



THE REGISTER

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA

FEB. 28, 2025

TOGETHER, LET US BE DISCIPLES OF JESUS ON MISSION.

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COURTESY PHOTO, TRACI STANFORD

Bishop Gerald Vincke visits with second-grader Timothy Schwarz, Sacred Heart-Colby, about the Light of Christ during Mass at Sacred Heart.

CSW 2025 Celebrating the gift of Catholic Schools

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

Students in the 15 diocesan schools across the Salina Diocese participated in a plethora of activities the last week of January in celebration of Catholic Schools Week 2025.

Even amidst the hustle-bustle and modifications of normal schedules, the theme remained the same all throughout the week.

"What a gift, to go to a Catholic school to learn about Jesus," Bishop Gerald Vincke told students early in the week at a Mass in Beloit.

That sentiment remained the same from far western Kansas in Colby and Oakley to the north-east corner of the diocese in Hanover.

"It's so awesome to be able to talk about God, telling the students to make good choices and remember to make God smile," said Patti Park, principal at St. Mary's Grade School in Ellis.

Park is in her fourth year at St. Mary's after teaching elementary school students for 32 years in the Hays school district.

"It makes me appreciate every day not only the value of a small school but a small Catholic school," she said of St. Mary's, which has an enrollment of 75 in preschool through sixth grade.

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Catholic Charities unveils new location in Hays

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas celebrated Valentine's Day 2025 in style.

A standing-room-only crowd gathered in the conference room of the Catholic Charities building in Hays on February 14, ready to celebrate the opening of a remodeled facility.

"Happy Valentine's Day everyone," said Megan Robl from Salina, the executive director of Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas.

"This dedication is appropriate on a day devoted to love," Robl said. "Our theme is love and gratitude."

With videos of the demolition and re-construction playing on a video screen in the background, Bishop Gerald Vincke of the Diocese of Salina blessed the walls around the room after congratulating the staff and construction crew.

"Bless this wonderful space and this building," Bishop Vincke said, "and bless those who come here and those who serve those who come here."

The bishop talked about the



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Megan Robl, executive director of Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas, third from left, is thrilled to help Leigh Purdy of the Hays Chamber cut the ribbon at the newly updated Catholic Charities facility in Hays.

mission of Catholic Charities: "to provide service to people, families and communities in need, to advocate for justice in social structures and to call the entire church and all people of good will to do the same."

"Everyone created is part of God's family," he said. "All are our brothers and sisters, and Catholic Charities sees every person in God's image."

Catholic Charities opened its first outreach facility in Hays in 1983 and had occupied space at several locations through the years.

It had outgrown its space, and during a search for a larger location in the past few years, the owner of this particular building – Hays businessman Verlin Pfannenstiel and his wife, Elaine – offered to gift

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Pope Francis responds to U.S. immigration policy

BY POPE FRANCIS

A LETTER TO THE U.S. BISHOPS

Dear Brothers in the Episcopate,
I am writing today to address a few words to you in these delicate moments that you are living as Pastors of the People of God who walk together in the United States of America.

1. The journey from slavery to freedom that the People of Israel traveled, as narrated in the Book of Exodus, invites us to look at the reality of our time, so clearly marked by the phenomenon of migration, as a decisive moment in history to reaffirm not only our faith in a God who is always close, incarnate, migrant and refugee, but also the infinite and transcendent dignity of every human person.

2. These words with which I begin are not an artificial construct. Even a cursory examination of the Church's social doctrine emphatically shows that Jesus Christ is the true Emmanuel; he did not live apart from the difficult experience of being expelled from his own land because of an imminent risk to his life, and from the experience of having to take refuge in a society and a culture foreign to his own. The Son of God, in becoming man, also chose to live the drama of immigration. I like to recall, among other things, the words with which Pope Pius XII began his Apostolic Constitution on the Care of Migrants, which is considered the "Magna Carta" of the Church's thinking on migration:

"The family of Nazareth in exile, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, emigrants in Egypt and refugees there to escape the wrath of an ungodly king, are the model, the example and the consolation of emigrants and pilgrims of every age and country, of all refugees of every condition who, beset by persecution or necessity, are forced to leave their homeland, beloved family and dear friends for foreign lands."

3. Likewise, Jesus Christ, loving everyone with a universal love, educates us in the permanent recognition of the dignity of every human being, without exception. In fact,



COURTESY PHOTO, JHON DAVID

Pope Francis calls on the faithful in America to construct a society that is more "fraternal, inclusive and respectful of the dignity of all."

when we speak of "infinite and transcendent dignity," we wish to emphasize that the most decisive value possessed by the human person surpasses and sustains every other juridical consideration that can be made to regulate life in society. Thus, all the Christian faithful and people of good will are called upon to consider the legitimacy of norms and public policies in the light of the dignity of the person and his or her fundamental rights, not vice versa.

4. I have followed closely the major crisis that is taking place in the United States with the initiation of a program of mass deportations. The rightly formed conscience cannot fail to make a critical judgment and express its disagreement with any measure that tacitly or explicitly identifies the illegal status of some migrants with criminality. At the same time, one must recognize the right of a nation to defend itself and keep communities safe from those who have committed violent or serious crimes while in the country or prior to arrival. That said, the act of deporting people who in many cases have left their own land for reasons of extreme poverty, insecurity, exploitation, persecution or serious deterioration of the environment, damages the dignity of many men and women, and of

entire families, and places them in a state of particular vulnerability and defenselessness.

5. This is not a minor issue: an authentic rule of law is verified precisely in the dignified treatment that all people deserve, especially the poorest and most marginalized. The true common good is promoted when society and government, with creativity and strict respect for the rights of all — as I have affirmed on numerous occasions — welcomes, protects, promotes and integrates the most fragile, unprotected and vulnerable. This does not impede the development of a policy that regulates orderly and legal migration. However, this development cannot come about through the privilege of some and the sacrifice of others. What is built on the basis of force, and not on the truth about the equal dignity of every human being, begins badly and will end badly.

6. Christians know very well that it is only by affirming the infinite dignity of all that our own identity as persons and as communities reaches its maturity. Christian love is not a concentric expansion of interests that little by little extend to other persons and groups. In other words: the human person is not a mere individual, relatively expansive, with some philanthropic feelings!

The human person is a subject with dignity who, through the constitutive relationship with all, especially with the poorest, can gradually mature in his identity and vocation. The true *ordo amoris* that must be promoted is that which we discover by meditating constantly on the parable of the "Good Samaritan," that is, by meditating on the love that builds a fraternity open to all, without exception.

7. But worrying about personal, community or national identity, apart from these considerations, easily introduces an ideological criterion that distorts social life and imposes the will of the strongest as the criterion of truth.

8. I recognize your valuable efforts, dear brother bishops of the United States, as you work closely with migrants and refugees, proclaiming Jesus Christ and promoting fundamental human rights. God will richly reward all that you do for the protection and defense of those who are considered less valuable, less important or less human!

9. I exhort all the faithful of the Catholic Church, and all men and women of good will, not to give in to narratives that discriminate against and cause unnecessary suffering to our migrant and refugee brothers and sisters. With charity and clarity we are all called to live in solidarity and fraternity, to build bridges that bring us ever closer together, to avoid walls of ignominy and to learn to give our lives as Jesus Christ gave his for the salvation of all.

10. Let us ask Our Lady of Guadalupe to protect individuals and families who live in fear or pain due to migration and/or deportation. May the "Virgen morena", who knew how to reconcile peoples when they were at enmity, grant us all to meet again as brothers and sisters, within her embrace, and thus take a step forward in the construction of a society that is more fraternal, inclusive and respectful of the dignity of all.

What brings me hope God's unfailing love, present in our diocese

BY BISHOP GERALD VINCKE

BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF SALINA

Someone recently asked me, "What brings you hope?"

Of course, my greatest hope is in Jesus and His unfailing love. But I believe the person asking was looking for something more specific—what's happening in our diocese that fills me with hope? And the answer is a lot!

As we enter this Year of Hope, I'd like to share some of the incredible things

happening in our diocese that we can all look forward to. (See the sidebar for a full list!)

