



# THE REGISTER

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA

MAY 24, 2024

TOGETHER, LET US BE DISCIPLES OF JESUS ON MISSION.

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## Prayer, silence and the Blessed Virgin Mary

*Bishop Vincke reflects on his 25 years as a priest*

BY ALAN HOLDREN  
SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Every day starts at around 5 a.m. No alarm, just the routine. Still in his pajamas, his first steps are to the house chapel for holy hour. Bishop Vincke's every day begins together with Jesus Christ himself, in prayer and silence, discerning God's will.

"I would say the Lord has blessed me with being at peace with silence and he's blessed me with knowing the importance of prayer," shares a refreshed looking Bishop Vincke in his chancery office on a rainy late-April Saturday just after lunch.

Bishop Vincke, who will turn 60 on July 9th, would rather not talk so much about himself but he has an important milestone coming up. His priestly ordination anniversary is June 12th, and he opened his doors to talk about the takeaways from his 25 years as a priest.

### Cultivating a vocation

Bishop Vincke grew up on a dairy farm in Michigan, the ninth of ten children. His parents raised him in the Faith. He stayed close to the sacraments. His mom made sure he made it to confession every month. Their family faith tradition had deep roots. His grandfather fought in the Great War back in Poland with John Paul II's father. And, it was his father's four sisters in the Benedictine order back in his native-Louisiana that showed young

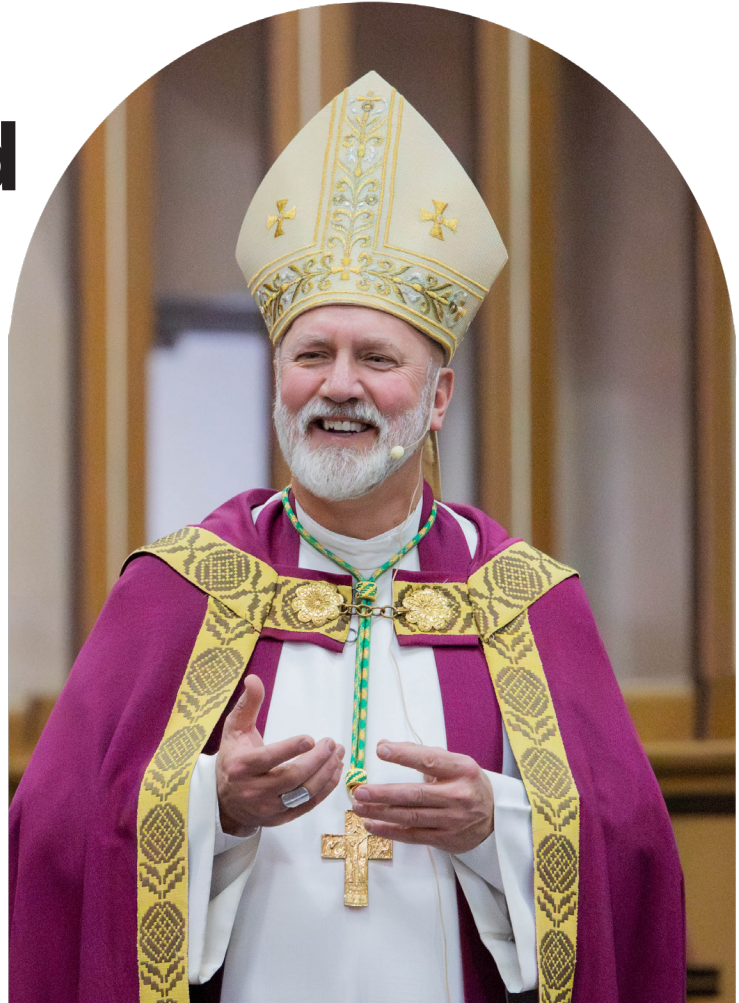
Jerry a joy that he wanted. Their secret? "They seemed detached from the world but very involved with the world in terms of prayer," says Bishop Vincke.

They planted a seed that would grow. It just needed time and encouragement. In his last year of high school, as he walked out of Mass with his girlfriend, his parish priest asked if he had ever considered the priesthood.

A few years later at Ferris State University in Michigan where he studied public relations, he had an assignment to get a comment from the priest in charge of the campus Newman Center. "And he just looked at me. Didn't answer the question. He just asked me, 'Have you ever thought about being a priest?' And that was the second time."

It wasn't until he was 22, though, during an internship with the St. Louis Cardinals Major League Baseball team that he really felt that call to the priesthood himself. Although he didn't immediately pursue it, he ultimately couldn't ignore it. "I felt that not only did God want me to do this, but this is where I want to be," Bishop Vincke shares.

One of his Benedictine aunts had given him a series of cassette tapes on St Ignatius' life that described the saint's own discernment process. "He felt the Lord say, 'Leave everything to me, I need you in this world.' And I felt the Lord saying, yeah,



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

**Bishop Gerald Vincke shares a message with the faithful at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina.**

he wants me to do this."

Several years and one last girlfriend later, he finally accepted the call and entered the seminary.

The first year of seminary was the hardest, but it was during that first month at Athenaeum Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio, that Jerry made a pledge to pray a rosary every day for the rest of his life. "It has happened and I think Mary's the one that really got me through this," says Bishop Vincke very sincerely.

He saw the years of formation through and on June 12, 1999, the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the then-34-year-old Deacon Jerry Vincke entered the Diocese of Lansing's St Mary's Cathedral. It was the hottest day of the year in a cathedral with no air conditioning when Deacon Vincke and two other candidates for the priesthood lay prostrate before the Lord as clergy, family and friends sang the Litany of Saints.

Laying there, the soon-to-be Fr. Vincke thought,

"Lord I'm in your hands and I'm going to give my life to you' and ... 'wow, you chose me to do this.'" The rest is "a bit of a blur" at this point, but "it was emotional." Lansing Bishop Carl Mingeling ordained him and his parents threw a party for him out on the farm later that day.

### Being an instrument

Administering the sacraments for 25 years, a priest develops an incredible body of experience, knowledge, and wisdom. Bishop Vincke has served as parish priest, director of a youth retreat center, vocations director, formator at Rome's Pontifical North American College, and now as Bishop of Salina. All of that experience has made it clear to him what God expects of his priests.

"A priest is called to lay down his life like a Good Shepherd for his people and especially to offer the sacrifice of the Mass which

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

# Giving the gift of an encounter with God

*“Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.”*

*Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth.”*

This past Sunday, we celebrated the Feast of Pentecost in which the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples of Jesus. This changed their lives. Jesus ascended to heaven but continued his mission through the working of the Holy Spirit in the lives of his disciples.

It’s good to remind ourselves that what happened then is happening now. We have received the Holy Spirit through our Baptism and Confirmation—the same Holy Spirit as the Apostles—and not a lesser quality either. The mission of Jesus continues in us. The chapters of the Acts of the Apostles continue in our lives through the working of the Holy Spirit.

My desire as your bishop is that every person in our diocese is filled with the Holy Spirit and each one of you experiences God’s love in your hearts.

Pope Francis commented on the importance of the Holy Spirit: “I would like to ask you a question: how many of you pray to the Holy Spirit every day? Probably few, but we must satisfy this desire of Jesus and pray every day to the Holy Spirit, so that he opens our heart towards Jesus. Let’s ask ourselves: are we open to the Holy Spirit, do I pray to him to enlighten me, to make me more sensitive to the things of God? And this is a prayer we need to pray every day: Holy Spirit, may my heart be open to the Word of God, may my heart be open to good, may my heart be open to

the beauty of God every day.”

In last month’s column, I mentioned that we are called to be disciples on mission. Pope Francis began his Apostolic Exhortation Evangelium Gaudium with these words: “The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew.”

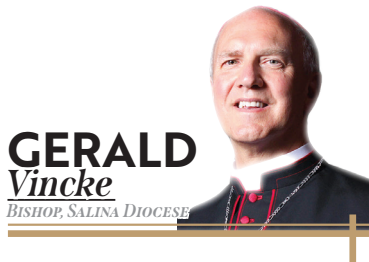
The greatest gift we can give another is the encounter with Jesus—the Savior of the world. Again, Pope Francis asks, “Do we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit, so as to be an active part of our communities, or do we close in on ourselves, saying ‘I have so many things to do, that’s not my job’?”

Jesus’ mission was aimed at giving the Spirit of God to all of us so we can continue his mission. May we be aware of our baptism and confirmation, sources of grace that are always present in us. May we give away what we have received. May the gift of the Holy Spirit be desired, prayed for and rediscovered today.

Saint Mother Teresa once said “I can do things you cannot. You can do things I cannot. We can do great things together.” Come Holy Spirit!

*+ Gerald L. Vincke*

The Most Rev. Gerald L. Vincke  
Bishop of Salina



**GERALD Vincke**  
BISHOP, SALINA DIOCESE

*“Ven, Espíritu Santo, llena los corazones de tus fieles y enciende en ellos el fuego de tu amor.”*

*Envía tu Espíritu y serán creados, y renovarás la faz de la tierra.”*

El domingo pasado celebramos la fiesta de Pentecostés en la que el Espíritu Santo descendió sobre los discípulos de Jesús. Les cambió la vida. Jesús ascendió al cielo, pero continuó su misión a través de la obra del Espíritu Santo en la vida de sus discípulos.

Es bueno recordarnos a nosotros mismos que lo que sucedió entonces está sucediendo ahora. Hemos recibido el Espíritu Santo a través de nuestro Bautismo y Confirmación—el mismo Espíritu Santo que los Apóstoles recibieron—y tampoco es de menor calidad. La misión de Jesús continúa en nosotros. Los capítulos de los Hechos de los Apóstoles continúan en nuestras vidas a través de la obra del Espíritu Santo.

Mi deseo como su obispo es que cada persona en nuestra diócesis esté llena del Espíritu Santo y que cada uno de ustedes experimente el amor de Dios en sus corazones.

El Papa Francisco comentó sobre la importancia del Espíritu Santo: “Me gustaría hacerles una pregunta: ¿cuántos de ustedes rezan al Espíritu Santo todos los días? Probablemente pocos, pero debemos satisfacer este deseo de Jesús y rezar todos los días al Espíritu Santo, para que abra nuestro corazón hacia Jesús. Preguntémonos: ¿estamos abiertos al Espíritu Santo, le rezo para que me ilumine, para que me haga más sensible a las cosas de Dios? Y esta

es una oración que debemos rezar todos los días: Espíritu Santo, que mi corazón se abra a la Palabra de Dios, que mi corazón se abra al bien, que mi corazón se abra a la belleza de Dios todos los días”.

En la columna del mes pasado, mencioné que estamos llamados a ser discípulos en misión. El Papa Francisco comenzó su Exhortación Apostólica Evangelium Gaudium con estas palabras: “La alegría del Evangelio llena el corazón y la vida de todos los que encuentran a Jesús. Aquellos que aceptan su oferta de salvación son liberados del pecado, el dolor, el vacío interior y la soledad. Con Cristo, la alegría renace constantemente”.

El regalo más grande que podemos dar a otro es el encuentro con Jesús, el Salvador del mundo. Una vez más, el Papa Francisco pregunta: “¿Nos abrimos al Espíritu Santo, para estar activos en nuestras comunidades, o nos encerramos en nosotros mismos, diciendo: ‘Tengo tantas cosas que hacer, ese no es mi trabajo’?”

La misión de Jesús estaba dirigida a darnos el Espíritu de Dios a todos nosotros para que podamos continuar su misión. Que seamos conscientes de nuestro bautismo y confirmación, fuentes de gracia que siempre están presentes en nosotros. Que podamos regalar lo que hemos recibido. Que el don del Espíritu Santo sea deseado, rezado y redescubierto hoy.

La Santa Madre Teresa dijo una vez: “Yo puedo hacer cosas que tú no puedes. Tú puedes hacer cosas que yo no puedo. Podemos hacer grandes cosas juntos”. ¡Ven Espíritu Santo!

## GOVERNOR PASSES BILL TO HONOR FR. KAPAUN IN CAPITOL

On March 22, Governor Laura Kelly signed Senate Bill 431. The bill directs the Capitol Preservation Committee to approve plans to place a permanent memorial honoring the life and service of Servant of God Fr. Emil J. Kapaun. “Fr. Emil Kapaun was known for

his selfless, dedicated service and providing care to all, regardless of their religion or beliefs,” Governor Laura Kelly said. “I am proud to honor his legacy and sacrifices for our country by signing this bipartisan bill.”

