh plant

47 Drain

50 Electroencephalograph (abbr.)

52 Baseball's Strawberry

53 First husband of Bathsheba

54 A Biblical mother

55 Say

59 Brand of coffee alternative

60 Set of 2

61 Otherwise

63 Opera solo

64 Fellow

65 Brink

67 Wood chopper

69 A Biblical mother

Answers on Page 14

SACRED HEART, COLBY



Confirmation – April 23
Front row from left, Porter Stieben, Peter Lager, Rose Ohlrogge, Patrick Schroeder, Vivian Schroeder and Anthony Haag. Second row from left, Father Brian Lager, Luis Cal-amaco Carrillo, Camille Denny, Audra Baalmann, Rogan Wiegert, Michael Juarez, Reegan Luedke, Evie Boles and Deacon Tom Schrick. Third row from left, Lilly Barnett, Matthew Schwarz, Rence Fikan, Brooklyn Hills, Matias Dominguez Gonzalez, Max Dominguez Gonzalez, Rook McKee and BJ Chavez. Back row from left, Mason Mazanec, Eli Horinek, Michael Gardner, Mateo Dominguez Gonzalez, Tucker Stieben, Brody Reid and Blake Wederski.



First Communion – March 12
Front row from left, Ella Fikan, Tony Jaeger, Xander Rhymer, Jonathan Hernandez, Ella Schroeder, Brynlee Reid, Maddie McCarty and Remington Roemer. Second row from left, Joseph Schroeder, Legend Finley, Jack Denny, Jonathan Schroeder, Dallis Stieben, Blaidynn Carman and Lucille Fellhoelter. Third row from left, Father Brian Lager, Nate Schroeder, Jayton Rush, Levi Gardner, Alyssa Bremenkamp, Harper Vaughn, Lily McKinney, Bristol Niblock and Shaylee Bell. Back row from left, Deacon Tom Schrick, Conner Surmeier, Kolton Miller, Carson Bergsten, Joshua Kistler, Sean Wederski, Katelyn Diederich and Bishop Jerry Vincke.

NIGHT OF HEALING

Join Father Rich Daise 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 June 2 at St. Joseph Church, 215 W. 13th, Hays. The evening will begin at 6 p.m. with exposition and adoration. Confessions will be heard by the priests during this time. The Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary rosary will be led by Father Blasi before benediction and reposition. The healing service will begin at approximately 7 p.m. Light refreshments and conversation will follow. For more information, call the parish office at (785) 625-7356.

COLBY STATION

The Board of Directors and staff of Divine Mercy Radio Inc. based in Hays will celebrate the start of the network's fifth station, 89.1, KGOH in Colby. The celebration will take place with a tower blessing and supper June 4.

"This latest station has been a labor of love for the people in western Kansas," said Donetta Robben, executive director. "We look forward to celebrating with our new listeners."

Blessing of the tower will take place at 5 p.m. at the tower site, which is located 1 mile south of the Oasis Travel Center in Colby. Father Fred Gatschet, vicar general of the Diocese of Salina, will conduct the blessing. Supper will follow at City Limits, 227 S. Range Ave. in Colby. The supper is limited to the first 100 people, so RSVPs are necessary and can be made by emailing donetta@dvmercy.com or calling the station at (785) 621-4110.

CONFERENCE COMING IN JUNE

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Once again, Catholic home-schoolers are gathering virtually to be encouraged as they fulfill their mission to be the primary educators of their children: "Cultivating Holiness in Your Homeschool," from June 9 to 10. Homeschool Connections, a leading provider of online classes both live and recorded for more than a decade, are again hosting the premier Catholic home-school conference.

Maureen Wittmann and Walter Crawford, co-directors of Homeschool Connections, are committed to not letting anything stop Catholic home-schoolers from getting everything they need to enrich their families. From talks to meeting the colleges and universities and seeing the materials they might need for success from a variety of exhibitors, their conference is packed.

Greg and Lisa Popcak, well-known Catholic radio hosts and authors, will be the keynote speakers. Father Joseph Gill, Jennifer Macintosh and other speakers are scheduled for live events. An additional 20-plus recorded talks will be made available for attendees.