First and foremost, we are launching the Adoration for Peace spiritual campaign, beginning on Ash Wednesday. This initiative invites everyone to spend time before the Blessed Sacrament, praying for peace—both in our hearts and in the world.

I encourage you to take part in this beautiful practice. I truly believe that time spent

with our Lord in adoration will fill your heart with hope throughout the year.

In addition to this, we are forming a Diocesan Pastoral Council on Synodality, which will help us integrate the synodal way more fully into our diocese. This is an exciting step toward greater communion, participation and mission in our local Church.

I hope you'll take advantage of these opportunities and join us in making this year filled



COURTESY PHOTO

Bishop Gerald Vincke shares a smile during Catholic Schools Week in January.

with hope! And may you all have a blessed Lent, encountering Jesus' love and mercy.



DIOCESAN EVENTS DURING THE YEAR OF HOPE

March 5:

Ash Wednesday

This marks the kickoff to the Adoration for Peace campaign in our diocese.

April 10:

Chrism Mass

A time for people all over the diocese to be united together. All are welcome to attend!

April 20:

Easter

He is risen! Many people are joining or returning to the Church during this sacred time!

April 26:

Deacon Ordination

One of our seminarians will become a deacon for our diocese.

May 31:

Priest Ordination

We have three transitional deacons being ordained priests.

June:

Summer Missions

Throughout the summer, volunteers help with ministries like Prayer & Action and Totus Tuus.

June 28:

Deacon Ordination

We have six permanent deacons getting ordained.

July:

Seminarist Dinners

This is always an exciting chance for our diocese to meet with seminarians.

August: 9-10

Eucharistic Conference

Fr. John Riccardo and his team from Acts XXIX are coming to our diocese for our second conference. People loved last year's conference, and I hope you can attend.

October:

Holy Fire Conference

This is a youth conference new to our diocese, and I'm excited to share more in the coming weeks!

November 20-22:

NCYC

I recently read from a confirmation letter that said, "Last November, I went to NCYC and something switched in me. I went to Confession for the first time in years, and it felt as if a weight was lifted off my shoulders ... and I began involving myself more and more in the faith."

Observing this Lent with your family

By MARIA RILEY

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Ash Wednesday begins the 40-day season called Lent. Catholics sacrifice for six weeks to prepare their hearts and minds to fully celebrate Jesus' resurrection.

Many families have traditions during the Advent season, but Lent does not have the same richness of traditions for families. Even without a wreath or tree, families can fully participate and grow closer to Christ this season.

Before starting his public ministry, Jesus spent 40 days in the desert. During Lent, Catholics metaphorically travel with Jesus into the desert. A simple way to call this to mind during Lent is to create a desert space in the home. Simple desert decorations like bare branches and a small potted cactus can remind family members of the season every day.

During Lent, Jesus calls us to pray, fast and give alms. Catholics of all ages are encouraged to choose a practice from each category. Families can do this together, too. In this way, the family will grow closer while deepening their faith.

Praying together as a family yields bountiful fruit. When the family prays together, kids learn through example. Families should consider their current prayer routine when making a plan for Lent. A daily family rosary may be the perfect addition to your routine, but if family prayer is new, it might just be an Our Father and three Hail Marys after dinner each night. The intentional time spent together connecting with God is more important than the specific prayer you pray.



COURTESY PHOTO, THAYS ORRICO

Ash Wednesday, March 5, kicks off Lent. Consider using this season to grow closer to Christ with your family.

Most kids think about giving up sweets when it comes to fasting, but it can include other sacrifices like screen time, social media, hitting snooze, or even a favorite toy. Giving up something we love reminds us of God's generosity and helps us detach from earthly things and focus on heaven.

Traditionally, almsgiving is interpreted as giving money to the poor. If children have an allowance, modeling and teaching tithing will foster life-long givers. Almsgiving isn't only money, though. Children can also share their time volunteering, donating items to a shelter, or going out of their way to say a kind word to a lonely classmate. Encourage family members to practice one intentional act of generosity or kindness each day of Lent, and then share the experiences during a family dinner.

On Fridays during Lent, Catholics pray the Stations to remember the great sacrifice Jesus made for

us. For children, Christ's suffering can be difficult and overwhelming. Use resources designed for kids and families (like Brother Francis' Stations of the Cross on Formed), and always remind children that Jesus' crucifixion isn't the end of the story. With steadfast hope we await the Easter season.

Even throughout Lent, each Sunday is celebrated as a mini-Easter. Catholics refrain from fasting and rejoice in Christ's victory over death. The remembrance of Jesus' passion keeps our hearts and minds on the profound proof of how much God loves us—so much that he sent Jesus to suffer and die for us so that we might have eternal life (cf. Jn 3:16).

While journeying through Lent with your family, always keep in mind that as we detach from the things of this world and make more time for prayer and selfless giving, we make room in our hearts for the heavenly gifts Jesus wants to bestow on us.

EL PAPA RESPONDE SOBRE LA INMIGRACIÓN

Queridos hermanos en el episcopado:

Les dirijo unas palabras, en estos delicados momentos que viven como Pastores del Pueblo de Dios que camina en los Estados Unidos de América.

1.El itinerario de la esclavitud a la libertad que el Pueblo de Israel recorrió, tal y como lo narra el libro del Éxodo, nos invita a mirar la realidad de nuestro tiempo, tan claramente marcada por el fenómeno de la migración, como un momento decisivo de la Historia para reafirmar no sólo nuestra fe en un Dios siempre cercano, encarnado, migrante y refugiado, sino la dignidad infinita y trascendente de toda persona humana.

2.Estas palabras con las que comienzo no están articuladas artificialmente. Incluso un examen somero de la Doctrina social de la Iglesia exhibe con gran fuerza que Jesucristo es el verdadero Emanuel (cf.Mt1,23), por lo que no ha vivido al margen de la experiencia difícil de ser expulsado de su propia tierra a causa de un inminente riesgo de

vida, y de la experiencia de tener que refugiarse en una sociedad y en una cultura ajenas a las propias. El Hijo de Dios, al hacerse hombre, también eligió vivir el drama de la inmigración. Me gusta recordar, entre otras, las palabras con las que el Papa Pío XII iniciaba su Constitución apostólica sobre el cuidado de los migrantes, que se considera como la carta magna del pensamiento de la Iglesia sobre las migraciones:

«La familia de Nazaret en exilio, Jesús, María y José, emigrantes en Egipto y allí refugiados para sustraerse a la ira de un rey impío, son el modelo, el ejemplo y el consuelo de los emigrantes y peregrinos de cada época y país, de todos los prófugos de cualquier condición que, acuciados por las persecuciones o por la necesidad, se ven obligados a abandonar la patria, la amada familia y los amigos entrañables para dirigirse a tierras extranjeras».

3.Asimismo, Jesucristo, amando a todos con un amor universal, nos educa en el reconocimiento

permanente de la dignidad de cada ser humano, sin excepción. De hecho, cuando hablamos de "dignidad infinita y trascendente", queremos subrayar que el valor más decisivo que posee la persona humana, rebasa y sostiene toda otra consideración de carácter jurídico que pueda hacerse para regular la vida en sociedad. Por lo tanto, todos los fieles cristianos y los hombres de buena voluntad, estamos llamados a mirar la legitimidad de las normas y de las políticas públicas a la luz de la dignidad de la persona y sus derechos fundamentales, no viceversa.

4.He seguido con atención la importante crisis que está teniendo lugar en los Estados Unidos con motivo del inicio de un programa de deportaciones masivas. La conciencia rectamente formada no puede dejar de realizar un juicio crítico y expresar su desacuerdo con cualquier medida que identifique, de manera tácita o explícita, la condición ilegal de algunos migrantes con la criminalidad. Al

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CATHOLIC CHARITIES FROM PAGE 1



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Bishop Gerald Vincke prepares to bless the new Catholic Charities facility in Hays on February 14.

it to Catholic Charities.

Catholic Charities then launched a \$1.2 million fundraising campaign that was aided greatly by the Kansas Department of Commerce Tax Credit program and the Patterson Family Foundation's Thriving Rural Grant Program.

The new location, three times the size of its previous office, now even has space for a thrift shop.