The bill makes note that Fr.

Kapaun is the most highly decorated chaplain in United States Army history and that he died as a prisoner of war in Korea.

It also states that, “Chaplain Kapaun’s life embodies the Kansas spirit and exemplifies the state motto ‘Ad astra per aspera.’”

Fr. Kapaun’s cause for beautification and canonization will be discussed in a meeting of the Theological Consultors at the Ordinary meeting of Cardinals and Bishops this June.

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**25<sup>TH</sup>**

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OF PRIESTHOOD**

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4:00PM-6:00PM**  
VICTORIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GYM  
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**BISHOP'S CALENDAR**

**June**

- 1 Confirmation, St. Mary Queen of the Universe, Salina, 7 p.m.
- 2 Confirmation, OLPH, Concordia, 10:30 a.m.
- 2 Fr. Don Zimmerman's Golden Ordination Anniv. Mass & Reception, STM, Manhattan, 3 p.m.
- 4 Confirmation, Holy Ghost, Sharon Springs, 5:30pm (MT)
- 9 100th Anniv. Celebration Mass, Sacred Heart, Atwood, 10:30 a.m.
- 9 Bishop Vincke's 25th Ordination Anniv. Mass and Reception, Victoria, 3 p.m.
- 10-14 USCCB Special Assembly, Louisville, KY
- 18 Year of Mercy, St. Thomas, Stockton
- 19 Year of Mercy, Sacred Heart, Plainville
- 25-26 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, Benedictine College, Atchison
- 30 Confirmation, St. Francis of Assisi, Munjor, 8 a.m.
- 30 Confirmation, St. Nicholas, Hays, 11 a.m.

**JUNE 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:**

We pray that migrants fleeing from war or hunger, forced to undertake journeys full of danger and violence, find welcome and new opportunities in the countries that receive them.

**Diocesan prayer intention:**

Lord, we ask for your blessing to be with all our young people and their families this summer. We ask that You protect them, fill their summer days with joy, and draw them ever closer to You.

**It all adds up to One for Fr. Chacko**

By DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN  
THE REGISTER

He might be a math whiz. But Father Mathew Chacko wouldn't even begin to guess how many sacraments he has performed as a Catholic priest.

Nonetheless, he will tell you that the one that ranks at the top for him is the Eucharist – the opportunity to offer Mass on a daily basis.

Fr. Mathew, in his 11th year of serving the Salina Diocese, celebrated his 40th anniversary of priesthood earlier this month.

A native of India, he came to Kansas in 2012, but it wasn't his first experience in the United States.

Fr. Mathew was ordained in his home country on May 11, 1984, and began teaching math at a university in India.

A few years later, he came to the U.S. to work on master's and doctorate degrees in math at Columbia University in New York City. He already had earned three bachelor's degrees and a master's in his home country in 12 years prior to his ordination.

After graduating from Columbia, he began teaching math at universities in New York and serving as an associate pastor at area churches there before returning to India in 2007.

Because of some serious health issues with one of our diocesan priests, Salina Bishop Edward Weisenburger summoned help from the Carmelite of Mary Immaculate congregation in India, and Fr. Mathew became a Kansas citizen.

He found that life in rural western Kansas was a stark contrast to the hustle and bustle of New York City.

"It wasn't really a culture shock going to New York," said Father Mathew, who grew up in the metro area of Bangalore, a population of several million people even back then, much like New York.

"But the Salina Diocese is definitely different than the city," he said of the wide open spaces.

He served as pastor of parishes in Wilson, Dorrance and Holyrood from 2012-19 before returning to his home country because of health issues of his own.

When Fr. Mathew came back to Kansas three years later, he was assigned pastor of parishes in three more small towns in the northwest part of the vast diocese.

Fr. Mathew describes himself as quiet, as do his parishioners, but they are quick to add they appreciate his reverence and his love of his vocation.

Carol Wessel, sacristan for the three parishes, said she is impressed with Fr. Mathew's memory.

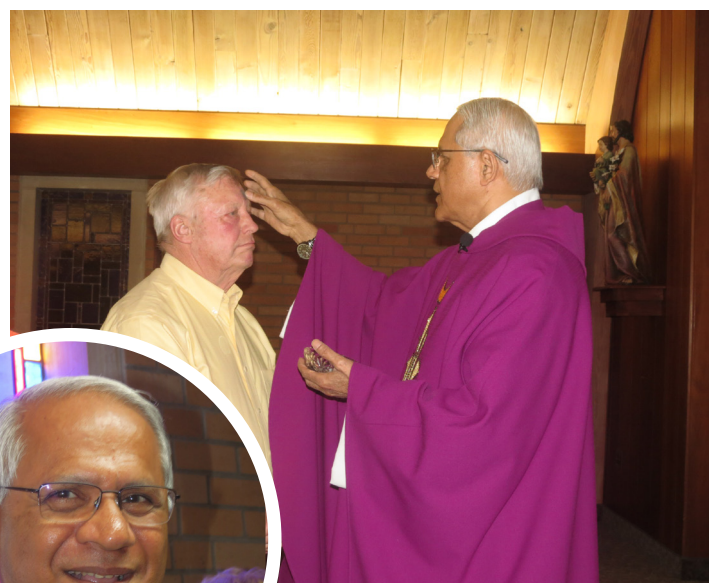
"He has no notes when he gives a sermon," she said. "He's very on top of

everything. He is really knowledgeable, and it amazes me that he can talk like that without notes."

Fr. Mathew keeps a busy schedule. He says one Mass at all three parishes on the weekends and alternates among them for weekly Masses every day but Monday.

That dedication is not lost on his parishioners.

"We have three small parishes out here," Wessel said, "so we feel very fortunate to have him."



COURTESY PHOTO

**Fr. Mathew Chacko places ashes on a parishioner's forehead on Ash Wednesday.**



**Prayer for Fathers**

St. Joseph, guardian of Jesus and chaste husband of Mary, you passed your life in loving fulfillment of duty.



You supported the holy family of Nazareth with the work of your hands. Kindly protect those who trustingly come to you.

You know their aspirations, their hardships, their hopes. They look to you because they know you will understand and protect them.

You too knew trial, labor and weariness. But amid the worries of material life your soul was full of deep peace and sang out in true joy through intimacy with God's Son entrusted to you and with Mary, his tender Mother.

Assure those you protect that they do not labor alone. Teach them to find Jesus near them and to watch over him faithfully as you have done.

Amen

## 25 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD, FROM PAGE 1

is for the salvation of souls,” says Bishop Vincke. “A priest is called to give his life away for his flock. He is not a priest for himself but for others.”

Looking back, he sees clearly that he has been blessed in so many ways throughout his priesthood.

The first great blessing that comes to his mind is that he accompanied both of his parents in the final days and moments of their lives. His father, Henry, died the year after his priestly ordination. His mother, Fidelis, passed on to eternal life three years ago.

As director of vocations back in the Diocese of Lansing, he started with 13 men and grew the seminarian numbers to 38. “It’s all God’s Providence and God’s calling,” he learned then. “Give it to God and he takes care of everything for us. God always provides and we don’t have to do all the work. God is so good to us.”

Being in Rome for five years as the formator for 42 men was a “beautiful assignment” and then came the move back to pastor at a 2,000-family parish and K-8 school in Michigan. “I loved it, absolutely loved it,” he says of the experience.

Being ordained a bishop in 2018 necessarily changed his priesthood. He’s still getting used to not being able to “go to the bishop” himself when an issue arises. The episcopate “was never on my radar,” he says of it now, but adds “it’s about trusting in the Lord, that he’s going to provide.”

All of these important moments and roles have given him a unique perspective, but the nugget of wisdom he most goes back to is: “The more time you spend in silence, the more the Lord speaks to your heart.”

He knows when he’s praying well and regularly because “you go through those ups and downs in your spiritual life, and it allows you to love your people so much more.”

Bishop Vincke adds that he does have some regrets. “You always want to be an instrument of God’s love instead of a barrier. In the seminary, they teach you either you’re going to be a bridge for the people or a barrier, and there are a few times I’ve been a barrier.”

“My only regrets are not loving people the way that God asked me to love them,” says the bishop. But, he also sees the good God brings out of those situations and has learned to trust in God’s plan.

“I would say the Lord has blessed me with being at peace with silence and to pray, and he has blessed me with knowing the importance of prayer. And, I would say the other gift is I actually love being with people and at the same time I’m comfortable being alone, very comfortable with just being with the Lord.”

### Following the Blessed lead

Mary has marked his life deeply. The two greatest influences on his life, in fact, are “my parents and the Blessed Mother,” he says. Well before his ordination, he would pray for her intercession and he felt her presence in his life.

But, it was five years after his ordination while he was in Rome visiting that he received confirmation of her guiding hand. It was the December 8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception, a nation-wide holiday in Italy and the day when the Pope visits a statue of Mary across the city center from the Vatican at the beautiful Piazza di Spagna. There, he makes a brief address to the city’s residents and leads those present in prayer.

The year was 2004 and he was a guest at the Pontifical North American College, the American seminary in Rome. Unsure if he should make the trek across town or not, he dropped to his knees in his room to pray about it. He felt Mary urging him to go, so he did.

He started walking, only knowing the general direction he should go. At a stoplight, he met an English-speaking man who led him to a religious house, directed him down a road, and went on his way. At the end of the road, he found himself standing on a few stairs adjacent to the street, not knowing what would happen next.

There on the packed streets, John Paul II arrived, bent over by Parkinson’s. As he was passing in front of Fr. Jerry Vincke, two little girls stopped the pope and gave him some flowers. “He was kind of like leaning over and he spins around like he’s looking for someone and then all of a sudden he looks at me and he nods to me and gives me his blessing. And that was the Blessed Mother. I really believe that.”

The bishop’s takeaway from that experience was simple, and he has lived by it since: “Listen to the Blessed Mother’s lead.”

There was another time when he was struggling with prayer. “Mary simply said to my heart, ‘Let’s just be with Jesus.’ Sometimes you go to prayer asking yourself what am I going to say or what am I going to do? And there’s Mary just saying it’s okay just to be together. It’s like a husband and wife driving a car for an hour. Sometimes you say a little bit and sometimes you don’t and that’s kind of how I feel about that.”

She’s been there every step of the way, the bishop says. “I was ordained a deacon on the presentation of Mary, a priest on the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and then became a bishop on the Feast of the Queenship of Mary, August 22nd.”

### A man on (a) mission

Bishop Vincke is known for traveling across the 27,000 square miles of the diocese continuously, always on the move. After his morning routine in Salina, after his Holy Hour, Mass, and duties at the chancery, “I go somewhere,” he says. “I like to sleep in my own bed, but I don’t mind being on the road.”

He visited each of the 86 diocesan parishes in the past year as part of a “Year of Mercy.” Since his ordination to the episcopate, he’s been to each of the parishes “multiple times,” in his estimation. That time in the car between places is spent praying, in silence or listening to classical music, often alone,



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

**Bishop Jerry Vincke gives a homily to students at St. Andrew’s in Abilene during Catholic Schools Week.**

for intentions the Holy Spirit puts on his heart. He sometimes thinks of his favorite place on the planet: the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, in France. He’s been there five times.

Then, he arrives at his destination and is catapulted into action. He loves to be among the people. Not only at formal events like First Communions, Confirmations, Knights of Columbus, conferences, school auctions, seminarian dinners and USCCB meetings, but, it’s family occasions as well.

He’s at parishes, schools, homes. He’ll ride along on combines during the harvest and help ranchers with the calving season. He’s been known to drop by a Confirmation party or at sporting events across the diocese on a moment’s notice. He once got a black eye playing a pick-up football game with some school kids, but still jumps into whatever game is going on when he arrives in time for recess.

When he’s in Salina, he leads morning prayer daily at the chancery. The bishop and staff pray for parishioners across the diocese by name. Different people, different needs every morning. He gets on a weekly video call on Monday evenings with his family to pray a rosary. His brother, Dan, thanks God for their parents, “who gave us the gift of the Faith.”