A fully interactive vendor area is accessible throughout the event, with scheduled live access to such sponsors as Franciscan University, Ignatius Press and Fiat Life Coaching. Every attendee will also receive access to the content for a year, giving them an opportunity to see everything available when it is most convenient.

For more, visit catholicomeschoolconference.com.

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For more, visit catholicomeschoolconference.com.

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH JUBILEES

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CONCORDIA

Each January, we introduce our jubilarians — the remarkable women we celebrate on the noteworthy anniversaries of the date they were received as novices into the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

In 2023, we honor three sisters who together represent many years of love of God and service to the neighbor.

As these special women prepared to begin their jubilee year, we asked each one to write a short reflection that would be an answer to these questions:

- What stands out to you about your years in religious life?
- What do you cherish and how would you describe it?

Sister Loretta Flax (Celebrating 70 years)

Parents: Paul and Martha Flax

Hometown: Ellis

Received into congregation: March 19, 1953

Education: G.E.D. Nazareth Motherhouse, Concordia.

Certificates: 1981 – Nurses Aide Training, CCCC; 1985 – Adult Care Home Aide; 1986

– Home Health Aide; 1988 – Medication Aide; 1990 – Rehabilitation Aide, Barton Co. Community College (and many hours of continued, ongoing education)

Missions: 1954-1965 – Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia Convent, coordinator of housekeeping in convents 1965-1967 – Marymount College, Salina, supervisor of housekeeping of 3 buildings

1967-1983 – Nazareth Motherhouse, assistant supervisor of kitchen and coordinator of bakery

1969-1970 – St. Mary's Convent, Grand Island, coordinator of housekeeping of 24 bedroom convent, babysitting occasionally

1983-1985 – Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Hays, ministry to the elderly

1985-1992 – St. John's Nursing Home, Hays, CNA/CMA/C Rehabilitation Aide

1987-1992 – St. John Assisted Living, Hays, CNA/CMA/Rehabilitation Aide 1987-1992 – St. Elizabeth Home Health, Hays, CNA/CMA/Rehabilitation Aide

1992-1995 – Medstaff Home Health, Hays, CNA/CMA/Chha/Rehabilitation Aide in homes

1987-2009 – St. John Assisted Living, Hays, CNA/CMA/Rehabilitation Aide

2010-2021 – Senior Company Program, Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Hays, Parish Nurse, Ministry 2011-2021 – HaysMed Center Hospital, Ministry, Catholic Chaplain

...

As I reflect on it, a 70th Jubilee is really a time to give thanks. I thought that my 70th birthday was a big benchmark for my life.

I was still working in Hays. Those

were 40 of the most fulfilling years of my life. Now that I think of it, the first 30 years were most fulfilling, too.

What I want to tell you is that I came home to Nazareth after 70 years of being out and about, "doing my Father's business."

In my 70 years, I have served in many various ministries. I have worked in hospitals and nursing homes on nursing teams, chaplain teams, home visitor teams, parish teams and many times on a "Sister Loretta Team." Even at the present time I work in hospice care.

My life began to change when I made my first seven-day directed retreat and 30-day directed retreat. These two gifts of time changed my life. These were days of joy and sorrow, which have brought me to a deeper realization of God's presence in my life and I know he wanted me to share this with his people.

One special experience in my 70 years was very personal. A close relative we called "Tillie" was a hospice client of mine, more dearly loved than most, I suppose. Her husband was living and they had 12 living children. I created an environment in which each of her children could have time alone with their mother to settle any unfinished business, good or bad. Each of them took advantage of that opportunity and gratefully expressed a deep sense of peace afterwards. We were present when she passed quietly to meet her savior. I worked with them through the grieving process and celebration of her life.

I came from a family of six children — one brother and four sisters. My parents were people of deep faith and trust. My gratitude starts with them. I can never say it to them enough. Thanks goes to my family, my CSJ community, friends and co-workers who touched my life and now rejoice with me on this 70-year jubilee. I especially want to thank Sisters Mel and Benedicta for encouraging and supporting me in the ministry of nursing.