The five arms of service for Catholic Charities services are food, hygiene, diapers and clothing that can be delivered through a mobile outreach; financial and housing assistance; counseling services; pregnancy support and adoption services; and thrift stores.

The Salina location has a thrift store but Hays had never before had room for one.

"The thrift store here in Hays is a milestone for us," Robl said. "Our goal with the thrift store is to provide a place for people to donate items like clothing and dishes that can go to families that can't afford to buy new things."

The building previously was made up of four separate units. The reconstruction project provided more open space with a division of three sections.

The front section with many large windows lent itself perfectly to the thrift store.

The middle section was remodeled for a warehouse and storage of supplies with a large garage door

installed near the back.

"That door might be my favorite addition," Robl told folks as they took tours following the ceremony.

"We focus a lot on local outreach," she said, explaining how the motorized door makes it easy for the outreach van to pull inside to load supplies.

The third section of the building now features the main entryway, staff offices and a large conference room. Currently, the Hays location employs four full-time staff members and also benefits from many volunteers.

"I was so pleased to see so many people attend," Robl said, adding that the dedication was almost like an anniversary celebration since Catholic Charities started in Hays about 40 years ago.

"Scripturally speaking, 40 brings to mind such qualities as repentance, newness, preparation for an important work or task, transformation, nourishment, growth, and ultimately, new generation and new life," she said. "When we see the number 40 used to denote time in the Bible, we are being told that something extraordinary and definitive is happening."

Extraordinary and definitive definitely describe the new Catholic Charities location in Hays.

"Perfect, just perfect," Robl said, flashing her infectious smile. "This anchors a presence for Catholic Charities for sites west of Hays."

Witnessing the circle of life through Catholic Charities

By DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

Jennifer Johnson has witnessed many a heart-warming moment as a Hays realtor while helping people buy or sell their property.

But none can compare to a conversation she had with a local businessman while trying to find a larger space to purchase for Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas.

About two years ago, Johnson approached Verlin Pfannenstiel about selling a vacant building he owned across the street from his former business, Heartland Lumber Co.

When Johnson asked Pfannenstiel what the cost would be to buy or lease the building, he told her he would think about it and get back to her.

When they reconnected, Pfannenstiel – a longtime philanthropist of his community – informed Johnson that he had decided to gift the building to Catholic Charities.

"I about fell out of my chair," Johnson said. "I couldn't believe what I was hearing."

Johnson, then a realtor for Coldwell Banker Executive Realty, had recently joined the Hays Area Council of Ambassadors and for some time had been searching for a larger space for the organization before contacting Pfannenstiel.

And this search was personal for Johnson. She was adopted along with her

brother Kevin by Hays residents Herb and Janice Walters through Catholic Charities in Salina more than 50 years ago.

"Catholic Charities certainly is near and dear to my heart," Johnson said. "I literally don't know where I'd be without it."

And she isn't sure where Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas would be without the generosity of Pfannenstiel and his wife, Elaine.



PHOTO BY MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

"Providing the building was a way for us to serve the Lord," Elaine said. "We are here to serve others. Our faith teaches us to care for those in need. When we are called, we must respond."

"For many years Catholic Charities has provided many and much needed services in Hays and north-west Kansas," Verlin said. "The commitment to this project guarantees these services will continue for years to come."

After gaining ownership of the building, Catholic Charities launched an aggressive fundraising campaign for the \$1.2 million project. Renovation of the building was completed in December, and now Catholic Charities is settling into its new space.

"This all couldn't have worked out more perfectly," Johnson said. "We had looked at some spaces that were too small. To find one with this kind of space and the set-up for a thrift shop – well, it was a God moment. God is so good."

BISHOP WEISENBURGER NAMED ARCHBISHOP OF DETROIT

The Vatican announced on February 11 that Edward J. Weisenburger has been named the next Archbishop of Detroit, Michigan.

Weisenburger has served as the

Bishop of Tucson, Arizona, for the past seven years.

Prior to that, Weisenburger was Bishop of the Salina Diocese from 2012-2017.

MARCH 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 intentions:

Let us pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences.

Diocesan intentions:

Let us pray that God may guide our hearts this Lent to grow in prayer, sacrifice and love. Strengthen us to follow Christ and serve others with compassion.

BISHOP'S CALENDAR

March

- 5 Ash Wednesday, St. Mary's, Salina All School Mass, 10 a.m.
- 8 Confirmation, Seven Dolors, Manhattan, 4:30 p.m.
- 9 Confirmation, Sacred Heart, Colby, 10 a.m.
- 9 Rite of Election, Hays, 3 p.m.
- 16 Confirmation, Mankato & Esbon in Mankato, 8 a.m.
- 16 Confirmation, St. Edward, Belleville, 11 a.m.
- 16 Rite of Election, Salina, 3 p.m.
- 22 Confirmation, St. Mary Queen of Angels, Russell, 5:30 p.m.
- 23 Confirmation, St. Joseph, Oakley, 10:30am
- 23 Confirmation, St. Mary, Ellis, 4 p.m.
- 28-29 Evangelization Conference, Sacred Heart, Colby.
- 29 Confirmation, St. Francis and Bird City at St. Francis, 6:30 p.m.
- 30 Confirmation, Sacred Heart, Atwood, 10:30 a.m.
- 30 Confirmation, St. John Nepomucene, Beardsley, 3 p.m.

Finding big stories in small print

My favorite parts of The Register are not on page one.

Of course, I love sharing about the usual big events: *Students March for Life*, *Catholic Schools are Thriving*, and, of course, *The Newest Crazy Awesome Thing Bishop Vincke Is Up To!*

But the stories I love most are in a smaller font, often tucked between ads on pages 14 and 15. My favorite part of this job is writing about baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

It's easy to see why I love sharing baptisms and weddings—such joyful occasions. But funerals? That might seem odd. And yet, they are my favorites.

Most people appear in the newspaper two or three times in their life—when they're born, when they're married, and when they pass away. The funeral announcements in The Register are short, just the most basic details. I often wish we had more space and could share the beautiful stories I hear from grieving loved ones.

But instead, I share the basic details and reflect on the much bigger stories hidden between the lines.

Usually, funeral announcements come to me from parish secretaries, but every so often, I receive one directly from a family member of the deceased.

Last month, one such message arrived in the mail, and it left a mark on my heart. It was a funeral

program, accompanied by a handwritten note about a woman who had passed

away. The note read:

"Thought you would like to know that my beloved wife passed away. Her polka friends would like to know. Love & Prayers, Her Hubby."

A simple note. But in those few words it's easy to hear love, grief, devotion, and faith.

But that wasn't all.

In addition to working on the paper, I also help with the Million Memorare campaign through our diocesan evangelization team. When someone prays 100 Memorares, they write on the card about what gives them hope and also what we can pray for on their behalf. When people mail in their postcards, I am the person who brings them to morning prayer for the bishop and his staff to pray over.

A couple weeks after receiving the above note, I grabbed a random memorare card to take to prayer. As I sat down, I realized it was from the same man. His prayer request? For his beloved wife.

God is such a great author. Each person's story is unique, and yet, each one connects with the stories of so many more. This life is so precious, and the life to come is full of hope.

I once served at a funeral Mass for a sweet elderly woman from my home parish. She and her husband had been married nearly 70 years. After the funeral, her grieving husband shared his life story, and how his wife had led him to Catholicism.

He said, "The two best things that ever happened to me are her, and how she helped me find Him."

It's been almost a decade since I heard that, and I still think about it often. It's been even less time since I read the note from the "loving hubby" I mentioned above, and I already know I'm going to think about that one for a long time, too.

The nature of every good and perfect gift is that it longs to return to its Creator. He made us, and the greatest joy we can receive is to live and love well, so that we may one day be with Him in eternity.

If you've recently lost a loved one, I'm so sorry for your loss. Please know of my prayers, and that it is my greatest honor to help them in a small way to be remembered.

If you would like to submit a recent funeral, baptism or wedding announcement, please email theregister@salinadiocese.org.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

**LORI
Leiszler**



WHAT GIVES YOU

Hope

WE WANT TO KNOW!