He loves to walk. When he has the time, he walks the trails through Salina for hours. He walks and he prays the rosary, making sure to ask for St. Maximilian Kolbe and St. John Paul II’s intercession at the end. When he doesn’t have the time to go for a long walk, he jumps on a stair-stepper machine. “Doctor’s orders” to keep his heart healthy.

He doesn’t say anything about it in this interview, but there’s so much he does besides. Relationships are everything to Bishop Vincke.

He’s known for forming real relationships with people. He doesn’t often forget a name.

They know him in the jails and other ministries and apostolates, as he watches out for and watches over the vulnerable. All the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

**Bishop Vincke greets parishioners after Mass.**

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

kids know him. So many of the diocese's university, high school, and elementary students have personal relationships with him.

He is known to run up the stairs of the chancery, taking them two at a time to save time. He's a man on a mission.

He's showing the diocese how

to live out the motto he has taken on for 2024: "Together, let us be disciples of Jesus on mission."

## Continuing the mission

"My mission is to bring as many people to Jesus as possible," says the bishop at the close of the

interview about his 25 years as a priest. "That's my whole mission, to bring as many people to Jesus as I can," says the Bishop at the close of the interview about his 25 years as a priest. "Even when we feel like God is a million miles away, that is when He is closest to us, because he knows the pain in

our hearts. He's always there, ready to embrace us. All I want is for people to encounter the love and mercy of Jesus. He will guide them to their ultimate reward in Heaven. That's the goal in life, and Jesus and the Sacraments of the Church are the one thing necessary."

## Parents comforted through faith, fellowship



COURTESY PHOTO

Dave and Donna Ward, Hays, honor their son's memory by staying involved with youth, especially in coaching.

By DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN  
THE REGISTER

Every parent reacts differently to the loss of a child, regardless of their child's age.

Dave and Donna Ward have decided to honor the memory of their 12-year-old son, Matt – who died in an accident back in 1999 – by helping others going through similar losses.

That's the message they gave those attending a memorial Mass for parents of deceased children on May 8 at Sacred Heart Church in Plainville.

Bishop Jerry Vincke said a similar Mass at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan the day before.

The Wards, who live in Hays, had not heard of these Masses for parents before this year. When they learned one would be so close to home, they decided to attend.

The diocese intentionally offers these Masses sometime during May – the month of Mary, Jesus' mother.

During each Mass, parents are given a rose to present to Mother Mary in a large vase at the front of church as Bishop Vincke greets each parent approaching the statue.

"During the month of May, we as Catholics are called to renew our faith and trust in Mary," Clare Stramel from the diocesan Office of Respect Life told the congrega-

tion. "I think a day like today is a beautiful example of how we can do just that."

"Just as Jesus entrusted Mary to his Church, entrust your children to Mary," Stramel continued. "Mary's life offers comfort to those who grieve. Just as Mary found strength in her faith, so, too, do grieving parents find solace in drawing closer to her son."

Following the Mass, parents were invited to gather in the Knights of Columbus Hall for refreshments. They were also invited to share their stories if they so chose.

Some spoke freely of their deceased children, who ranged in age from adults to babies who were miscarried during pregnancy. Others sat pensively quiet, unsure if they could speak without being overcome with emotion.

The Wards wholeheartedly accepted the challenge to speak.

"I've learned through the years that you never know when your story is going to be someone else's salvation piece," Donna said. "That's humanity. That's what we're all here for. We're all part of a club we don't wish to be part of, but we are. That's our connection, and we have to respect the fact that everyone deals with loss in their own way."

The Wards told how on July 4, 1999, they were playing golf with friends in their hometown of Norton, and their son was was

playing with a neighborhood friend in his backyard. His friend shot at a bird on a clothesline pole. The BB hit the pole, ricocheted back and hit Matt in his temple.

They said Matt seemed fine until his brain began to swell. He walked into his friend's house and collapsed. He was life-watched to a hospital in Kearney, Neb., and died a few hours later.

Donna said like any tragedy, the Wards first went through the "what ifs." What if they hadn't played another nine holes of golf that day, and they would have been home. What if it hadn't been so windy, and Matt would have been at the lake. What if ...

"Then we realized there were so many things that had to come in line that day for that exact moment to happen," she said. "It wouldn't have mattered what we were doing. It was his time."

Donna said that as she and her family sat in the hospital chapel soon after Matt's passing, she heard a voice asking, "If I were to give you Matt for 12 years or not at all, what would you choose?"

"I know it was God's voice. It sat me down, and I had to answer," she continued. "I felt the voice needed an answer."

"I would take the 12 years," she admitted.

So on they marched – some days fine, other days difficult – for the past 25 years.

"Everyone feels pain; that's the universal thing about humanity," Donna said. "And everyone's pain is unique to them. We believe it's all about a choice of where you want to put your energy."

That energy for the Wards is in

their family. They eventually moved from Norton to the beautiful mountains of Colorado. But when their daughter, Tara, and her family moved to Hays, the Wards soon followed.

"I love the mountains," Dave said. "But our family is here, and family is the most important. This is where we want to be."

They have also put their energy into being involved with youth, especially in coaching (Dave in wrestling and Donna, volleyball).

The Wards say that sports parallel real life in so many ways, and "we have been blessed by the opportunity to teach life lessons through coaching, ones that athletes can take into adulthood."

Dave remembers talking to his son after a baseball game when Matt was disappointed about not having a better performance.

Dave asked Matt if he had done his best, and that's what he needed to continue to strive for. After Matt died, the Wards adopted "Just Do Your Best" (JDYB) as Matt's motto, which they continue use with their youth athletes today.

Donna talked about how you never know how your faith will be tested and that she realized "the greatest gift our parents gave us was the foundation of faith."

The Wards say they "keep going" with the belief they will indeed see Matt again someday.

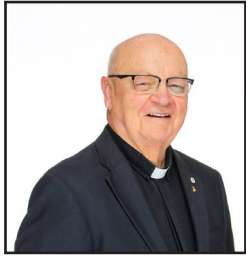
"I learned about the foundation of what I needed to know - that belief in eternity," she said. "If I live to be 100, it's going to be a snap of a finger compared to eternity."



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

During each of these special Masses, grieving parents are given a rose to present to Mother Mary in a large vase at the front of church.

## PRIEST ASSIGNMENTS



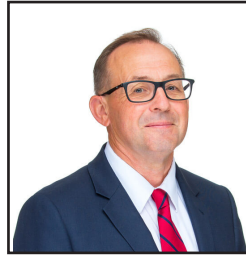
Baxa



Asirvatham



Hammerschmidt



Souza



Konrade



Rockers



Blasi



Gatschet



Basil



Schmeidler



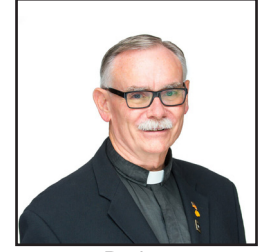
Werth



Savariyar



McCaffrey



Daise



Saw Lone



Kieffer



McCandless



Amoako-Opare



Richards



Kothalamuthu



Talbot

**Effective July 1, 2024:****Father Henry Baxa:**

Granted full retirement and relieved from all canonical appointments in the Diocese of Salina.

**Father Joseph Asirvatham, HGN:** Released from assignment as Parish Administrator of St. Joseph Parish, Bird City; St. John Nepomucene Parish, Beardsley; and St. Francis of Assisi Parish, St. Francis, to return to his home country of India.

**Father Gale Hammerschmidt:** Released from assignment as Priest Supervisor of Seven Dolours of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Manhattan, and St. Patrick Parish, Ogden, while maintaining other official appointments in addition to being the Director of Evangelization and Communications for the Diocese of Salina.

**Deacon Edward Souza:** Released from assignment as temporary Parish Director of Seven Dolours of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Manhattan, and St. Patrick Parish, Ogden, while maintaining other official appointments.

**Father Jarett Konrade and Father Andrew Rockers:** Released from the pastoral care of St. Theresa Parish, Mankato and of Sacred Heart Parish, Esbon, as priests in solidum, while maintaining other official appointments.

**Father Leo Blasi:** Transferred from pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Plainville, and St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Stockton, to pastor of Seven Dolours of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Manhattan, and St. Patrick Parish, Ogden, with

residence in the Seven Dolours of the Blessed Virgin Mary parish rectory, Manhattan.

**Father Fred Gatschet:** Released from pastoral care of St. Bernard Parish, Ellsworth, St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish, Kanopolis, and St. Joseph Parish, Brookville, as a priest in solidum. Transferred from pastor of Sacred Heart Cathedral Parish, Salina, to pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Hays, with teaching duties at Thomas More Prep-Marian Jr./Sr. High School.

**Father Stanley Basil, HGN:** Released from pastoral care of St. Bernard Parish, Ellsworth, St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish, Kanopolis, and St. Joseph Parish, Brookville, as a priest in solidum, and appointed pastor of these same parishes.

**Father John Schmeidler:** Transferred from pastor of Saints Philip and James Parish, Phillipsburg, St. John the Evangelist Parish, Logan, and St. Mary Parish, Smith Center, to pastor of Sacred Heart Cathedral Parish, Salina, and part-time Chaplain of Sacred Heart Jr./Sr. High School.

**Father Joshua Werth and Father Thiruthuvadoss 'Trinity' Savariyar:** Appointed pastoral care of Saints Philip and James Parish, Phillipsburg, St. John the Evangelist Parish, Logan, and St. Mary Parish, Smith Center, as priests in solidum, with Fr. Joshua Werth appointed as moderator. Fr. Werth maintains other official appointments with residence at St. Francis of Assisi parish rectory, Norton. Fr. Savariyar is released from assignment as Parochial Vicar of Immaculate Heart of Mary

Parish, Hays, and will reside at Saints Philip and James parish rectory, Phillipsburg.

**Father Brian McCaffrey:** Released from assignment as parochial vicar of St. Mary Queen of the Universe Parish, Salina, and Chaplain of Sacred Heart Jr./Sr. High School and appointed parochial vicar of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Hays, and chaplain of Thomas More Prep-Marian Jr./Sr. High School, and assistant Vocations Director for the Diocese of Salina, with residence in the Immaculate Heart of Mary parish rectory, Hays.

**Father Richard Daise and Father Henry Saw Lone:** Appointed pastoral care of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, St. Francis, St. Joseph Parish, Bird City, St. John Nepomucene Parish, Beardsley, Sacred Heart Parish, Atwood, and St. Mary Parish, Herndon, as priests in solidum, with Fr. Henry Saw Lone appointed as moderator. Fr. Daise is transferred from pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Hays, and will reside in the St. Francis of Assisi parish rectory, St. Francis. Fr. Saw Lone is transferred from pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Atwood, and St. Mary Parish, Herndon, and will maintain his residence at Sacred Heart parish rectory, Atwood.

**Father Joseph Kieffer and Father Ryan McCandless:** Appointed pastoral care of St. Edward Parish, Belleville, St. Isidore Parish, Cuba, St. George Parish, Munden, Sacred Heart Parish, Esbon, and St. Theresa Parish, Mankato, as priests in solidum, with Fr. Joseph Kieffer appointed as moderator. Fr. Kieffer maintains other official appointments with resi-

dence at Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish rectory, Concordia. Fr. McCandless is released from assignment as Priest in Residence at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Concordia, but will maintain his residence at Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish rectory, Concordia.

**Father Ernest Amoako-Opare:** Transferred from parish administrator to pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Hill City, St. Joseph Parish, Damar, Christ the King Parish, WaKeeney, and St. Michael Parish, Collyer, maintaining residence at the Immaculate Heart of Mary parish rectory, Hill City.

**Father Damian Richards and Father Michael Raj Kothalamuthu:** Appointed

pastoral care of Sacred Heart Parish, Plainville, and St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Stockton, as priests in solidum, with Fr. Damian Richards appointed as moderator. Fr. Richards maintains other official appointments with residence at St. Nicholas of Myra parish rectory, Hays. Fr. Kothalamuthu is released from assignment as Parochial Vicar of St. Joseph Parish, Hays, and will reside at Sacred Heart parish rectory, Plainville.

**Deacon Wayne Talbot:** Assigned to diaconal ministry at St. John the Baptist Parish, Hanover, Kansas St. Augustine Parish, Washington, Kansas and Sacred Heart Parish, Green Leaf, while maintaining other official appointments.