The purpose of all that I did was to see the face of God in those I met and served and for them to experience the face and touch of God through me. It worked for me and I hope it worked for those in my world.

My prayer is: Thank you, thank you, thank you. Alleluia. Wow.

Sister Carolyn Juenemann (Celebrating 60 years)

Parents: Fred and Rose (Kaus)

Juenemann

Hometown: Selden

Received into congregation: Sept. 8, 1962

Education: Marymount College of Salina – B.S. in Business Administration and Economics

Missions: 1967-1973

– St. John's Hospital, Salina, Business Manager and Office Manager

1973-1975 – Marymount College, Salina, Director of Alumni Relations

1975-1977 – Fort Hays College, Hays, Campus Minister

1977-1979 – St. Joseph Hospital, Concordia, Office Manager, Assistant Controller

1979-1984 – Parishes of Belleville, Munden and Cuba, Pastoral Associate

1984-1985 – Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina, Jr. High Liturgy Coordinator

1985-1989 – Parish of Goodland and Diocesan Renew Team, Pastoral Associate/Renew Team Member

1989-1990 – Religious Education Coordinator at Ft. Riley, Acting Director of Charities, Office Assistant at St. Isidore's

1990-2001 – St. Michael's Parish, Chapman, Pastoral Administrator

2002-2007 – Morris Hill Chapel, Fort Riley, Director of Catholic Religious Ed. & Pastoral Associate

2007-2012 – Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina, Music Director & Organist, Sexton of Mt. Calvary Cemetery

2012 – Present – Diocese of Salina Chancery, Salina, Tribunal Office Coordinator

...

Reflecting back on my reluctant decision to enter the Convent over 60 years ago, the major thing that stands out to me is the gradual awareness of the importance of the religious values that were emphasized in our family. One that especially caught my attention was that we should always strive to do "God's will." When it came time to make a decision about a choice of vocation, I relied on that value and by then I had become aware of that famous line by Dante the Divine Comedy, "In God's will is our peace."

Even though there were some serious challenges in the formation years, including the impact of Vatican II, it continues to be more and more obvious to me that God is always faithful to his promises if we continue to trust in that plan and strive to fulfill it. In the many and varied ministries of these past 60 years, it is clear that each time I said "yes" to a new challenge, the former experiences were preparing me for the next one.

Hospital financial management followed by alumni director at Marymount and campus ministry at Fort Hays College, summer training programs for liturgical ministry as well as Valley Hope clergy courses were preparing me for many years of pastoral ministry on both the local and diocesan level. The 11 years at St. Michael's in Chapman were a great exposure to military personnel, which I then served at Fort Riley during Desert Storm for five years.

It was a joy to return to our diocese and to use my liturgical and musical skills as music director at our cathedral until the Chancery needed someone with experience in marriage annulments to coordinate the tribunal, where I currently serve.

I cherish each of these opportunities, but probably the most unique and memorable one was to become the first non-ordained parish administrator in the diocese and of being a part of the development of that type of ministry.

These 60 years have shown me that it is definitely true that, "In God's will is our peace." I am very grateful.

Irma Janira Diniz (Celebrating 50 years)

Hometown: Rosario, Maranhão, Brazil

Received into congregation: July 31, 1973

Education: PTIA – Universidade Federal (Teresina)

Missions: Teresina and rural areas nearby, Amarante, Pimenteiras, Monsenhor Gil, Pará, Caxias, Maranhão, Picos.

Short Term – Cities of Nova Esperança, Buenos Aires, Parque Mão Santa, Graça Aranha.

Janira has spent her time serving the people of God in primarily pastoral missions, especially among the poor and the marginalized.

She has served in rural based communities in leader formation, religious education and evangelization, working with the handicapped, "popular" education network – Paulo Freire, bible studies and women's groups focusing on spirituality and crafts.

Janira loves to sing and dance. She is an artist.

Now retired, she lives at the Villa in Teresina (our main house) and spends time in her art studio behind the house.

...

The Latin American Pastoral Update Course, which gave me the opportunity of a two-year experience, with a community of 36 black families, in Amarante: Poço d'Antas, I learned their blessings, their prayers, their way of being a community. They chose Our Lady of Fátima as their patron saint and the patron saint's anthem was chosen in a contest. The winner was 72-year-old Dona Francisca.