Visit bit.ly/hopecontest to learn more and enter our Year of Hope writing contest, or go to bit.ly/myhoperesponse to share a short response!



LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION



LORI LEISZLER, THE REGISTER

A talented choir leads the congregation at St. Mary Queen of the Universe, Salina, during a special Vietnamese Mass to celebrate Tết, the Lunar New Year.

By **LORI LEISZLER**
THE REGISTER

The Vietnamese community marked January 29 with a joyful celebration of the Lunar New Year, a time of festivity and togetherness with family and friends. In Salina, St. Mary Queen of the Universe Parish hosted a special Vietnamese Mass, bringing the community together in worship.

Although Bishop Gerald Vincke was unable to

celebrate the Mass, due to a tight schedule that day at the Topeka March for Life, he greeted parishioners after Mass with smiles and warm greetings. One parishioner even taught him how to say, "Happy New Year" in Vietnamese: Chúc mừng năm mới.

Bishop Vincke said, "The Vietnamese community is a vibrant part of our diocese, and I look forward to celebrating more Masses in Vietnamese in the future."

PRO-LIFE CELEBRATION



COURTESY PHOTO

Over 80 members of St. Wenceslaus, Wilson, St. Joseph, Dorrance, and St. Bernard's, Ellsworth, were unable to participate in the March for Life, Jan. 24, 2025, in Washington, D.C., so they created their own march. On Jan. 26, as part of the Sunday Mass, emcee Hank Carreon introduced the March, beginning with 1973. As their birth year was announced, a member or members born that year carried red roses to the altar. To celebrate 2025 two pregnant women carried white roses. At the conclusion of the march Archbishop Fulton Sheen's Spiritual Adoption of Unborn Babies was recited. Since 2015 Knights of Columbus Council #1924 and Daughter's of Isabella Circle #232 have sponsored this event.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK, FROM PAGE 1

About 150 miles west of Ellis, Kristel Jahnke echoed those thoughts.

“Not only do we get to talk to children about God daily, but I get to live my faith every day,” said Jahnke, librarian and marketing director at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School in Junction City.

Jahnke, a lifelong member of St. Xavier Parish, attended the local Catholic school for 13 years, graduating in 1999.

She never ventured far from home, attending Kansas State University in Manhattan just



COURTESY PHOTO

Beckem Jimenez, a sixth-grader at St. Mary's-Ellis, helps his younger sister, kindergartner Bryn, skate across the stage during a talent show at their school.

“I get to interact with students from 3 to 18 years old,” she said. “It’s fun to get to know them and to see what they like to read and share the love of reading.”

“And,” she added, “we are able to have daily prayers together. It’s a constant reminder that we all make each other better.”

Schools recognized several groups and individuals during the week in appreciation of their support.

“This week is always a great opportunity to reach out to the community and thank them,” Jahnke said.

“We couldn’t do it without them.” Schools also paid homage to heroes of today – and yesteryear.

Mike Hubka, principal of Manhattan Catholic Schools, was welcomed to CSW with a birthday greeting for him on the front of the school sign the weekend before.

It was an extra special celebration this year for him and his school after a medical issue for their leader in November gave everyone a scare.

“I look at it as God is not done with me yet,” said Hubka,

who passed out at a football game and had a device implanted for a heart condition last fall.

At Thomas More Prep-Marian Junior-Senior High School in Hays, the basketball teams celebrated the rich history of their school.

Special uniforms were made for one of their games, honoring the history of their predecessors who attended St. Joseph Military Academy and Marian High School.

The military program in Hays ended in 1970, and the all-boys’ school was renamed Thomas More Prep. Ten years later, the all-girls’ Catholic school (Marian High) consolidated with TMP to form TMP-Marian.

The front of the boys’ jerseys featured the St. Joseph’s Military crest and SJMA, with an American flag and St. Joseph’s school name,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



COURTESY PHOTO

Students at Manhattan Catholic School wished a happy birthday to their principal, Mike Hubka, the weekend before CSW.



COURTESY PHOTO, TRACI STANFORD

Kindergartner Brave Finley gazes at his candle while participating in a living rosary at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Colby.

25 miles away, then returning to Junction City to raise her family.

Three of Jahnke’s siblings still live in the area, and both of her children have attended St. Xavier’s as well.

“When my children started

school, I noticed they needed volunteers,” said Jahnke, who later started substitute teaching at St. X before moving into her current position.

She said she wouldn’t trade her job for any other.

School Notes

Scholars bowl teams among the best in Kansas

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

Scholars bowl teams from four diocesan schools closed out their seasons in impressive fashion by qualifying for the state tournaments in their respective divisions.

Salina-Sacred Heart claimed a runner-up trophy, while Hays/Thomas More Prep-Marian and Beloit-St. John’s each won third-place honors.

Class 2A

Sacred Heart claimed a state trophy for a fifth consecutive year by finishing second in the 2A state finale at Moundridge.

This year’s seniors were hoping to make it a perfect 4-for-4 after claiming state titles the past three years.

However, the Knights’ runner-up finish marks the sixth straight year that Sacred Heart has brought home hardware from the state meet. After earning fourth-place medals in 2020, the Knights finished second in 2021 before their impressive state three-peat in 2022-23-24, followed by this year’s runner-up finish.

“All the teams are really good at state,” said David Green, longtime Knights scholars bowl coach. “It just depends on

the day. Any one can deserve to be No. 1.”

The Knights learned that at regionals, where they claimed the third and last spot for a trip to state.

“We’re very grateful,” Green said. “We thank God for every victory and every chance we get to compete.”

Four seniors who closed out their prep careers at state for the Knights were Abram Anderson, Jayden King, Luke Newell and Caroline Stone. Completing Sacred Heart’s state team were juniors Grayson Tinker and Zach Hernandez.

Two seniors from TMP-Marian also completed their final high school meet in style with their third-place finish at state. It was the second top-three finish in three years after placing third in 2023.

Monarch seniors Caleb Marintzer and Sam Schroeder were joined at state by junior Eli Stein, sophomores Mattias Marintzer and Sam Krannawitter and freshman Leo Billinger.

After claiming the Mid-Continent League championship with an undefeated record, TMP-Marian finished second at its own regional meet to advance to state.



COURTESY PHOTO

Sacred Heart placed 2nd in 2A State Scholars Bowl.



COURTESY PHOTO

TMP-Marian placed 3rd in 2A State Scholars Bowl.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Cadets, across the top of the back.

Likewise, the girls' jerseys had Marian across the front just under the Marian crest, with GCHS/MHS on the back to represent Girls Catholic High School and Marian High.

Several members of the varsity teams have family who attended one of those schools, including senior Teegan Gottschalk, whose grandmother, Krista (Leiker) Gottschalk was a cheerleader for the Monarchs and graduated from Marian High in 1978.

Teegan said she was proud to wear the throwback uniforms as a fourth-generation student at the school. Her great grandfather, Cecil Gottschalk, attended St. Joseph Military Academy; her grandfather, Chris Gottschalk, was a TMP graduate; and her father, TJ Gottschalk, graduated from TMP-Marian.

"I thought it was cool to be able to show everyone what they looked like back then, learn a little about our school history, to represent Marian and support our past," Teegan said while talking about carrying on her family tradition as well. "I can't see myself anywhere else."

Bishop Vincke celebrated Mass at several locations during CSW or the week before, with students and teachers from some schools traveling to nearby parishes for joint celebrations.

In Hays, nearly 750 students and staff from four area schools joined parishioners at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church for Mass with Bishop Vincke.

Hays Catholic Schools – Holy Family Elementary and TMP-Marian – welcomed groups from neighboring St. Mary's-Ellis and Sacred Heart-Plainville to attend Mass with them on the last day of CSW.

During his homily, Bishop Vincke talked

about 2025 being the Jubilee Year of Hope.

"In Jesus there is hope that does not disappoint," he said. "He's alive, and He's with us. That's the reason for our hope! He's our life, our salvation, our hope."



COURTESY PHOTO,

ST. XAVIER SCHOOL'S MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS CLASS

Isabelle Breidenstein, a third-grader at St. Francis Xavier-Junction City, shakes hands with Bishop Gerald Vincke after Mass as her older sister, fourth-grader Anastasia, looks on.