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2227 S RANGE AVE

AUG  
2  
5:15PM

HAYS, KS  
ROSE GARDEN  
BANQUET HALL  
2350 E 8TH ST

DETAILS TO COME

# Scholarship Winners Announced

By Corrina Hudsonpillar

The Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina is pleased to announce scholarship winners for the 2024-2025 school year. 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. Scholarship recipients are chosen by an unbiased panel of judges based on the criteria and rubrics established for each.

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 upon the passing of Msgr. Kruse in 2006.

The Marymount Memorial Education Trust Scholarship is awarded to individuals attending an accredited Catholic College as a full-time student and are active

registered members of a Catholic parish 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. Sue held many leadership positions at a local and diocesan-wide CYO level. This scholarship is awarded to an individual who is not only an active registered member of a parish in the Diocese of Salina but is also active within their local CYO group.

The Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina would like to congratulate all the scholarship recipients, as well as all graduates in the diocese. 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 us at 785-827-8746 or [development@salinadiocese.org](mailto:development@salinadiocese.org).



## 2024-2025 Winners

### MONSIGNOR CLEMENT A. KRUSE SCHOLARSHIP

- Jaci Biggs -- Kansas State University
- Jane Letourneau -- Benedictine College
- Jenna Gengler -- Kansas State University
- Marissa Myers -- Fort Hays State University
- Anna Thielen -- Bethany, Sterling or Kansas Wesleyan
- Aubrey Gengler -- Benedictine College
- Tyson Dinkel -- Fort Hays State University

### MARYMOUNT MEMORIAL EDUCATIONAL TRUST SCHOLARSHIP

- Emma Mick -- Benedictine College
- Emma Roberts -- Benedictine College
- Abigail Gardner -- Benedictine College
- Maria Mick -- Benedictine College
- Jazlyn Fenner -- Benedictine College
- Michelle Zarybnicky -- Benedictine College

### SUSIE DEGES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

- Ainsley Collins -- Colby Community College

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Working with the Catholic Foundation allows you to create an impact through planned and charitable giving that is meaningful and aligns with your Catholic values. All funds invested by the Catholic Foundation meet or exceed the guidelines established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

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Director of Development || 785-738-7336

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## Governor's Scholars named

By THE REGISTER

One senior at each of the five diocesan Catholic schools have been honored as a Kansas Governor's Scholar by finishing in the top 1 percent of their high school graduation class. Jenna Gengler, Beloit-St. John's; Jacob

Heimerman, Hays/Thomas More Prep-Marian; Anthony Marshall, Salina-Sacred Heart; Rebecca Peterson, Junction City-St. Francis Xavier; and Gage Stewart, Tipton Catholic.

Several other seniors from parishes across the diocese who attend public schools also were

named Governor's Scholars.

The entire list of 2024 scholars can be found on the Kansas State Department of Education's website at <https://shorturl.at/ipGK1>.

## Easter earns Truman scholarship

By THE REGISTER

Adelaide Easter, a graduate of Salina-Sacred Heart High School, has earned a prestigious Harry S. Truman scholarship.

Easter, a senior at Kansas State University, is majoring in agricultural economics and global food systems leadership.

Students are nominated by their institution based on their records of leadership, public service and academic achievement.

This committee select approximately 200 students as finalists, who are interviewed by regional review committees across the country. Only 55 to 65 scholars are chosen each year.

In earning the highly competitive Truman scholarship, Easter will be awarded \$30,000 for graduate studies, leadership training, and internship and fellowship opportunities in the federal government.

## SCHOLARS BOWL 'SWEEP'

The St. John's Middle School scholars bowl team had a wonderful season, competing at 10 different meets. A total of 21 students competed for St. John's this season. The 'A' team placed in the top four at every meet they attended, bringing home the gold three times and the silver five times. The 'B' team brought home the gold five times and the silver two times. Perhaps the cherry on the top of the season was going to our last meet at Southeast of Saline with four teams and coming home with the top two spots in both divisions—a clean sweep!



COURTESY PHOTO

Back Row: (6th graders, left to right) Eva Holdren, Karrydy Dunstan, Wadyn Griffeth, Trayl Lowery, Simeon Horinek, Sam Letourneau, Kolbe Konrade. Middle Row: (8th graders, left to right) Max Clark, Brooks Dunstan, Lila Lowery, Addison Bergmann, Maryann Walter, Zelig Horinek. Front Row: (7th graders, left to right) Aaron Bates, David DiNuzzo, Bryson Bergmann, Colton Pearson, Bosco Holdren, Kolbe Eilert, Isabel Holdren, Avila Niewald

## ST. JOHN'S SEES STOCK MARKET GAME SUCCESS



COURTESY PHOTO

Two St. John's High School students, Faith Woods and Jonas Letourneau, were top finishers among Kansas high school students in The Stock Market Game for the October 2023 to April 2024 cycle. Woods finished in second place, growing her \$100,000 initial portfolio to \$130,755.34 over the course of the school year. Letourneau finished in third place, growing his portfolio to \$126,112.99. Both students participated in The Stock Market Game as part of the Personal Finance class taught by Jeff Bates.

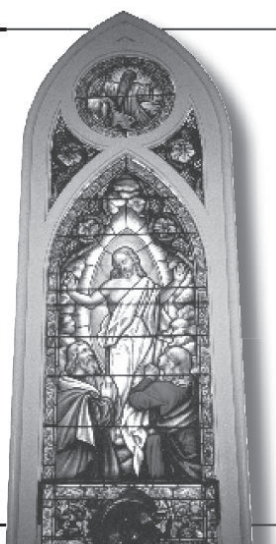
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COURTESY PHOTO

## ACE's success is multi-generational

By DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN  
THE REGISTER

There is a changing of the guard for the annual Auction for Christian Education at Thomas More Prep-Marian Junior-Senior High School in Hays.

Led by 32-year-old Mason Ruder – advancement director for Hays Catholic Schools – and his crew, the 2024 ACE, to which it's commonly referred, went off without a hitch the last weekend of April in its attempt to break last year's record of \$897,700.

Of particular interest is Item No. 160, which always targets a specific need for the school. This year's funds for that item are earmarked for a financial foundation for the future of Catholic education.

The Walter and Marie Dechant family kicked off Item 160 this year with a donation of \$102,500. The Leo J. and Albina Dreiling Trust contributed a dollar-for-dollar matching fund for up to \$250,000, so that item alone had reached nearly \$500,000 before the auction even began.

Anyone wishing to contribute to Item 160 can still do so by contacting the school at 785-625-6577 by May 31.

Although a younger crowd is helping take over the event's planning, Ruder and his employees still had plenty of help this year from the old guard.

Mary Lang and Kathy Kaseforth, who each had worked more than 25 years in

TMP-M's alumni office before recently retiring, helped out this year.

Wanda Billinger, long-time director of the school's alumni association, has worked on ACE for more than 35 years and has been looking forward to – and preparing for – the 50th ACE for several years. She personally solicits hundreds of gifts for ACE each year.

Ruder acknowledged that his office couldn't have gotten the job done without Billinger's lead and the help of so many other volunteers.

"With our new crew, we are only as successful as we are because of all the work and foundation of those that went before us," Ruder said. "To be able to carry on from what we learned from the generation that has taken care of us for so long is a privilege."

Even the crowd has taken on a younger look in recent years. Several alumni were walking the halls of TMP-M as students just six years ago.

One of those was Ethan Lang, a 2018 graduate who attended his first ACE with his wife, Emily, also a TMP-M alum ('19).

"It was really cool to be able to experience ACE from a different view," he said, adding that he was glad to see several people who he attended school with at the auction.

"It's great to see the different generations where one of the main things you all have in common is TMP, everyone caring about the future of TMP," he said.

## Scholarship Granting Organization for the CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA

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Call or Email the Catholic Foundation Office to learn more

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## Sacred Heart, TMP-M claim prestigious Jester Awards

BY THE REGISTER

The drama departments of two of the Salina Diocese's Catholic high schools were well represented at this month's Jester Awards at Wichita's Century II Performing Arts Center.

Salina's Sacred Heart and Hays' Thomas More Prep-Marian each took home some top awards from the Jester Awards, a program designed to celebrate excellence in high school musical theatre.

The Music Theatre Wichita judging team reviews the scores given to 134 high school music performances that were entered for consideration by 44 schools throughout Kansas during this school year.

Sacred Heart won the Belden Mills Spirit of the Jesters Award and \$1,000 for its theatre department, which is given to one high school each year for showing the Jester Awards spirit.

Sacred Heart was chosen for the spirit award for its resilience, determination and teamwork to make their show possible when a community tragedy forced



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

**Eighth-grader Isiah Boswell, Salina, and fifth-grader Carter Stephenson, Hays, won Jester Awards for their performances in their community high schools' musicals this year.**

them to completely move their show to a new location the day of opening night.

In addition, Isiah Boswell from Salina and Carter Stephenson from Hays each received the Outstanding Pre-High School Performer Award.

Isiah, an eighth-grader at Sacred Heart Middle School, played Linus in the production of "You're A Good Man Charlie Brown."

Carter, a fifth-grader at Holy Family Elementary, played Winthrop Paroo in TMP-M's production of "The Music Man."

Those winners were chosen from among regional nominations by Music Theatre Wichita.

Other regional nominations for the diocesan schools were:

- Sacred Heart's "Charlie Brown" – Cameo performer, Karrigan Thompson as Violet w./ blanket; and program design, Matea Gregg, drama club supervisor and music director.
- TMP-M's "Music Man" – Stage crew.

## Service day for TMP-M students

BY THE REGISTER

Hays residents young and old were treated to a day of fun with high school students earlier this semester.

Thomas More Prep-Marian High School students took to the streets to spend a day of service, delivering goodies to and spending time with community members.

Residents at the Via Christi Village and Good Samaritan Society facilities, as well as clients of Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas, got to enjoy cinnamon rolls while playing board games and bingo with the students.

Students also spent recess time outdoors with youngsters at Holy Family Elementary, tidied up areas around the

TMP-M campus and made thank-you cards for local businesses to show appreciation for support of their school.

They rotated among each of those service activity locations throughout the morning. TMP-M students then got a treat themselves with grilled burgers, courtesy of members of local Knights of Columbus members.

The afternoon was dedicated to Class Olympics and camaraderie.

Senior Madelyn Rozean, president of the school's Student Council, deemed the day a success, as "students were given the opportunity to grow in relationships with each other and utilize team-building skills."



COURTESY PHOTO

**TMP-M students spend time playing bingo with DSNWK clients during a service day for the school.**

## IT TAKES A DIOCESE!

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### Hays

Email Mandy Meagher  
mmeagher@hfehays.org or call 785-625-3131

- Classroom Aid
- Kitchen Helper
- Maintenance Worker

### Hays

Email Chad Meitner,  
meitnerc@tmpmarian.org or call 785-625-6577

- Front Office Admin. Assistant

### Junction City

Email Shawn Augustine  
augustines@saintxrams.org or call 785-238-2841

- Activities Director
- K-12 Counselor
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### Manhattan

Email Mike Hubka  
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- Part-time K-4 Music
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### Oakley

Email Michelle Selzer  
mselzer@sjoakley.org or call 785-671-4451

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# From tragedy to healing: A mother's journey with Catholic Charities

By MEGAN ROBL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF NORTHERN KANSAS

Tynan Dowell's life changed forever with a tragic drowning accident that no mother should ever have to endure.

"Clara was a chubby little girl with bright blonde hair and bright blue eyes, just like her daddy," she shares.

As Tynan recalls her 14-month-old daughter Clara's vibrant personality and the joy she brought to their family, she also recounts the harrowing experience of the accident and the subsequent loss. The support of her husband and the guidance of Bishop Vincke helped her navigate the initial stages of grief, but the journey towards healing required a different kind of support—one that Catholic Charities provided.

Tynan connected with Jessica Sampson, Director of Family Support Services and a therapist at Catholic Charities in Manhat-



COURTESY PHOTO

tan. Their first phone call marked the beginning of a therapeutic journey that would lead Tynan towards healing and growth.

"When I stepped into the offices of Catholic Charities, I felt very warm. I felt very welcomed. I felt very secure in being able to share my trauma, being able to share how I had been grieving," Tynan reflects.