The mission in the diocese of Conceição do Araguaia in Pará, mainly with the Carajás indigenous people, in the struggle to raise awareness of their rights with government agencies and with families in the region.

I also took on pastoral work with the local church. It was difficult work, but it favored my maturity, faith and trust in the Lord Jesus.

Another experience was with the Periferia Project, assisting street children who lived in the landfill. I also coordinated the Diocesan Pastoral da Terra in the struggle for land conquest.

I created the Third Age Program and action at the university with the elderly, for four years.

I currently visit and accompany elderly and disabled people with guidance and training and work at home with handicrafts.

I appreciate the echo of the voice of the Lord that keeps calling me and telling me, "Do not be afraid, for I am with you until the end."

Each one of my sisters for their way of being, welcoming, caring, living together, sharing and respecting.

The merciful way of the Lord who accepts us as we are and takes care of all of us and of all humanity.

BIKE, FROM PAGE 7

Tourists, both on bicycles and the bus, are treated to music from members of the Hays Symphony, as well as healthy snacks and water at each stop. The bus tour

includes a talk on Volga-German history, which this year will be given by tour guide Jerry Braun, a fourth-generation resident of Ellis County.

Early registration by

June 23 will guarantee registrants a \$10 discount and a shirt.

Entry fee for the bicyclists is \$45 for early birds who register by June 23 and \$55 after that date.

Cost of the bus tour is \$75 (or \$85 after June 23).

Participants are treated to a meal and polka music in Frontier Park at the conclusion of the event.

For more information or

to register, visit <https://tourdiekapellen.com> or call the Hays Convention and Visitors Bureau at (785) 628-8202. Anyone wishing to volunteer can call the Hays CVB.

Weekend brings couples closer

By THE REGISTER

The EverMore in Love era officially kicked off in the Salina Diocese in April with 22 couples participating in the full immersion event in Hays. The program is a marriage enrichment opportunity and will be used as an additional marriage preparation tool for engaged couples.

At the full immersion weekend, couples got a chance to reflect on their marriages. They learned some valuable tools they could take home to ensure they communicate, engage and grow ever more in love with each other every day of their marriage. The sacrament of marriage is a lifetime commitment to each other that must be worked on constantly as life changes for couples.

Leading the weekend were Brad and Libby DuPont of the Archdiocese of Kansas City and Tom and Jeanne Stevenson of the Lansing Diocese. Both couples have been a part of the EverMore program for many years and have been



COURTESY PHOTO

Brad and Libby DuPont, left, and Tom and Jeanne Stevenson, right, joined Bishop Jerry Vincke at the EverMore in Love event.

instrumental in forming engaged couples and strengthening married couples.

During the weekend, the couples also met other couples from throughout the diocese and sampled some of Hays' local restaurants. Bishop Jerry Vincke

joined the couples for Mass at the TMP-Marian Chapel on Saturday evening. He thanked the couples for their willingness to participate in the retreat and for the beautiful witnesses they are to the world of God's unconditional love through their marriages.

Dan and Shelly Wahlmeier, parishioners at St. Joseph Parish in New Almelo, participated in the weekend.

"EverMore in Love was a great experience for both Shelly and I," Dan Wahlmeier said. "With the crazy world we live in, we were blessed to dedicate 100% of our focus on each other for

an entire weekend. We needed this to help refocus and realize just how much we still have to learn about each other even though we have been married for 29 years. We would encourage all married and engaged couples to attend."

The diocese has two goals with the EverMore in Love program.

The first goal is to allow married couples to enrich their marriages and continue to grow together through life's many changes. The program gives couples a great opportunity to get away and spend a weekend focusing on their marriage and each other.

DID YOU KNOW?

Your generosity to the Bishop's Annual Appeal – Call to Share makes programs like EverMore in Love available to engaged and married couples within the diocese. Thank you for your "yes" in supporting strong marriages and families.

If you haven't given and would like to do so, visit join.salinadiocese.org.

The second goal is to develop mentor couples who can accompany engaged couples as they prepare for marriage. This program supplements existing diocesan programs for marriage preparation.