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Guest speaker Braden Johnson calls on students at Sacred Heart-Salina during CSW.

Class 1A, Division II

St. John's missed out on its first state championship in 10 years by the narrowest of margins but was still able to bring home a trophy.

After going undefeated in pool play at state, the Blujays finished the finals round with a 4-1

record – the same as two other schools. Because of the point-margin tiebreaker rule, Satanta ended up with the first-place trophy, and Hutchinson-Central finished second.

It was the second top-three finish in as many years for St. John's, which was second a year ago. This year, the Blujays won their own regional meet with a perfect 10-0 record

after going undefeated in the Northern Plains League for a third straight season.

The state team was comprised of seniors Lily DiNuzzo, Henry Holdren, Jonas Letourneau and Nicholas Niewald and junior Greg Walter, with freshman Maryann Walter as alternate.



COURTESY PHOTO

St. John's, Beloit, placed 3rd in 1A, DII State Scholars Bowl.

Members of St. Xavier's state team were senior Miguel Weber, junior Janis Curit and freshmen Mya Black, Alien Mangefel and Kaydence Wood.

Junction City-St. Francis Xavier also qualified for state for a third straight year after finishing third at regionals but was not able to make it out of pool play at state.

HANOVER'S COOK HONORED WITH KAIRS AWARD

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER



AMANDA COOK

It might have been prophetic when a county highway north of U.S. Highway 36 in northeast Kansas was named All-American Road.

That road eventually leads to the small town of Hanover – home of St. John's Catholic School, which coincidentally is led by an All-American educator.

Amanda Cook, principal of St. John's, is in her 26th year at the elementary school as a teacher/administrator.

But if you add the number of years in which she attended classes there during her childhood, Cook's tenure at St. John's is on the north side of three decades.

Following graduation from Benedictine College in Atchison, Cook returned to her hometown to teach and coach at her alma mater – and has been there ever since.

"It's my school, my hometown," she said. "I want it to be the best it can be."

Colleagues appreciate Cook's leadership style, praising her for "creating an environment at St. John's where everyone feels like family and feels safe."

Nominees said that Cook's understanding and support of staff and students is second to none.

That's one of the reasons she was chosen as the recipient of the Kansas Association of Independent and Religious Schools (KAIRS) Distinguished Educator Award for the Diocese of Salina.

Cook annually attends the KAIRS conference in Topeka because "it's a chance for us to get to some information from other principals."

She won the Distinguished Educator Award one year as a teacher and this year, she accepted the award on behalf of her staff.

"I wish they could have given the award to the entire staff," she said. "They are the heart of our school."

Cook was honored – but surprised – when Superintendent Geoff Andrews emailed her of the news that she was this year's honoree for our diocese.

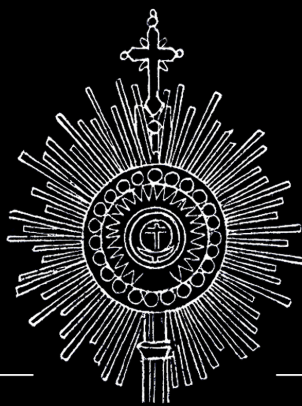
"At first I didn't believe it; I thought it was a spam email," she said. "Then he confirmed it was legitimate."

Cook continues to keep in touch with her students after graduation, taking photos at Hanover High School athletic events and sharing them with the athletes.

"I get to watch the sporting events front and center," she said, "and it's my way to stay connected with them when they move across the street to high school."

Andrews echoed the St. John's staff's assessment of its principal.

"Amanda's life is a testament to her deep commitment to Catholic education and her community," Andrews said. "Her passion for supporting students and staff, combined with her strong connection and communication with the Hanover community, make her a leader who truly inspires and uplifts those around her. She is an outstanding example of what it means to serve others with faith and purpose."



EST

2025

ADORATION FOR PEACE



SALINA DIOCESE SPIRITUAL CAMPAIGN

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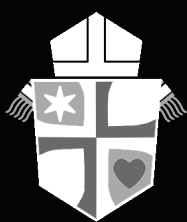
Eucharistic Adoration

*is the greatest power in the universe,
capable of transforming us
and changing the face of the world.”*

– St. Maximilian Kolbe

Our goal is for all 86 parishes in the Salina Diocese to run a four-month spiritual campaign that, little by little, educates, inspires and attracts all our parishioners to commit to a weekly hour of Eucharistic adoration. I'm asking each parish to begin offering weekly Eucharistic adoration in some capacity or if they already have a regular schedule, I challenge them to grow and expand. Can you imagine if every parishioner in our diocese would commit to an hour of prayer each week in Eucharistic adoration? It would transform our diocese. We can do this! Let's believe it is possible!

+ Gerald J. Vencke



CATHOLIC DIOCESE
of SALINA



ADORATIO
FOUNDATION

Men's group responds to the need for Christian community

By LORI LEISZLER
THE REGISTER

The work of mercy of feeding the hungry doesn't always have to be grand, elaborate or expensive. Sometimes, it can be as simple as sharing stories over light snacks and feeding people's deeper hunger for community and friendship.

Such is the case for one men's group, founded in Salina just over two years ago by Tyler Greenman, a parishioner at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Salina.

It all started when Greenman read an article online by Father David Nix about how men need more community in their lives.

The phrase "Men need other men" struck a chord with him, as did Fr. Nix's advice: Start a men's group with the people around you.

Taking that to heart, Greenman shared the post with a few men he knew but had never made time to connect with regularly.

He said the biggest challenge to a group like this isn't interest—it's busyness.

"There isn't one guy in the group who isn't busy trying to juggle all the demands of work and family. That busyness though makes a group like this even more important, not less."

The group decided to meet once a month, starting in the evenings after putting their children to bed. They rotate who hosts, having snacks and focusing on fellowship.

Member Geoff Andrews said the group has also been great for faith formation.

"It's what got me started really going to adoration," Andrews shared. "Now, if

someone can't make their hour, I'll step in. I probably wouldn't have done that if they hadn't asked."

Prayer is also a key part of their meetings, with the host leading. Andrews said this has made him more comfortable praying aloud.

"And we always have great conversations—all about how to be good husbands, good fathers and good people."

Since the group started two years ago, it has doubled in size.

"It is a lot of fun, but most importantly, it's been a huge blessing to all of us," Greenman said. "We feel less alone, and

we are inspired by each other. There is something fundamentally different about being in a group with other Catholic men."

The men encourage others to start their own groups, too. With the approach of the Feast of St. Joseph—patron saint of fathers, families and workers—celebrated on March 19, now could be a great time for Catholic men of the diocese to form their own groups, growing in faith and fellowship.

All it takes to start is an invitation.

"I was listening to a priest talk about the importance of community one time," Greenman said. "He was talking about the difference between road cycling by yourself versus being in a group ... He talked about how much easier it is to ride by yourself. Riding in a group is complicated. However, and I think is very applicable to a men's group, he said, 'If you want to go fast, go by yourself. If you want to go far, go with others.' At its core, that's why this group is such a blessing."



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Youth advocate for life at D.C. and Topeka marches

By ALLISON OCHOA

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

January's slate of local and national pro-life events like the Ignite Rally and Mass for Life in Topeka, and the March for Life in Washington, D.C., gave individuals across the Diocese of Salina the opportunity to stand as witness to the sanctity of human life.

Nikki Luppen coordinated travel to the national March for Life event for a group of 20 individuals representing St. John the Baptist Parish in Hanover. The group consisted of 12 junior high students, two college students, parents, a teacher and community members.

"The group came away with knowing the truth; the truth about life and what it is and what it stands for," Luppen said about the impact the national event had on the Hanover participants.

Having participated in the March for Life over 15 times growing up and as an adult, Luppen said the speakers at each event are a highlight. Speakers in Washington, D.C., on January 24 included Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, Governor of Florida Ron DeSantis and abortion survivor Josiah Presley. The rally's keynote speaker was professional surfer Bethany Hamilton who, as a rising surf star, lost her arm in a shark attack at the age of 13. Now an adult, Hamilton's inspirational message of faith and determination was a highlight of the rally, themed Life: Why We March.