One aspect that stood out to

Tynan was the emphasis on setting goals during her counseling sessions. "Setting those goals was one thing that was very helpful. I felt like in the season of grieving, it's very easy just to be stagnant and just to kind of sit in it. She always encouraged me to set goals," Tynan explains. "We were able to talk through what I specifically needed to work on, and what I could take home and



COURTESY PHOTO

work on together as a family as we were healing"

Reflecting on her counseling experience, Tynan emphasizes the importance of seeking professional help in times of trauma and loss. She shares, "Everybody is going to have a cross to carry at some point in their life, and Catholic Charities provides opportunities for people to grow, to heal, to process, to learn, to set goals so that they can get through the trauma or the struggles or the cross that they have to carry."

To learn more about Catholic Charities Counseling Services, visit [www.ccnks.org/counseling](http://www.ccnks.org/counseling).



COURTESY PHOTO, CAROLYN MEYER

The St. Francis Knights of Columbus presented a check for \$1000 from the proceeds of their annual Right To Life BBQ to Carolyn Meyer, President of Pregnancy Pathways, Inc, a volunteer pregnancy help center that assists with supplies, resources and informative materials in Hoxie, Kansas.





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To request a full job description and benefits information, contact Ann Pfeifer, Parish Business Administrator, at 785-625-7356. You can email or hand-deliver a resume to [stjoffice@stjoehays.com](mailto:stjoffice@stjoehays.com) or 215 W. 13th Street, Hays. The position will begin in the summer of 2024. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.



## You're Invited

Salina Diocesan Council of Catholic Women  
Biennial Convention - August 24, 2024  
Immaculate Conception Parish Center  
302 S. Monroe, Grinnell, KS 67738

Featuring Catholic Author and Speaker  
**Kathryn Whitaker**  
**Holiness in Family Life**

Registration, \$30, including lunch, is due by August 14, 2024. Make checks payable to SDCCW.

Registration Forms available from your Parish Office or by contacting Tammy Steeples, 785-737-8899 or [tsteeples@hotmail.com](mailto:tsteeples@hotmail.com)

Register by mail to Tammy Steeples, PO Box 99, Palco, KS 67657 or online at [Salinadiocese.org/events](http://Salinadiocese.org/events) (on-line registration available starting July 1).

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## FR. ZIMMERMAN TO CELEBRATE GOLDEN JUBILEE

Father Don Zimmerman will celebrate his 50th jubilee of priesthood in the Diocese of Salina on Corpus Christi Sunday. The celebration is set for June 2 at St. Thomas More Catholic Church in Manhattan.

Fr. Don is calling his jubilee "50-plus-one" because he was ordained on June 2, 1973, so 2023 actually was his 50th anniversary.

However, he wanted to celebrate at St. Thomas More Parish, where he had served as pastor from 2002-15, and he lives in Manhattan in retirement.



Because of a remodeling project at St. Thomas More last summer, Fr. Don decided to postpone his celebration until this year.

His celebration will begin with a 3 p.m. Mass, followed by a Corpus Christi procession to the parish hall for a dinner/reception.

Fr. Don wishes to invite anyone who would like to participate in his celebration but asks that those planning to

attend the reception to RSVP to his number (785-564-0538) or to the parish office (785-776-5151) by May 28.

### June 2

• 50th Jubilee for Fr. Don, 3 p.m., St. Thomas More, Manhattan.

### June 8

• Feast Day BBQ Celebration, 6 p.m., Immaculate Heart, Hays.

### June 9

• 100th Anniv. Mass, 10 a.m., Sacred Heart, Atwood.

### June 9

• 25th Jubilee for Bishop Vincke, 3 p.m., St. Fidelis, Victoria.

*If you have any questions about an event listed here, please contact the parish/office/school directly.*

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA

# EUCCHARISTIC CONFERENCE

**AUGUST 9 -10, 2024**

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FR. JARETT KONRADE



BISHOP JOSEPH ESPALLAT



BISHOP JERRY VINCKE



FR. GALE HAMMERSCHMIDT

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## FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS



**Christ the King, WaKeeney, Apr. 14**  
Morgan Keller, Eva Newcomer, Emery Pakkebieb, Ezra Beuttenmuller, Colt Howard, Karter Werth, Bo Shubert, and Randall Colby. Back: Fr. Emmanuel Mensah, parochial Vicar. Side: Chane & Heidi Goff, Religious Education Teachers.



**St. Bernard's, Ellsworth, May 5**  
Back: Catechist Mary Soukup, Fr. Stanly, and Catechist Tobina Norris. Front row: Azelynn Laas, Finnley Cole, Kolt Warta, Kendall Obermueller and Sadie Worl.



**St. Ignatius, Kanopolis, May 5**  
Fr. Stanly and Easton Vague.



**St. Mary Queen of Angels, Russell, Apr. 7**  
Left to Right: Fr. Michael Elan, Brooklyn McKenna, Mila Wieger, Sarah Guerrero, Sonya Orender, Kimber Schoenberg, and Kellan Whitmer.



**St. Mary's, Ellis, Apr. 7**  
Back Row: Oliver Meagher, Dean Hickert, Fr. Dana Clark, Adaler Keller, and Hayden Chessmore. Front Row: Kinsley Petz, Brecklynn Fischer, Brenne Honas, and Olivia North.



**St. Thomas More, Manhattan, Apr. 7**

First Row (left to right): Jade Hutzler, Iyla Nickelson, Shyloh Crankshaw, Eisley Nguyen, Celeste McHaney, Emma Eyestone, Margaret McCullough, Brittany Braet, Elena Delgado, Gracie Rudd. Second Row: Kinsley Darnell, Madalyn Boddy, Kendall Brinkman, Annistyn Watson, Mary Cameron Disbrow, Lauren Lindshield, Gracie Sonnier, Mary Kate Krembel, Louise Suther, Taylyn Martinez y Marr, Penelope Sagartz. Third Row: Callum Nickelson, Rhett Dressman, Julia Kirk, Milan Shaw, Dalton Gaschler, Kane Neuhold, Charles Waggoner, Brycen Harris, Nick Fund, Quinn Marquez, Tyrion White, Logan Strother, Aubrey Brazzle, Charlotte Young, Andrea Feldkamp (MCS Teacher). Fourth Row: Olivia Kline, Ava Whittington, Thomas Flack, Patton Diederich, Jared Kline, Xavier Cavaleri, Colgan Thompson, Dylan Waggoner, Declan Loomis, Beau Kohake, Aisla Mick. Last Row: Josefina Gantt, DRE, Marlene Martinez (Catechist), Wendy Winston (Catechist), Fr. Don Zimmerman, Fr. Frank Coady, Bethany Loomis (Catechist), Kelsey Young (Catechist), Aubrey Strother (Catechist), Rita Marshall (Catechist), Jessica Hampton (MCS Teacher).



**Immaculate Heart of Mary, Hill City, Apr. 14**

Communicants-front row, left to right: Jared Flax, Jude Jilka, Ralyn Minium, Benjamin Harmon, and Braxton Summers, along with their parents, teachers, and Fr. Ernest Amoako Opare.



**St. Francis of Assisi, St. Francis, Apr. 14**

Back row: Wyatt Lobmeyer, Fr. Joseph Asirvatham, Brody Penka, and Joan Gienger (catechist). Front row: Abigail Mendoza, Ella Lobmeyer, and Mia Quezada.



**St. Wenceslaus, Wilson, Apr. 28**

From left to right: Quentin Dlabal, Kash Dlabal, Ethan Ehrlich, and GW Pack with Fr. Tony Kulandaijesu.



**Seven Dolores, Manhattan, Apr. 7**

FRONT: Jessica Hampton (MCS 2nd Grade Teacher), Parker Eaves Price (RE Catechist), Jude Bussard, Charlotte Willard, Conley Vera, Remi Breault, Virginia Johnson, Teresa Theubet. MIDDLE: Paisley Amarello, Saveah Rayne Palomo, Amelia Bourne, Gianna Hahn, Sophia Hall, Allison Becker, Jihanna Dunstan, Damien Bayless, Vanessa Vargas (RE Catechist). BACK: Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt, Beckett Shepek, Collin Holthaus, Wiley Riffel, Elijah Byland, Nicholas Olson, Jaxon Dierksen, William Windhorst, Jayden Garcia, Deacon Ed Souza. NOT PICTURED: Andrea Feldkamp (MCS 2nd Grade Teacher).



**St. Mary's, Ellis, Apr. 18**

Yates brothers join the Catholic Faith: Brothers, Kyle & Dale Yates, are baptized and receive First Holy Communion.



**Seven Dolores, Manhattan, Apr. 7**

Front: Parker Eaves Price (RE Catechist), Alexa Sosa Burciaga, Frankie Urbina, Julian Nuñez-Luna, Emmanuel Gonzalez Moreno, Jesús Perez, Misha Coronado Perez, Vanessa Vargas (RE Catechist). Back: Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt, Yulissa Olague, Jared Espino Marquez, Danae Espino Sanchez, Isabela Gonzalez, Yazlin Espino Marquez, Erika Peralta-Dosal, Brianniece Ramirez, Deacon Ed Souza.



**St. Mary's, Clifton, Apr. 21**

Back row: 2nd grade Catechist Ashley Schwab, First Communicants Harper Wurtz, Kinsley Knoetgen, Isabelle Begnoche and Father Heina. Front row: Heitor Lopes Pimentel and James Schwab.



**St. Francis of Assisi, Munjor, May 5**

Elliot Leiker & Father Damian Richards.



**OLPH, Goodland, Apr. 28**

Front Row left to right: Cielo Estrada, Hudsyn Schulte. Back Row left to right: Landon Sramek, Connor Eftink, Jamison Sis, John Bentzinger. Fr. Carlos.



**St. Michael, Collyer, Apr. 21**

Father Ernest Amoako-Opare, Jordi Walt, Micah Gillespie, and Lydia Moeder.



**Sacred Heart, Colby, Apr. 21**

Front row, left to right: Michael Cox, Gabriel Cox, Jaylen Hernandez, Levyn McKee, Daisy Kough, Eastin Wolf, Jackson Brottem, Graycen McLemore, and Jace Caraballe. Back row: Fr. Brian Lager, Fabian Torres-Veloz, Kenzie Rietcheck, Emmett McKinney, Ryker Quint, Quinn Mazanec, Adeline Horinek, Allie Schroeder, Issac Gardner and Deacon Tom Schrick.



**St. Mary's, Smith Center, Apr. 14**

Front (L-R): Abigail Sheldon, Riggs Allen, Louie Owen Back (L-R): Monica Skidmore, Fr. John Schmeidler, Reed Mansholt.



**St. Joseph, Oakley, Apr. 14**

Front Row: Brooklyn Halbleib, Nora Goetz, Makenzie Andersen, and Mayra Valencia. Middle Row: Lawson Rumback, Talon Jones, Ignacio Bravo, Olson Samuelson. Back Row: Teachers, Victoria Goetz, Jessica Halbleib, Fr. Luke Thielen, and Michelle Selzer, Principal. Not pictured, Teacher Bryn Kuhlman.



**St. John's, Beloit, Apr. 14**

First Row: (L to R) Heston Murrow, Gabriel Cadena, Ava Ellenz, Bradlee Fuller, Cora Mondero, William Holdren, Kaden Wessling, Lucas Gillette, Owen Konrade. Second Row: Luke Martin, Joseph Holdren, Emma Gengler, Rielynn Pruitt, Evangeline Clark, Uriah Roderick, Rhett Brinker, Willa Gronewoller. Third Row: Hanston Krier, Paige Bell, Reid Schroeder, Isabel Knappert, Brooklyn Wiseman.



**St. Francis Xavier, Junction City, Apr. 28**

1st row (left to right): Emelia Weigel, Isabelle Breidenstein, Rosalyn Perez, Landree Liebau, Josimar Alejandra Castillo Guajardo, Royce Ann Hall, Adalind Rose Martin. 2nd row: Alyssa Rushen, Ryleigh Webster, Conner Hausauer, Austin Crawford, Reagan Mary Colvin, Janessa Galvan Chavarria, Grant Michael Dinkel, Kiera Isabelle Wenham. 3rd row: Marjeli Jaramillo, Caroline Deacon, Juan Szimendel-Gonzalez, Mabel Nicole Bechard, Embree Buckholtz, Juan Markus Zsimandel, Vincent Bowen. 4th row: Mrs. Jessica Breidenstein, Sophia Resendiz, Ronan Girardot, Cristian Moon, Father Kerry, Frenando Efrain Dzib, Yayra Hubertine Abalo, Mrs. Betsy Liebau.