"There is a real need to help young couples prepare for their wedding and lives together," said Bill Meagher, director of family life in the diocese. "Walking and talking with a couple as these young people prepare for their wedding will be an incredible opportunity to learn. These relationships are so beautiful and often last long after the wedding. We all need advice at times, and it is so helpful for these young couples to have a mentor couple to go to when they need help."

"This is only the beginning of the program. There will be more immersion weekends in the future."



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Hector Soler
Field Agent
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BAPTISMS

Bristol Brzon, daughter of Zachary and Katie (Maree) Brzon, was baptized April 8, 2023, by Father Henry Baxa at St. Edward Church in Belleville.

Lawson Brzon, son of Zachary and Katie (Maree) Brzon, was baptized April 8, 2023, by Father Henry Baxa at St. Edward Church in Belleville.

Saylor Brzon, son of Zachary and Katie (Maree) Brzon, was baptized April 8, 2023, by Father Henry Baxa at St. Edward Church in Belleville.

Lawson David, son of Jake and Marissa Betts, was baptized April 22, 2023, at St. Joseph Church in Dorrance.

Luke Jacob Decker, son of Jacob and Lauren Decker, was baptized April 15, 2023, by Father Gnanasekar Kulandai at St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City.

Sophie Elaine Eck, daughter of Brian and Frances Eck, was baptized April 15, 2023, by Father Frank Coady at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

Ezabella Lillianna Fleming, daughter of Tyler and Kala

(Peterson) Fleming, was baptized Dec. 10, 2022, by Father Gnanasekar Kulandai at St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City.

Christine Joy Dualos Gastador, daughter of Jehel Gastador and Phoebe Dualos Gastador, was baptized Jan. 29, 2023, by Father Lourthu Antony Kulandaijesu at St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City.

Callen Wade Hertel, son of Jared and Alexis (Oliver) Hertel, was baptized April 30, 2023, by Father Damian Richards at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Munjor.

George Michael Konz, son of Gus and Kelsey (Peterson) Konz, was baptized April 16, 2023, by Father Damian Richards at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays.

Delaney Jaye Mattke, daughter of Brady and Shelby (Werth) Mattke, was baptized March 25, 2023, by Father Dana Clark at St. Mary Church in Ellis.

Brooks Eugene Ninemire, son of Lacy Ninemire, was baptized April 23, 2023, by Father Matthew Cowan at St. Joseph Church in New Almelo.

Brooklynn Jade Redding, daughter of Christopher and Alesha (Brenner) Redding, was baptized March 26, 2023, by Father Dana Clark at St. Mary Church in Ellis.

Della Grace Serpan, daughter of Brian and Abigail (Pflughoeft) Serpan, was baptized March 26, 2023, by Father Dana Clark at St. Mary Church in Ellis.

Rosa Kasterna Soichy, daughter of Kaster and Natalyn (John) Soichy, was baptized April 2, 2023, by Father Gnanasekar Kulandai at St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City.

Millie Sue Ward, daughter of Evan and Abby (Goebel) Ward, was baptized April 23, 2023, by Father Damian Richards at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays.

Hazlee Jo, daughter of Rico and Aubrey Ptacek-Wilcox, was baptized April 30, 2023, at St. Wenceslaus Church in Wilson.

Easton Dean Wiseman, son of Lucas and Jill Wiseman, was baptized March 26, 2023, by Father David Metz at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Concordia.

RURAL, FROM PAGE 10

The next stop on the St. Isidore's Day celebration was the motherhouse for the Sisters of St. Joseph. Participants were treated to an informative tour of their organic garden.

Lyle Pound, the motherhouse gardener, spoke about the three aspects of organic gardening: ground cover, composting and mulching.

The motherhouse is home to an impressive array of organically grown foods that not only help to nourish the Sisters but also other residents in Concordia.

A tour of the motherhouse followed. Built in 1884, one of the first tasks was to build a motherhouse, which would serve as their convent and as an "academy" for students of all faiths.

The tour included a brief history of the convent and



COURTESY PHOTO

A soil management display was set up at the event.

chapels.