Luppen explained the decision to take junior-high students to the rally did not come lightly, but boiled down to logistics – activity schedules for older students – and a desire to prepare them for high school and beyond.

"They're put in a lot of different situations in high school and college [related to pro-life issues] so I feel it's a good time to expose them to things like this.

"My hope is that this pilgrimage plants a seed in everyone's heart to live according to God's word," she continued, "to love and respect every life from the moment of conception until death so that we all can celebrate

each other in heaven with our Lord and God."

The tone of the Ignite: Rally for Life event in Topeka on January 29 was equally as hopeful as the national march. Hosted by the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas, the event invited participants to "rally and pray for the defense of unborn children and the safety and dignity of expectant women in Kansas and throughout the United States."

Those participants included 14 students, two teachers and one priest from St. John Catholic High School in Beloit. The students not only participated in the event, but several of them put the skills they've honed in their classes to work.

"We had some members of our Media class create content

[about the event] for our school's social media page, and they were able to interview individuals like Chuck Weber with the Kansas Catholic Conference, Bishop of the Diocese of Salina Jerry Vincke and Danielle Underwood with Kansans for Life," said teacher Alan Holdren.

Senior Nicholas Niewald attended Ignite for the first time to see how pro-life advocacy works locally. "It helped me understand how to defend my pro-life position," he said. He and fellow students found Leah Darrow's testimony particularly moving—her son, born at 22 weeks, spent 199 days in the NICU.

"Hearing her speak about saving her child despite overwhelming odds was a testimony to perseverance and courage," Niewald said.

Juniors Lynelle Gengler and Ava Wiles agreed.

"Her story was absolutely amazing," said Wiles. "I think everyone should hear her story. No matter how hard things got, she never gave up. She chose to intervene and go through with her pregnancy and keep her baby. That shows there are always different



PHOTO BY MARC AND JULIE ANDERSON

Students from Beloit March for Life in Topeka.

options to take care of your child rather than choosing abortion."

Holdren said seeing the impact pro-life events like the Ignite rally have on the students is one reason he continues to sponsor these trips.

"When they get to experience it themselves, they see why it makes sense and is reasonable to support the pro-life movement," he said. "It's a beautiful testimony to see a ton of Catholic school students at these events. They are able to stand in solidarity with others and then say, 'I didn't realize there were so many people out there like me.'"

For students like Niewald, the impact of this event will last long into the future.

"This helped me put what I'm learning in religion class into reality," he said. "Seeing all those other people with the same beliefs and values I hold...it makes me realize we're all humans that need to be loved.

"I wouldn't be opposed to be a leader in the pro-life movement someday," he continued. "I want to make people aware of the issues and I believe if they knew both sides of the issue it could help them to see why we're pro-life."

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RESPUESTA DE LA PÁGINA 3

mismo tiempo, se debe reconocer el derecho de una nación a defenderse y mantener a sus comunidades a salvo de aquellos que han cometido crímenes violentos o graves mientras están en el país o antes de llegar. Dicho esto, el acto de deportar personas que en muchos casos han dejado su propia tierra por motivos de pobreza extrema, de inseguridad, de explotación, de persecución o por el grave deterioro del medio ambiente, lastima la dignidad de muchos hombres y mujeres, de familias enteras, y los coloca en un estado de especial vulnerabilidad e indefensión.

5. Esta cuestión no es menor: un auténtico estado de derecho se verifica precisamente en el trato digno que merecen todas las personas, en especial, los más pobres y marginados. El verdadero bien común se promueve cuando la sociedad y el gobierno, con creatividad y respeto estricto al derecho de todos —como he afirmado en numerosas ocasiones—, acogen, protegen, promueven e integran a los más frágiles, desprotegidos y vulnerables. Esto no obsta para promover la maduración de una política que regule la migración ordenada y legal. Sin embargo, la mencionada "maduración" no puede construirse a través del privilegio de unos y el sacrificio de otros. Lo que se construye a base de fuerza, y no a

partir de la verdad sobre la igual dignidad de todo ser humano, mal comienza y mal terminará.

6. Los cristianos sabemos muy bien que, sólo afirmando la dignidad infinita de todos, nuestra propia identidad como personas y como comunidades alcanza su madurez. El amor cristiano no es una expansión concéntrica de intereses que poco a poco se amplían a otras personas y grupos. Dicho de otro modo: ¡La persona humana no es un mero individuo, relativamente expansivo, con algunos sentimientos filantrópicos! La persona humana es un sujeto con dignidad que, a través de la relación constitutiva con todos, en especial con los más pobres, puede gradualmente madurar en su identidad y vocación. El verdadero amor es que es preciso promover, es el que descubrimos meditando constantemente en la parábola del "buen samaritano", es decir, meditando en el amor que construye una fraternidad abierta a todos, sin excepción.

7. Preocuparse por la identidad personal, comunitaria o nacional, al margen de estas consideraciones, fácilmente introduce un criterio ideológico que distorsiona la vida social e impone la voluntad del más fuerte como criterio de verdad.

8. Reconozco el valioso esfuerzo de ustedes, queridos obispos de Estados Unidos,

cuando trabajan de manera cercana con los migrantes y refugiados, anunciando a Jesucristo y promoviendo los derechos humanos fundamentales. ¡Dios premiará abundantemente todo lo que hagan a favor de la protección y defensa de quienes son considerados menos valiosos, menos importantes o menos humanos!

9. Exhorto a todos los fieles de la Iglesia católica, y a todos los hombres y mujeres de buena voluntad, a no ceder ante las narrativas que discriminan y hacen sufrir innecesariamente a nuestros hermanos migrantes y refugiados. Con caridad y claridad todos estamos llamados a vivir en solidaridad y fraternidad, a construir puentes que nos acerquen cada vez más, a evitar muros de ignominia, y a aprender a dar la vida como Jesucristo la ofrendó, para la salvación de todos.

10. Pidamos a la Santísima Virgen María de Guadalupe que proteja a las personas y a las familias que viven con temor o con dolor la migración y/o la deportación. Que la "Virgen morena", que supo reconciliar a los pueblos cuando estaban enemistados, nos conceda a todos reencontrarnos como hermanos, al interior de su abrazo, y dar así un paso adelante en la construcción de una sociedad más fraterna, incluyente y respetuosa de la dignidad de todos.

WHAT'S HAPPENING



March 1
• St. Andrew's Parish School Auction, Abilene, 6 p.m.

March 5
• Ash Wednesday.

March 9
• Rite of Election, Hays, 3 p.m.

March 16
• Rite of Election, Salina, 3 p.m.

March 17
• St. Patrick's Day.

March 22
• St. John's School Auction, Beloit, 4 p.m.

March 25
• Feast of the Annunciation Lenten Pilgrimage

March 28-29
• Evangelization Conference, Sacred Heart, Colby.

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

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March 4:

The Synod is done. Are we done with Synodality? Presenter--Fr. Robert Schremmer and guests.

You are invited to join Bishop Jerry Vincke, Fr. Frank Coady and Georgina Paz as they share why they are excited about synodality - that thing going on in our Church.

Fr. Bob Schremmer will moderate the conversation as a bishop, pastor and lay leader discuss a beginning of a long-term commitment of the Church in western Kansas to listen, accompany, and grow together in faith.

March 25:

Second Vatican Council - The Universal Call of Holiness. Presenter--Fr. Frank Coady.

Vatican II pointed out that all baptized people are called to holiness of life, not just clerics and vowed religious. How do the laity live that out, in prayer and in practice?

UPCOMING ORDINATIONS

TRANSITIONAL DEACON ORDINATION
Luke Friess

April 26, 2025
10:00 AM | Sacred Heart Cathedral

PRIEST ORDINATION
Kade Megaffin, Jesse Ochs & Adam Urban

May 31, 2025
10:00 AM | Sacred Heart Cathedral



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hosted by Fr. Joseph Kieffer & Fr. Tony Neusch

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St. Mary's, Salina

- Primary Teacher (K-2)

Tipton Catholic

- High School PE Teacher

View these and learn more information at jobs.educatekansan.org and type in the searchbar "Diocese of Salina"



LIVING FAITH AMBASSADORS: *Using the Power of Prayer to eradicate Human Trafficking*

BY DEANNA KYMER
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR FOR
THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF
CONCORDIA

Human trafficking is a global problem, and it's not a new one. As opponents of the abhorrent practice do everything they possibly can to battle against the traffickers, it can seem like an uphill battle.