**Did You Know?**

In the Diocese of Salina, the sacraments hold profound significance as conduits of divine grace and central expressions of our faith. Your gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal – Call to Share helps shape the spiritual journey of Catholics in the Diocese of Salina, guiding them through the various stages of life with grace and profound meaning. To give, visit [join.salinadiocese.org](http://join.salinadiocese.org), mail a check to PO Box 1696, Salina KS 67402 or scan the QR code.



**BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL  
YOUR GIFTS IN ACTION**



**Immaculate Conception, Minneapolis**

Front Row: Lucy Cline, Clayton Still, Cordel Bacon, and Dean Bretton. 2nd Row: Adala VanDoren, Father Mark Wesely, and Laykn Brushwood.



**St. Michael, Chapman, Apr. 20**

Left to right: Front row: Leo Anderes, Cooper Yahsholtz, Corbin Calovich, Lucas DeArmond, Grant Whitehair. Middle row: Kallan Beck, Caylin Kelly, Wyatt Abel, Silas Norton. Back row: Fr. Peter, Greyson Gilliland, Hadley Haverkamp, Elise Norton, Catechist Abby Anders.



**St. Fidelis, Victoria, Apr. 14**

First row: Rhett Hoffman, Katelyn Hartman, Addelyn Anderson, Gracyn Dreiling, Brigg Schumacher, and Dawson Schmidtberger. Second row: Luke Brungardt, Brielle Hoffman, Ann Wellbrock, Elizabeth Wellbrock, and Collin Schippers. Third row: Vivian Windholz, Brynn Herl, and Jackson Stone. Top row: Catechist Mrs. Jeanna Wellbrock, Owen Pfeifer, Bo Pfeifer, Luke Tholen, and Father James Moster OFM Cap., Pastor.



**Sacred Heart, Oberlin, Apr. 28**

(From left) Madison Peters, Isaac Abbot, Landree Carter, Tatum Larue, Emily Peters, Anna Mondero and Father Mathew Chacko.



**St. John the Baptist, Hanover, Apr. 21**

Front row: Julie Jueneman (catechist), Trinity Schlabach, Lindsey Gugenhan, Anna Jueneman, Leigha Jueneman, Gillian Minge, Kelby Rupprecht, Hannah Zarybnicky, and Emily Jueneman (catechist). Middle row: Elijah Heiman, Brandt Beikmann, Noah Jueneman, Alec Jueneman, Jaden Butler-Jueneman, and Tanner Bruna. Back: Braylon Meyn, Camron Jueneman, Elgin Sinn, Father David Metz, Garrett Martin, Braden Schwartz, Bishop Gerald Vincke, and Rieken Stallbaumer.



**Seven Dolores, Manhattan, Apr. 20**

Front (L to R) Carolina Tortella, Addison Crouch, Kenley Platt, Lauren Perry, Oliva Moon, Kayleigh Lawson, Palin Clark, Zoey McKinley, Tori Breault, Analiah Cruz, Dulce Gomez-Rios. Back (L to R) Lee Taylor, Micah Whelchel, Enzo Robledo Coronado, Phillip Kling, Mitchell Machin, Jonathan Moon, Charles Fuemmeler, Jonah O'Donnell, Cain Coonrod, Benjamin Chavez, Bishop Gerald Vincke. Deacon Ed Souza.



**St. Bernard's, Ellsworth, and Bishop Gerald Vincke.**



**St. John's, Beloit, Mar. 30**

Left to Right: Catechumens Evan Seltmann, Neil Bonjour, Denton Gilley, Andy Prather and Candidates Lauren Ludwig, Karen Cockroft, Brad Cockroft.



**St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton, Salina, Apr. 13**

Back Row L to R: Jessie Durr, Ariel Duxler, Kyiah Samuelson, Maliah Smith, Nick Gardner, Gavin Howard, Gage Howard, Jack Weber, Landon Hone, Gavin Phillips, Anthony Escobedo, Lander Escobedo, Cristian Picasso, Bishop Gerald Vincke. Middle Row L to R: Alan Morales, Wyatt Donatell, Lourdes Martin Escobedo, Jordin Hutfles, Alaina Le, Andrea Escobedo, Abram Perez, Corbin Ebert, Elliana Reed, Reese Heinrich, Alexandra Martin Escobedo, Owen Leonard, Kaylee Reynolds, Yadira Escobedo, Fr. Keith Weber. Front Row L to R: Kyla Hamel, David Duenas Galvan, Nicolas Campa, Natalie Bramblett, Adelyn Duxler, Briley Buchwald, Olivia Allen, Tara Richardson.



**St. Fidelis, Victoria, Apr. 24**

Bottom Row: Pastor Father James Moster, OFM Cap., Hailey Anderson, Shelby Dorzweiler, Abigail Bronson, and Bishop Gerald Vincke. Second Row: Catechist Yvonne Braun, Emma Dinkel, Caidyn Dinkel, Claire Schippers, Wesley Sander, and Brinly Lichter. Third Row: Wyatt Schmidtberger, Emma Schmidtberger, Myah Younger, and Samuel Windholz. Top Row: Aiden Dinkel, Kyle Huser, Cody Schmidtberger, Ethan VonLintel, and Jaxon Stoffel.



**St. Xavier, Junction City, Apr. 10**

Front row: Mya Black, Brooke Barnes, Lyla Liebau, Kimberly Davis, Nay Wenham and Juliana Macias. Middle row: Constance Bowen, Solaris Bowen, Brennen Doan, Noah Cruz, Jayden Striggow, Nolan Effland and Sarabeth Engstrom. Back Row: Ryan Dzub-Ramirez, Giovanni Hurley, Fr. Kerry Ninemire, Bishop Gerald Vincke and Luis Resendiz.



**Immaculate Conception, Minneapolis, Apr. 21**

Front Row: Kambren Koelling, Victoria Hueser, Kendyn Biggs, Ashlyn Roth, Maci McClure, Eleanor Hitching. Second Row: Ryan Myers, Father Mark Wesely, Wyatt Griffin, Matthew Sweat, Benjamin Dawson, Aiden Hessman, Bishop Gerald Vincke.



**St. Joseph, Bird City, May 5 (Cheylin High School and eighth-grade graduates)**

Father Joseph Asirvatham, Brady Ketzner, Pablo Bermudez, Kohen Pochop, Eduardo Baca, Victor Hernandez, Deacon Mark Vrbas.

# A Confirmation letter to Bishop Vincke

**PRIOR TO CONFIRMATION, THERE'S A TRADITION OF CONFIRMANDS WRITING LETTERS TO THE BISHOP REQUESTING THE SACRAMENT. THIS PRACTICE REFLECTS THE AGE-APPROPRIATE COMMITMENT, UNDERSTANDING AND READINESS OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO RECEIVE THE GRACES OF THE SACRAMENT AND TAKE ON THE MISSION OF BEING A WITNESS TO CHRIST IN THE WORLD. BELOW IS ONE SUCH LETTER RECEIVED BY BISHOP VINCKE THAT WAS PARTICULARLY POWERFUL.**

By **Serenity Smith, Quinter**  
Special to *The Register*, Nov. 2023

It was just my mom and me throughout my childhood, as my parents separated when I was younger. Facing my father's absence, I found peace and strength in my faith. Since my father wasn't in the picture, I recognized early on that Jesus would fill the role as my father figure and the dependable presence I would rely on while growing up. The initial confusion and sadness about my parents' relationship led me to a realization—I discovered that God's love is the anchor I need. This realization has empowered me to cultivate resilience and strength, traits my younger self would have done anything for. I am reminded of Jesus' constant love for me and others daily. I'm grateful for the challenging lessons that shaped me into who I am today; without them my love for Jesus wouldn't be the same.

My parish is a church that I believe everyone should have the opportunity to attend. It stands on a solid foundation, and every Sunday, my connection with God deepens during Mass. The anticipation of receiving the sacrament of initiation has been a long-held aspiration of mine. In preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation, I had the incredible experience of attending NCYC—an emotional journey that also filled my heart with a sense of calmness. However, by the end of the day, I was grateful for growing up in a faith-filled community surrounded by some of the strongest individuals I've ever known.

I was apprehensive about Confirmation, uncertain if I was genuinely ready for such a big commitment. Yet, after the transformative experience at NCYC, where I knelt in adoration and felt the presence of Jesus beside me, I have never felt more prepared and overwhelmed with joy to be confirmed.

Surrounded by inspiring teachers like Allison Polifka and Jamie Mense—women who were incredible and have guided me and shared their love for Jesus—I am forever thankful for their presence in my life.

I selected Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, known as "the Little

Flower of Jesus," for seeing herself as simple wild flowers in forests and fields, unnoticed by the more significant population. I find a strong connection with her. Her humble and compassionate nature and her belief in the divine presence of Jesus everywhere continue to serve as a daily reminder in my life.

Growing up, with the absence of my father, I learned never to take life or the presence of another human being for granted, realizing that moments of happiness should be cherished because they are fragile. I was presented with an opportunity to go on a mission trip to Chicago this summer. I spent a week with many different kids, all holding a burden heavier than I could have ever imagined. As I got to know them, their stories of resilience in the face of adversity opened my eyes. Watching these kids embrace life with such a positive outlook, despite the uncertainty of whether they'll have a meal at home, made me realize that I could never take another human being or life itself for granted. Their stories reminded me that while life can be harsh and unpredictable, being here is all a blessing. I returned from that mission trip with a renewed sense of gratitude. I was determined to make the most of every opportunity to bring positivity and hope into the lives of people like those kids, who deserved nothing less than a chance at a better tomorrow. After Chicago, I looked at life differently. I was thrilled to receive the sacrament of Confirmation at the Catholic Church, as I see it as a significant stride in deepening my faith.

While my ultimate goal is to reach heaven, I acknowledge that the path at times will not be the smoothest. I understand that just believing Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross is not all I need to attain a heavenly destination. I have to be committed to living a life dedicated to Jesus. Taking the next step, which is



Confirmation, will bring me closer to that sacred goal. I genuinely believe that being a devoted Catholic extends beyond just attending Mass; active participation is critical. Whether serving as a lector or engaging in any form of involvement within the church, these actions contribute to the growth of one's faith.

Following my Confirmation, my commitment is not limited to attending Mass, but extends to actively seeking opportunities to express my love for Jesus and fortify my faith. Looking ahead, I have decided to contribute to the younger generation more meaningfully. I have set my sights on teaching a CCD class next year. Reflecting on the impactful lessons imparted by my CCD teachers, I am deeply grateful for their role in shaping my spiritual journey. Now, I aspire to give back to the younger generation by sharing the knowledge and values that have been instrumental in my growth spiritually.

Lastly, I thank (you) Bishop Vincke, for graciously taking the time to read my letter. I am eager and filled with anticipation to meet you at the upcoming celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation. Your love and commitment to Jesus is raw, inspiring, and powerful; You're truly making a difference in the world, moving mountains with your faith and the overwhelming love you share with others. I will pray for you and am forever thankful for your guidance and support in my spiritual journey. I hope you will also pray for me.

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## WEDDINGS

**Kevin Aldan and Jodine Lynn Demapan** were married April 12, 2024, at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Fr. David Voss witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Ruben Galang and Maria Galang. Parents of the bride are Jose Demapan and Susana Babauta. Witnesses were Alex Aquino and Micaela Demapan Cabrera.

**Kaden Barker and Kyliya Geisler** were married April 6, 2024, at St. Boniface Church in Tipton. Fr. Leo Blasi witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Rod and Lora Barker. Parents of the bride are Jeff and Venus Geisler. Witnesses were Chase Barker and Grace Grady.

**Michael Barut and Jerrika Barut** were married April 12, 2024, at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Fr. David Voss witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Felix Barut and Emelita Barut. Parents of the bride are Jerry Ramos and Myrna Fines. Witnesses were Joseph Tabaldo and Mellissa Tabaldo.

**Dalton William Brummer and Celeste Renée Graciano** were married April 20, 2024, at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan. Fr. Don Zimmerman witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Dennis Brummer and Melissa Flint. Parents of the bride are Rodrigo and Susan Graciano. Witnesses were Kent Miles and Giselle Graciano.