The day was a fitting tribute to St. Isidore and his wife St. Maria.

The qualities found in the lives of Isidore and Maria — commitment to family, social justice work, love for the land, service to the poor and a deep spirituality — are qualities that exist in rural America and are key to growing the Catholic faith in rural members of the diocese.

WEDDINGS

Leo Dreiling and Michaela Kuhn were married April 15, 2023, at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays. Father Damian Richards witnessed their vows. Parents of the

bridegroom are Leo and Michaela (Chestnut) Dreiling. Parents of the bride are Terry and Rebecca (Wasinger) Kuhn. Witnesses were Heath Horacek and Brittany Andrade.

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 June

We pray that the international community may commit in a concrete way to ensuring the abolition of torture and guarantee

support to victims and their families.

Diocesan prayer intention for June

We pray for peace in our world. May we learn to see Christ in all those we meet. Lord, teach us to love others, to treat them with the value and dignity they deserve as your sons and daughters.

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DEATHS

Grace M. (Dusin) Bruna, 73, of Hanover, died March 13, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 18 at St. John the Baptist in Hanover. Father Joseph Kieffer presided.

Scott "Scooter" A. Bruna, 59, of Hanover, died March 15, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 20 at St. John the Baptist in Hanover. Father Joseph Kieffer presided.

Maria Cappelletti, 89, died Dec. 18, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 28 at

St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City. Father Sam Etim presided. Burial in Fort Riley Post Cemetery.

James Curtis Costello, 65, of Lakewood, Calif., died Feb. 18, 2020. Commendation and Committal were celebrated April 29 in Sunrise Cemetery in Manhattan. Father Ryan McCandless presided.

Raymond George Costello, 96, of Plano, Texas, died Feb. 3, 2023. Commendation and committal were celebrated April 29 in Sunrise Ceme-

tery in Manhattan. Father Ryan McCandless presided.

Charles V. "Chuck" Giebler, 92, died April 8, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 18 at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays. Father Damian Richards presided. Burial at St. Joseph Cemetery in Hays.

Sister Donna Gottschalk, 82, died Nov. 2, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Nov. 11 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays. Father Nick Parker presided. Burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Hays.

Monica J. Grant, 69, of Concordia, died March 31, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 14 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Concordia. Father David Metz presided. Inurnment in St. Concordia Cemetery in Concordia.

Larry Michael Hynek, 71, of rural Barnes, died Jan. 29, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated Feb. 3 at St. John the Baptist in Hanover. Father Joseph Kieffer presided.

Larry Larson, 79, died April 10, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 18 at St. Edward Church in Belleville. Father Henry Baxa presided. Burial in Riverview Cemetery in Scandia.

Linda Lynch, of Junction City, died March 25, 2023. Committal service was March 31 in St. Mary Cemetery. Father Gnanasekar Kulandai presided.

Rosella Frances Mallon, 93, of Manhattan, died March 16, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 24 at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Father Ryan McCandless presided. Burial

in St. Patrick's Cemetery in Ogden.

Ella Louise Moloney, 76, of Junction City, died April 16, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 21 at St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City. Father Frank Coady, Father Kerry Ninemire, Father Peter O'Donnell and Father Gnanasekar Kulandai presided. Burial in Vine Creek Cemetery in Ottawa.

Janel A. Moore, 70, of Hays, died April 4, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 11 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church. Father Joshua Werth presided. Burial in St. Anthony Cemetery in Schoenchen.

Edna Lou (Koester) Riemann, 88, of Phillipsburg, died April 7, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 13 at Ss. Philip and James Church in Phillipsburg. Father John Schmeidler presided. Burial in Fairview Cemetery in Phillipsburg.

Iris Sanders, 94, of Junction City, died Jan. 28, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated Feb. 4 at St. Francis Xavier Church in Junction City. Father Sam Etim presided. Burial in St. Mary Cemetery.

Sharon Louise (Gales) Schmidt, 80, of Hanover, died Dec. 23, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Jan. 6 at St. John the Baptist in Hanover. Father Joseph Kieffer presided.