Especially as reports such as the following from the United Nations website are published: Child trafficking, trafficking for forced labor and forced criminality are rising as poverty, conflict and climate leave more people vulnerable to exploitation, according to the 2024 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons published today by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

As overwhelming as it may seem, there is something that each of us can do that is easily accessible. Just ask Sr. Mary Savoie.

For nearly 15 years, Sr. Mary fought trafficking alongside her late friend, Sr. Margaret Nacke, a driving force behind anti-trafficking initiatives. Sr. Margaret helped create educational programs, the Alliance to End Human Trafficking, and a national hotline. After her passing in 2024, Sr. Mary felt called to continue the mission—through prayer.

“At 94, I’m in good health, but taking on a big project was daunting. One thing I can do is pray,” Sr. Mary says. In June 2024 she launched a prayer group, recruiting over 40 Sisters at their annual assembly. Sisters Mary Jo Sullivan and D.J. Rak helped spread the initiative, and today, more than 70 “Living Faith Ambassadors” have joined.

Each “Living Faith Ambassador” receives a personal message from Sr. Mary, brief information on human trafficking, and a prayer to be offered for each month. Motherhouse Administrative Services employee, Jane Wahlmeier, keeps track of the mailing list and sends the monthly email.

Sr. Mary enjoys the numerous notes and letters she has received from many of the Prayer Ambassadors. She has even received an anonymous life story from a survivor of human trafficking sent by the victim’s counselor.

If you’re interested in joining this powerful mission, simply send an email to jwahlmeier@csjkansas.org to be added to the list and begin on the journey of eradicating human trafficking.

If you suspect trafficking is taking place or have an emergency, please call local law enforcement or the National Human Trafficking Hotline immediately at 1-888-373-7888 to report what you know. In the case of an emergency, please call 911.



COURTESY PHOTO

On Jan. 12, St. Mary Queen of Angels CYO hosted a parish pancake feed with a free will donation to be used for the NCYC convention in November. Helping the members were CYO leader Deanna Myers, Terri Middleton and Marc Nichols.



COURTESY PHOTO

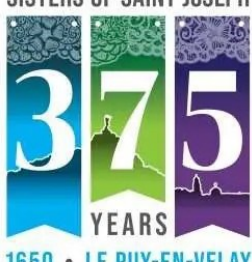
Eight young athletes from Victoria won the local Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship hosted by Fidelis Council #1867. They went on to compete at the regional competition on Feb. 16 in Tipton. (L-R) Rhett Hoffman (9), Addy Sander (9), Kasen Truan (10), Stella Rodger (11), Easton Nuss (11), Brantley Pfeifer (12), Aria Haselhorst (12) and Chelsie Huser (13).



COURTESY PHOTO

Winners of the local Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship from Colby are as follows: (L-R) Randon Coulter, Max Juenemann, Lakeen Fellhoelter, Emery Fikan, Jadrien Dible, Silas Horinek, Hadley Surmeier, Lucy Lager and Peter Lager.

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Two religious sisters pass away

Sister Sylvia Winterscheidt

Sister Sylvia Winterscheidt, 92, died February 9 at NCK Medical Center in Concordia. A Sister of St. Joseph for 72 years, she was born September 8, 1932, in Mercier, KS, to Henry and Mary Burkart Winterscheidt, the youngest of twelve children. Baptized Loretta Marie, she entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in Concordia on September 8, 1951. She received the habit and the name



Sister Sylvia in 1952, pronouncing final vows in 1956.

She earned an AB in English from Marymount College in 1964 and an MA in American Literature from Kansas State University in 1976, followed by an MA in Pastoral Ministry from Creighton University. She taught in Illinois, Kansas, and Nebraska before transitioning to pastoral ministry in Nebraska. She later studied psychosynthesis

at the Jungian Institute in Switzerland, using that training in her work at Manna House of Prayer in Concordia. She retired to the Motherhouse in 2011.

Sister Sylvia was preceded in death by her parents, six brothers, and five sisters.

Mass of Christian Burial was held February 14 in the Motherhouse Chapel, with burial in the Nazareth Motherhouse Cemetery. Memorials may be made to the Sisters of St. Joseph Health Care/Retirement Fund or Apostolic Works of the Sisters, P.O. Box 279, Concordia, KS 66901. Arrangements by Chaput-Buoy Mortuary, Concordia.

Sister Alvina Miller

Sister Alvina Miller, 106, died February 3, 2025, at the Dominican Sisters of Peace Motherhouse in Great Bend. She was born February 17, 1918, in Catharine, Kansas, to Adam and Alvina Miller. She entered the Dominican Sisters in 1932 and pronounced vows in 1935, marking 90 years of religious profession.

Sister Alvina ministered as a teacher in Wichita, Garden City, and Great Bend, later serving as a pastoral minister in Hoisington. She also worked as a medical librarian at St. Catherine's Hospital in Garden City and



Central Kansas Medical Center in Great Bend. At the Motherhouse, she continued as a librarian. She enjoyed knitting, gardening, baking, and reading, even using audiobooks when her vision declined. She wrote her autobiography,

The Mill of a Miller, sharing her family's story and religious journey. She was preceded in death by her parents, brothers Arthur and Cecil, sister Amelia Meis, and niece Jackie Price. She is survived by sisters-in-law Gloria and Mary, niece Jenifer, nephew Jeff, and her Dominican Sisters.

Mass of Christian Burial was held February 7 at the Sisters' Convent, with burial in the Sisters' Resurrection Cemetery. Memorials may be sent to Dominican Sisters of Peace, 2320 Airport Drive, Columbus, OH 43219-2098. Condolences and the full notice are available at www.bryantfh.net. Arrangements by Bryant Funeral Home, Great Bend.



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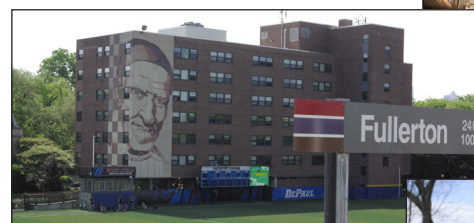
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BAPTISMS

Faustina Stella Soltero Celaya, daughter of Felipe and Mary Soltero, was baptized January 11, 2025, by Fr. Jarett Konrade at St. John the Baptist Parish in Beloit.

Carter James Clements, son of Cameron and Emma Clements, was baptized January 19, 2025, by Dcn. Buzz Harris at St. Thomas More Parish in Manhattan.

Amelia Jayne Conklin, daughter of Jack and Jhesica Conklin, was baptized January 12, 2025, by Fr. Frank Coady at St. Thomas More Parish in Manhattan.

Autumn Louise Housh, daughter of Alan and Miranda Housh, was baptized January 18, 2025, by Fr. Jarett Konrade at St. John the Baptist Parish in Beloit.

Cooper Joseph Klaus, son of Austin and Laurel (Hickel) Klaus, was baptized January

19, 2025, by Fr. Damian Richards at St. Nicholas of Myra Parish in Hays.

Olivia Kay Lightner, daughter of Charles and Heather (Huber) Lightner, born July 22, 2022, was baptized January 19, 2025, by Fr. Kevin Weber at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Parish in Salina. Godparents are Travis Huber and Kathy Burlew.

Karter Owen Mead, son of Kevin Mead and Bailey Jean Latta, was baptized February 1, 2025, by Fr. Michael Elanjimattathil at St. Mary

Queen of Angels Parish in Russell.

David Bradley Nevarez, son of Alexis and Greta Nevarez, was baptized January 26, 2025, by Dcn. Buzz Harris at St. Thomas More Parish in Manhattan.

Radley James Pfeifer, son of Ryan and Kristen (Jewell) Pfeifer, was baptized January 26, 2025, by Fr. Damian Richards at St. Nicholas of Myra Parish in Hays.