**Shawn Patrick Fahey and Hannah Marie Swihart** were married April 23, 2024, at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Clay Center. Fr. Mike Leiker witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Eddie and Lisa Fahey. Parents of the bride are Butch and Jennifer Swihart. Witnesses were Matthew Barnes and Janessa Johnson.

**Jaden Mathew Johnson and Natalie Rose Butts** were married April 12, 2024, at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina. Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt witnessed their vows.

Parents of the groom are Brenda and Ryan Bernard. Parents of the bride are Lori Tremblay and Robert Butts. Witnesses were Josh Johnson and Caitlyn Butts-Fleming.

**Eli James Lohrmeyer and Isabelle Kate Barbieri** were married April 27, 2024, at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina. Fr. Peter O'Donnell witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Amy Werth and David Lohrmeyer. Parents of the bride are Katy and Ted Barbieri. Witnesses were Travis Rabun and Madison Mittie.

**Patrick McFadden and Katherine Hinzman** were married February 3, 2024, at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Fr. David Voss witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Joseph McFadden III and Ellen McKee. Parents of the bride are David Hinzman and Paula Serra. Witnesses were Jacob Santillan and Molly Egilsrud.

**Kurt Schroeder and Emily Eilert** were married April 6, 2024, at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit. Fr. Matthew Davied witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Kriss and Lisa Schroeder. Parents of the bride are Brian and Sheri Eilert. Witnesses were Brett Schroeder and Logan Eilert.

**Joaquin L. Wahlmeier and Helen M. Carlin** were married April 13, 2024, at St. Aloysius Gonzaga Church in Osborne. Fr. Leo Blasi witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Daniel and Shelly Wahlmeier. Parents of the bride are Darin and Debra Carlin. Witnesses were Gabriel Friess and Katzel Carlin.

**Samuel Joseph Wheeler and Emma Grace Faulkner** were married April 13, 2024, at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan. Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Sean and Susan Wheeler. Parents of the bride are Dwight and Jennifer Faulkner. Witnesses were Edwin Schreiner and Abby Faulkner.

**Charlotte Joan Albers**, 91, Grinnell, died March 25, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 3 at St. Joseph Church in Oakley. Fr. Luke Thielen and Fr. Brian Lager presided. Burial in St. Paul's Cemetery, Angelus.

**Sandra Allard**, 80, died April 2, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 12 at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan. Fr. Frank Coady presided. Interment at Kansas Veterans Cemetery, Manhattan.

**Mary Jane (Loader) Belt**, 84, died April 20, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 25 at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina. Fr. Kevin Weber presided. Burial in Mt. Calvary Cemetery, Salina.

**Geraldine Bushell**, 91, died March 30, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 5 at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Clay Center. Fr. Mike Leiker presided. Burial in Greenwood Cemetery, Clay Center.

**Sharon Kay Eck**, 63, died April 27, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated May 3 at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit. Fr. Jarett Konrade presided. Burial at a later date in St. John's Cemetery, Beloit.

**Janet Frances Fisher**, 69, Larned, died April 14, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 22 at St. Nicholas of Myra Catholic Church in Hays. Fr. Damian Richards presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery, Hays.

**Eleanor A. "Ellie" Gabel**, 84, Hays, died April 29, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated May 3 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Hays. Fr. Richard Daise presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery.

**Alice Ann Gerleve**, 94, Hanover, died March 11, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 16 at St. John the Baptist Church in Hanover. Fr. David Metz presided.

**Julie F. Goeckel**, 62, Hanover, died March 2, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 6 at St. John the Baptist Church in Hanover. Fr. David Metz and Fr. Joseph Kieffer presided.

## FUNERALS

**Stewart Graves**, 58, Salina, died April 12, 2024. Funeral Service was April 22 at St. Michael Church in Chapman with Father Peter O'Donnell and Father John Wolesky co-officiating. Burial was in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Chapman.

**Irene Marie Hazen**, 100, Grinnell, died April 13, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 19 at Immaculate Conception Church in Grinnell. Fr. James M. Thomas presided. Burial in Immaculate Conception Cemetery.

**Dorene Frances Howard**, 95, Manhattan, died December 4, 2023. Funeral Mass was celebrated January 20, 2024, at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Fr. Randall Weber presided. Burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery, Wamego.

**Phil H. Howe**, 91, Manhattan, died March 17, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 21 at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Fr. Kerry Ninemire presided. Burial in Sunrise Cemetery, Manhattan.

**Michelle Lee Hynek**, 49, died February 12, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 1 at St. John the Baptist Church in Hanover. Fr. David Metz presided.

**Jean T. Jensen**, 89, Manhattan, died February 29, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 6 at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt presided. Burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Ogden.

**John Paul Jones**, 37, Victoria, died April 11, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 15 at The Basilica of St. Fidelis in Victoria. Fr. Curtis Carlson, OFM Cap. presided. Burial in St. Catherine Cemetery.

**Linda Lake**, 79, Manhattan, died January 29, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated February 5 at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt presided. Burial in Sunrise Cemetery, Manhattan.

**Thong Le**, 77, died April 12, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 16 at St. Mary Queen of the Uni-

verse Church in Salina. Fr. Huen presided. Burial in All Saints Cemetery, Salina.

**Helen K. Leiker**, 97, Ellis, died April 9, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 13 at Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church in Antonino. Fr. Curtis Carlson, OFM Cap., presided. Burial in St. Francis Cemetery, Munjor.

**Charles Louis Long**, 87, died April 8, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 13 at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit. Fr. Andrew Rockers presided. Burial in St. John's Cemetery, Beloit.

**Otto John McMillin**, 84, died March 16, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 2 at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan. Fr. Frank Coady presided. Inurnment at Kansas Veteran's Cemetery, Manhattan.

**Louis L. Meredith**, 82, died March 20, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 3 at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina. Fr. Kevin Weber presided. Burial in Delphos Cemetery.

**Kenneth Carl Sack**, 73, Manhattan, died February 17, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated February 27 at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt presided. Burial in Sunrise Cemetery, Manhattan.

**Shirley Shiltz**, 74, died April 19, 2024. Funeral service was celebrated May 1 at St. Mary's Church in Ellis. Fr. Dana Clark presided. Inurnment at Mt. Hope Cemetery, Ellis.

**Esther Irene Umscheid**, 77, Manhattan, died March 19, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 27 at Seven Dolors Church in Manhattan. Fr. Kerry Ninemire presided. Burial in Valley View Memorial Park, Manhattan.

**Leroy Paul Wildeman**, 80, Hoxie, died April 2, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 20 at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Hoxie. Fr. Vincent Thu Laing and Fr. Mitchel Zimmerman presided. Burial at a later date in St. Frances Cabrini Cemetery.

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## BAPTISMS

**Kambell May Albers**, daughter of Kord Patrick Albers and Amber Elizabeth Klaus, was baptized March 17, 2024, by Fr. Randall Weber at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Andrew Esteban Alcantar**, son of Fabian Esteban Alcantar and Nallely Hernandez, was baptized April 13, 2024, by Dcn. Ed Souza at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Carter Noah Amarello**, son of John Keegan Amarello and Shauna Lyn Chapman, was baptized January 14, 2024, by Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Kinsley Banks**, daughter of Bryan Howell and Shayna Banks, was baptized on April 3, 2024, by Fr. Michael Elanjimattathil, CMI, at St. Mary Queen of Angels, Russell.

**Hudson Michael Bergmann**, son of Gabriel and Gabrielle Bermann, was baptized April 7, 2024, by Fr. Mike Leiker at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Clay Center.

**Annabelle Ruth Cole**, daughter of Keith and Lauren (Boos) Cole, was baptized March 3, 2024, at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina. Godparent is Bonnie Boos.

**Truett Alan Crabtree**, son of Derek and Jennifer (Augustine) Crabtree was baptized May 5, 2024, by Fr. Damian Richards at St. Nicholas of Myra Church, Hays.

**Bailey Dinkel** made a Profession of Faith to the Catholic Church at Easter Vigil, on March 30, 2024, by Fr. Dana Clark at St. Mary's Church in Ellis.

**Ariel Ulisses Castaneda Encarnacion**, son of Timoteo Castaneda Tomas and Odilia Encarnacion-Olivera, was baptized February 11, 2024, by Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Nahia Yetlanetzi Castaneda Encarnacion**, daughter of Timoteo Castaneda Tomas and Odilia Encarnacion-Olivera, was baptized February 11, 2024, by Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Dalery Mayle Escobedo**, daughter of Juan Manuel Escobedo and Guadalupe Yaraldin Garcia, was baptized April 27, 2024, by Fr. Vincent Thu Laing at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Hoxie.

**Theodore Ryan Garza**, son of Daniel Luke Garza and

Julie Ann Garza, was baptized April 14, 2024, by Dcn. Ed Souza at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Samuel Sanglard Gomez**, son of Victor and Leticia, was baptized April 7, 2024, by Dcn. Wayne Talbot at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

**Parker Jo Gottschalk**, daughter of Brandon and Maci (Knipp) Gottschalk, was baptized April 21, 2024, by Fr. Damian Richards at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays.

**Matias Gael Guzman**, son of Fernando and Mayra (Irigoyen) Guzman, was baptized April 13, 2024, by Fr. Trinity Savariyar at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays.

**Miriam Jane Hamel**, daughter of Nathaniel and Katie Hamel, was baptized April 28, 2024, by Fr. Joshua Werth at St. Joseph Church in New Almelo.

**Harrison William Hodges**, son of Nicholas and Lindsay Hodges, was baptized April 14, 2024, by Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan.

**Jana Elizabeth Holdren**, daughter of Joseph and Marci Holdren, was baptized May 1, 2024, by Fr. Andrew Rockers at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit.

**Brynnleigh Howell**, daughter of Bryan Howell and Shayna Banks, was baptized April 3, 2024, by Fr. Michael Elanjimattathil, CMI, at St. Mary Queen of Angels, Russell.

**Paisley Howell**, daughter of Bryan Howell and Shayna Banks, was baptized April 3, 2024, by Fr. Michael Elanjimattathil, CMI, at St. Mary Queen of Angels, Russell.

**Kannon Bradley Hunsicker**, son of Riley and Tori (Teb) Hunsicker, was baptized April 13, 2024, by Fr. Dana Clark at St. Mary's Church in Ellis.

**Charlotte Elizabeth Kutina**, daughter of Andrew Replogle Kutina and Kara Nicole Katzenberg, was baptized April 6, 2024, by Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Emillie Rose Linn**, daughter of Derek and Tara (Hertel) Linn, was baptized April 13, 2024, by Fr. Damian Richards at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays.

**Mia Espino Marquez**, daughter of Arturo Eduardo Espino Mejia and Selene Sarahy Marquez Hernandez, was baptized March 31, 2024, by Fr. Rafael I. Campos at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Sofia Espino Marquez**, daughter of Arturo Eduardo Espino Mejia and Selene Sarahy Marquez Hernandez, was baptized March 31, 2024, by Fr. Rafael I. Campos at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Brady Franklin Martin**, son of Andrew and Tori Martin, was baptized April 8, 2024, by Fr. Mike Leiker at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Clay Center.

**Cora Joy Michael**, daughter of Kevin Lee Michael and Maria Alicia Catanach, was baptized April 4, 2024, by Dcn. Robert Catanach at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Charlotte Lee Morrell**, daughter of Matthew Logan Morrell and Melissa Giangrosso Morrell, was baptized February 10, 2024, by Fr. Don Zimmerman at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Bennett Dale Murrow**, son of Matthew and Emily Murrow, was baptized April 13, 2024, by Fr. Daryl Olmstead at St. Boniface Catholic Church in Tipton.

**Noah Antonio Refugio**, son of Axel Refugio and Gabrielle Banda, was baptized May 5, 2024, at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina.

**Ellie Marie Rohr**, daughter of Nathan and Tiffanie (Thiede) Rohr, was baptized April 28, 2024, by Rev. Mr. Dennis Rohr at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays.

**Kirk Anton Schley**, son of Todd Paul Schley and Margaret Jeanean Waymire, was baptized January 7, 2024, by Fr. Randall Weber at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

**Mason Nicholas Schuh**, son of Nicholas and Michelle Schuh, was baptized April 20, 2024, by Fr. Matthew Davied at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan.