Bernette R. Stadelman, 77, died March 26, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 31 at St. Joseph Church in Hays. Father Dana Clark presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery in Hays.

Brian Christopher Thoman, 39, of Indianapolis, died Dec. 16, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 4 at Chaput-Buoy Funeral Home in Concordia. Father David Metz presided. Inurnment in St. Concordia Cemetery.

Francis "Frank" Unrein, 89, of Gorham, died April 9, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 15 at St. Mary Help of Christians Church in Gorham. Father Michael Elanjimattathil presided. Burial in St. Mary Cemetery in Gorham.

Barbra Ann (Buser) Walther, 88, of St. John, Ariz., died Feb. 10, 2023. Grave-side service was conducted by Father Matthew Cowan on April 15 in St. Joseph Cemetery in New Almelo.

Ardell (Walker) Wilkie, 93, of Marysville, died Dec. 26, 2022. Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 30 at St. John the Baptist in Hanover. Father Joseph Kieffer presided.

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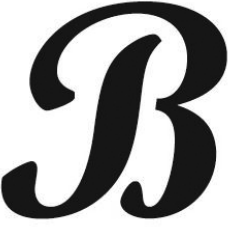
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Speaker discusses cultural topics at event

BY ALLISON OCHOA

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Gender identity, preferred pronouns and cultural pressures were just a few topics tackled by speaker Jason Evert in his “Gender and the Theology of Your Body” presentation April 24 at the Basilica of St. Fidelis in Victoria.

During his 90-minute presentation, Evert addressed the confusion many young people face as gender issues continue to be highlighted in multiple facets of everyday life.

“Facebook in the United States offers 56 genders to choose from and in the UK, 71 gender options are offered,” he said. “People are tempted to either dismiss it all or debate it.”

Evert delved into gender theory, stereotypes and gender dysphoria, explaining the differences and nuances between them. He also gave real-world examples and statistics proving the harm gender issues and the cultural focus on them are creating.

“Today, people are telling kids, ‘If you were born in the wrong body, don’t change your mind, change your body,’” he said.

Evert explained the physical and mental health toll these gender issues are taking on young people. Those who have undergone puberty blockers or hormone treatment are experiencing sterility, increased risk of heart disease and a lifelong medical dependency to support the transition. He also cited studies that indicate an increased suicide risk for individuals who have undergone a gender transition process.



COURTESY PHOTO

Jason Evert speaks to those in attendance at the April event.

“People ask, ‘What can we do?’ when faced with gender identity issues because, to many people, the mindset is you either affirm them or reject them,” he said. “This is a struggle between the world and the truth. If you love someone, you don’t lie to them. Doing so is false compassion.”

“Instead of arguing, listen with reverent curiosity. We don’t always have to be the mouth of Christ. ... Sometimes we have to be his ears.”

“Our whole culture is out to sea on this topic and if we as a culture can’t distinguish male from female, the issues will compound exponentially,” he said. “This is where the Church can step in with clarity. The body doesn’t need to be reconstructed, but the culture needs to be reconstructed.”

Jeanette Brungardt, director of religious education at the Basilica of St. Fidelis and coordinator of the evening’s events, said

Evert’s message is vital due to the topic’s prevalence in our cultural conversation.

“Just because we’re a small town in western Kansas doesn’t mean our kids aren’t being exposed to this idea that you can choose your gender,” she said. “It’s a hard topic to tackle and people want answers, people on the ministry side, like youth sponsors and directors of religious education, as well as parents. Jason always approaches every topic with compassion, but he’s very direct. His message is a source of love, compassion and general guidance.”

Four junior high school students from St. Francis Xavier parish in Junction City were part of the 160 attendees at the event. The

parish’s evangelization coordinator and trip sponsor, Amber Davis, said the students were glad they went.

“They thought the presentation was good and they liked the fact that he wove humor into it,” Davis said. “I thought it was a timely and relevant subject for them to hear about because they need to know how to handle this issue. Jason gave them a good foundation by saying, ‘Here’s the issue and here’s how to help the people who may come to you with this issue.’ He gave them the verbiage to communicate with people gently and lovingly about it, to help them through the struggles while affirming God’s plan for them.”

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