**Millie Marie Seifert**, daughter of Andrew and Molly (Green) Seifert, was baptized April 6, 2024, by Fr. Steven Heina at St. John the Baptist Church in Clyde.

**Elle Parker Sherley**, daughter of Dalton and Kaitlyn Sherley, was baptized April 28, 2024, by Dcn. Wayne Talbot at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

**Emery Mae Sherley**, daughter of Dalton and Kaitlyn Sherley, was baptized April 28, 2024, by Dcn. Wayne Talbot at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

**Everly Gene Sherley**, daughter of Dalton and Kaitlyn Sherley, was baptized April 28, 2024, by Dcn. Wayne Talbot at St. Thomas More Church in Manhattan.

**Theo James Shriver**, son of Tyler and Jennifer Shriver, was baptized May 5, 2024, at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina.

**Becky Lanny Siebold**, son of Caleb and Megan Siebold, was baptized February 25, 2024, by Fr. Mike Leiker at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Clay Center.

**Susanna Maria Speltz**, daughter of Chris and Amanda Speltz, was baptized February 4, 2024, by Fr. Mike Leiker at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Clay Center.

**Lucy Kay Stramel**, daughter of Scott and Clare (Riordan) Stramel, was baptized April 20, 2024, at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina. Godparents are Sarah Riordan and Fr. Andy Hammeke.

**Braxton Summers**, son of Derick and Dayna Summers, was baptized April 14, 2024, by Fr. Ernest Amoako Opare at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hill City.

**Veronica James Taylor**, daughter of Michael and Jenna Rae Taylor, was baptized April 28, 2024, by Fr. Andrew Rockers at Sacred Heart Church in Esbon. Godparents are Marty Read and Beverly Read.

**Augustin Thomas VonLintel**, son of Colten and Hannah (Doll) VonLintel, was baptized April 27, 2024, at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina. Godparents are Reese and Maggie Tollette.

**Addison Rose Weber**, daughter of Patrick and Mary Lynn Weber, was baptized April 27, 2024, by Fr. Vincent Thu Laing at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Hoxie.

**Maraia Werth** was baptized, received Communion and confirmation at Easter Vigil on March 30, 2024, by Fr. Dana Clark at St. Mary's Church in Ellis.

**Kyle and Dale Yates**, grandsons of Taft and Barbara Yates, were baptized and received First Holy Communion on April 18, 2024, by Fr. Dana Clark at St. Mary's Church in Ellis.

Come, Holy Spirit!



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# Diocese hits top 10

By THE REGISTER


The Diocese of Salina scored sixth in the top-scoring dioceses of the Voice of the Faithful's 2023 report called "Measuring and Ranking Diocesan Safe Environment Programs."

Voice of the Faithful has published the second independent, online review of all U.S. Roman Catholic dioceses' level of compliance with child protection and safe environment guidelines. The initial review, conducted in 2022, found that U.S. dioceses together averaged 67 out of a possible 100 points when measured against the accepted standards. With a score of 91.5% the Salina Diocese ranks in the top tier, amongst 168 other dioceses.

Ongoing Protection Efforts: The obligation for all Christians to protect children flows from the ministry and example of Jesus Christ. VOTF's Child Protection efforts focus primarily on education and on monitoring parish/diocesan child-safety programs to ensure consistent, ongoing vigilance.


"Congratulations to all our parish and school Safety Coordinators and to Wendy Backes, Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator, for their on-going efforts and for achieving this level of excellence," said Kim Hoelting, HR Director.

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## Sister Jeanne McKenna Passes Away

Sister Jeanne McKenna died May 8, 2024, at Nazareth Motherhouse in Concordia, KS. She was 91 years old and a Sister of St. Joseph for 64 years. She was born in Kingman, KS on September 3, 1932, to Peter and Catherine Heatherman McKenna, the last of ten children, and was baptized Eileen Jeanne. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph, Concordia, KS on September 8, 1959. On March 19, 1960, she received the habit of the Sisters of St. Joseph and was given the name Sister Mary Berard, later changing back to her baptismal name. She pronounced first vows



on March 19, 1961 and final vows on March 19, 1964.

Sister Jeanne received a BA in History from Marymount College, Salina, KS in 1954, followed by a PhD in History from St. Louis University in 1968. She taught in schools for 21 years in Salina, Emporia, Topeka, KS; Kansas City, MO and Grand Island, NE. She also served in Gov. Carlin's Office from 1978-1980 and later worked as a fiscal division director for the Kansas State Treasurer's Office and for the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. She retired to Nazareth Motherhouse in 2015.

Sister Jeanne was preceded in

death by her parents and her siblings. A Bible Vigil Service was held May 14 at 9:30 a.m. in the Nazareth Motherhouse Chapel with Sister Marilyn Wall as the eulogist. The Mass of Christian Burial was May 14 at 10:30 a.m. in the Motherhouse Chapel, Father Barry Brinkman presiding. The burial was in the Nazareth Motherhouse Cemetery. Chaput-Buoy Mortuary, 325 W. 6th St., Concordia, KS was in charge of arrangements. Memorials for Sister Jeanne McKenna may be given to the Sisters of St. Joseph Health Care/Retirement Fund or the Apostolic Works of the Sisters; P.O. Box 279, Concordia,



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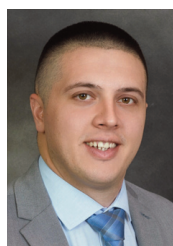
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## Fr. Joseph Asirvatham says goodbye

By ALLISON OCHOA

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

From seeing his first snowfall and adjusting to the ways Americans worship at Mass, to learning the nuances of American culture, Father Joseph Asirvatham's experiences over the last decade have been vast. Now, as he prepares to say goodbye to the people of the Salina Diocese, Father Joseph will take his memories of Kansas home to the people of southern India and his next assignment.

Father Joseph was ordained in Tamilnadu, India, on February 3, 2009. In 2014, he arrived in Kansas during a snowstorm, ready to serve the people of the Salina Diocese.

"Imagine me when I got out at the airport and saw snow falling! I



Asirvatham

was so shocked," Father Joseph said with a laugh. "I didn't know the meaning of snow, so I wondered, 'Am I in Heaven?' I was just so happy and took so many pictures that I sent home to my family and friends in India!"

Father Joseph then traveled to Hays to begin his new assignment at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church as an associate pastor.

"Father Kevin [Weber] taught me so much while I was in Hays," Father Joseph recalled. "I had culture shock from the punctuality of people who came to church, the food – it was a struggle initially to eat American food because it was so different, and even obtaining my driver's license ... I learned a lot!"

"When I came to the U.S. and Immaculate Heart of Mary, I

started with a charismatic way of preaching, but that just wasn't what people were used to," he added, saying he learned to adjust to a more reserved style of worship.

Father Joseph said one element of life in central and western Kansas that he has deeply appreciated has been the hospitality of the people.

"The people are so constant in helping," he said. "The parishioners have encouraged me a lot and I've shared a lot about Indian culture with them."

Those parishioners span several communities across the Diocese. During his time in Kansas, Father Joseph has served parishes in Hays, Beardsley, Bird City, Cawker City, Downs, Goodland, Osborne, St. Francis, Sharon Springs and Tipton.

"I'm so thankful to all the priests

and parishioners here who took care of me, and also to our bishops for inviting us and allowing us to be part of this family to serve the faithful," Father Joseph said. "I am grateful, happy and thankful for them."

While he will complete his current assignment as Parish Administrator in St. Francis, Bird City and Beardsley at the end of June and stay in Kansas through early July, Father Joseph is excited about reuniting with his family and jumping into whatever assignment his bishop has ready for him upon his return to India. Wherever that is, he said he will carry out the mission that was given to him upon his ordination, to "go, therefore, and preach to the whole world." It is the motto of the Heralds of Good News, the order to which he belongs, and it is one he strives for wherever he goes.

## Bitter defeat, solid wins, mark 2024 Kansas Legislative Session

An insidious assault on children by the tragically misguided "gender transition" industry was this close to being shut down by the 2024 Kansas Legislature. Two last minute "flip flop" votes, including one by a State Representative from Beloit, resulted in a bitter defeat.

Emotionally vulnerable Kansas children struggling with their sexuality are the big losers.

For reasons unknown nor seriously explored by much of academia, the incidence of gender dysphoria (GD) in Kansas and around the world is exploding. GD is a psychological condition in which children express strong desires or feelings to be treated as the gender other than their biological sex. Some children describe feeling as if they were "born in the wrong body."

For much of the past two decades, so-called "transition treatments" for GD included puberty blockers,

cross-sex hormone injections, and even the surgical amputation of healthy genitals and breasts. The secular news media insists on misnaming all this as "gender-affirming care."

Now these "treatments" are coming under severe peer-reviewed criticism as medically misleading and even experimental. Many children-victims who've suffered debilitating, life-changing harm are seeking to "de-transition." Lawsuits are being filed against the medical community for the physical harm they've caused.

Today, policy makers from European countries where gender transition procedures began are sounding the alarm, reversing course, and taking the responsible step of banning these procedures. Twenty-two American states have done the same.



Kansas Legislators passed the Help Not Harm Act, S.B. 233, ensuring that minors could not receive puberty blockers, cross sex hormones or surgery to treat gender dysphoria. A special provision allowed children already on hormones time to wean off them. Help Not Harm passed with veto-proof margins.

As expected, Governor Kelly vetoed the legislation. Then unexpectedly, two State Representatives, including Rep. Susan Concanon (R-Beloit), flip-flopped their original vote and sustained the veto, extinguishing a golden opportunity to protect Kansas children.

Sadly, instead of treating confused and questioning children with compassion and understanding, Kansas will continue to allow

these harmful procedures to continue.

The lost override vote on Help Not Harm was a major blemish on an otherwise positive legislative session from the perspective of the Kansas Catholic Conference and the Catholic Bishops of Kansas.

We were encouraged by legislative overrides on other vetoes to pass Pro-Life laws designed to help women in unplanned pregnancies, encourage adoption and support pregnancy resource centers. Lives will be saved as a result.

Every Kansas State Senator and Representative seat is up for election this year. We encourage you to be informed and get involved. Sign up for our newsletter at [www.kansasatholic.org/take-action](http://www.kansasatholic.org/take-action).

**St. Joseph, Cornerstone of Families, pray for us!**

## St. Phillip's of Hope celebrates 150 years of Faith



By PATRICIA MACDONALD

In the winter of 1873, a lone Jesuit missionary left St. Xavier's in Junction City, KS and crossed the cold wind-swept prairie to visit the new com-

munity of Hope. Riders were sent to notify Catholic families a priest, Fr. Phillip Scholl, had arrived to say Mass. Fr. Scholl continued to visit the settlers monthly, saying Mass in various homes. In 1877, construction of a simple 24 x 30 frame church was completed on land donated by A. Henquet. It was named for St. Phillip the Apostle and to honor the young priest the people loved and admired.

The congregation hosted visiting priests from Junction City, Solomon, Abilene, Council Grove and Herington. In 1907-08, a group of Polish families arrived from Nebraska, increasing the number of parishioners. A larger church was needed. Construction started in 1909 on

land donated by James Haley (Healy) under the direction of Father J. B. Glynn. Parish member Francis L. "Frank" Steffek was the building contractor. The new church was dedicated May 10, 1910, by Bishop John F. Cunningham of Concordia. Two small statues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary, which adorned the first church, now grace the high altar where descendants of the early settlers worship today.

St. Phillip's remained a mission church until 1946 when it became a separate parish. In 1960, the house north of the church was donated by the heirs of the former owner Miss Elizabeth Lorson, fulfilling her wish to make her home a rectory for a parish priest. Fr. Basil Torrez

was assigned as St. Phillip's first resident priest, allowing the congregation to enjoy daily Mass and two services on Sunday.

1983 saw the last resident priest leave. St. Phillip's once again shares a pastor, Father George Chalbham, with Herington and Elmo.

A parish anniversary celebration is planned for Sunday, July 7, 2024.

Bishop Jerry Vincke will celebrate Mass at 4:30 p.m., followed by a catered meal and program on church history in the parish hall. All current and former members of St. Phillip's community are invited to attend. Photos and memorabilia will be on display in the hall.

Contact Patricia MacDonald at 785-479-2279 if you have photos, items, questions or to RSVP.