Taysom Ryatt Sander, son of Tyler and Caroline Sander,

was baptized January 26, 2025, by Fr. Michael Elanjimattathil at St. Mary Help of Christians Parish in Gorham.

Charles James Shetlar, son of Jackson and Rebecca (Costello) Shetlar, born November 5, 2024, was baptized January 19, 2025, by Fr. Kevin Weber at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Parish in Salina.

Seraphim Thang Sian Deih, daughter of Michael and Catherine, was baptized January 5, 2025, by Fr. Frank

Coady at St. Thomas More Parish in Manhattan.

Louis Shepherd Skerjanec, son of Brennan and Bridgette Skerjanec, was baptized January 12, 2025, by Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan.

Bennett Reed Sylvester, daughter of Logan and Andrea Sylvester, was baptized January 12, 2025, by Dcn. Wayne Talbot at St. Thomas More Parish in Manhattan.

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WEDDINGS

Jonathan Gassman and Harley Kester were married December 7, 2024, at St. Joseph Parish in New Almelo. Fr. Josh Werth witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Randy and Beth Gassman. Parents of the bride are Nathaniel and the late Maranda Kester. Witnesses were William Gassman and Sierra Kester.

Tanner Samuelson and Michelle Wessling were married January 25, 2025, at St. John the Baptist Parish in Beloit. Fr. Jarett Konrade witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Scott and Patty Samuelson. Parents of the bride are Gerald and †Jean Wessling. Witnesses were Matt Eilert and Amanda Hagan.

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FUNERALS

Larry M. Dinkel, 78, died January 18, 2025. Funeral service was celebrated January 31 at St. Mary's Parish in Ellis. Inurnment with military honors followed at the Kansas State Veterans' Cemetery, WaKeeney.

Mary Ann Dinkel, 87, of Hoxie, formerly of Hays, died January 9, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated January 15 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays. Fr. Nick Parker presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery, Hays.

Mary Annette Franz, 87, died January 5, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated January 24 at St. Thomas More Parish in Manhattan.

Fr. Frank Coady and Fr. Donald D. Zimmerman presided. Inurnment at a later date.

Clara L. Lackey, 88, died January 9, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated January 14 at St. John the Baptist Parish in Beloit. Fr. Andrew Rockers presided. Burial in St. Michael's Cemetery, Axtell, KS.

Lillian Nowak, formerly of Gorham, died January 20, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated January 27 at St. Mary Help of Christians Parish in Gorham. Fr. Michael Elan presided. Burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Gorham.

Patrick W. Payton, 60, died December 27, 2024.

Funeral Mass was celebrated January 15, 2025, at St. Aloysius Gonzaga Parish in Osborne. Fr. Daryl Olmstead presided. Burial in St. Aloysius Cemetery, Osborne.

Vernon F. "Vernie" Pfannenstiel, 88, of Hays, died January 19, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated January 23 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays. Fr. Brian McCaffrey presided. Burial in St. Francis Cemetery, Munjor.

Craig M. Reiter, 72, died December 29, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated January 4, 2025, at St. John the Baptist Parish in Beloit. Fr. Daryl Olmstead presided. Burial in Hill City.

Bonnie Belle Roth, 97, died January 13, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated January 20 at St. John's Parish in Herington. Burial in Sunset Hill Cemetery, Herington.

Vernon Sylvester, 93, of Befort died December 5, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated January 25, 2025, at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Munjor. Fr. Damian Richards presided; Fr. Ken Smith concelebrated. Burial at St. Francis of Assisi Cemetery, Munjor.

Sherry Ann Witthuhn, 67, died December 31, 2024. A Memorial Service and Rosary were held January 11, 2025, at St. Mary's Parish in Ellis. Fr. Dana Clark presided. Inurnment at a later date.

Leon Wolf, 89, of Hays died January 30, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated February 4 at St. Joseph Parish in Hays. Fr. Fred Gatschet presided. Burial in St. Anthony Cemetery, Schoenchen.



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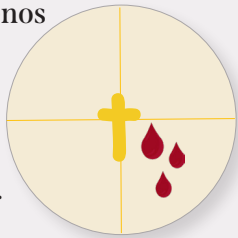
Adoration Corner

A Eucharistic miracle occurs every day, at every Mass across the world, when the bread and wine is transformed into Jesus' body and blood. The term "Eucharistic miracle" can also refer to even more extraordinary signs of Jesus' presence in the Eucharist.

In 1996, a consecrated Host in a Buenos Aires church was placed in water to dissolve. Instead, it miraculously transformed into bloody tissue. Then archbishop Jorge Bergoglio (now Pope Francis) arranged for scientific testing.

In 1999, Dr. Frederic Zugibe, a forensic pathologist, examined a sample without knowing its source. He found it was human heart tissue from the left ventricle, showing signs of distress, as if the person had suffered greatly. White blood cells indicated the heart was alive when the sample was taken, and the blood type was AB+, the same as in other Eucharistic miracles and the Shroud of Turin.

This miracle is a powerful sign of Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist. The fact that the Host became heart tissue—taken from someone in agony—reinforces Christ's sacrifice for us. It invites us to deepen our faith in the Eucharist, where Jesus offers us His very heart.



SPOTLIGHT ON THE SAINTS

St. Casimir of Poland was a prince who loved God with all his heart and chose to live a holy life. He was born in 1458 in Poland and was the son of King Casimir IV and Queen Elizabeth. Even though he grew up in a palace, he didn't focus on riches or power. Instead, Casimir wanted to follow Jesus and help others. He spent a lot of time in prayer and loved to read about saints, especially Mary.

Casimir was very kind to the poor and made sure to use the money he had to help people in need instead of spending it on fancy things for himself. He also cared a lot about fairness and always tried to do what was right.

He lived a pure and simple life, but he became sick when he was just 25 years old. He offered up his suffering to God and died in 1484. He is the patron saint of Poland, Lithuania, and young people.



ST. CASIMIR OF POLAND

FEAST DAY: MARCH 4

Journey through the Sorrowful Mysteries this Lent

I will say something you probably do not hear very often. I love the Lenten season. In a world that is quick to ignore suffering and celebrate success, the Church, in its infinite wisdom, offers us this liturgical season as a chance to reflect on the gift of hope and the new life Christ has given us. A chance to see the value we have to God and an opportunity to reflect on how we can be better disciples and evangelists who bring God's love to all we meet.

Unfortunately, our world is full of people who don't know their value and dignity. A wise priest friend once gave me a penance of praying the sorrowful mysteries as if Jesus was going through each of those mysteries for me and that I was watching. It had a powerful impact on me then and still does today.

Agony in the Garden—Jesus is praying to the Father. He is asking if it is his will that this cup passes from Him. He knows what will happen and how brutal the next few days will be. He shows us how to pray when we face a challenging future with his words, not my will but your will, Father. Then he looks at each of us with loving eyes and says, you are worth me going through what I will go through the next few days. That is how much I love you.

The Scourging—In this mystery, we see Jesus undergo brutal pain and suffering for us. At any moment, he could stop everything, but he doesn't. He doesn't because he loves us. We are part of those participating in scourging Jesus with our words, actions, the way we treat others and the way we treat God. Even through the pain and injustice, Jesus looks at us and says, I love you enough to go through this for you.

The Crowning—In this mystery, we see Jesus being mocked and crowned with a false crown. We do this when we put other things before God in our lives. It has to be hard for Him to see us putting things of this world before Him, but with humility and loving patience, He stays with us as we learn to put God first in our lives.

The Carrying of the Cross—Another brutal humiliation Jesus must endure for us. No one can force him to carry the cross. Jesus looks at us and chooses to put the cross on his shoulder. He chooses to do that out of his love for every one of us. He looks at each of us in the crowd and says, you are worth this pain and suffering.

The Crucifixion—When we struggle with our self-value and are not sure that God can love us, all we need to do is look

at a crucifix. The greatest expression of love is to lay down your life for someone else, and Jesus did that for each of us. He paid for our sins and opened the gates of Heaven because he loves every one of us and desires to spend eternity with us. He says to each of us, you are worth all of this.



BILL Meagher
DIOCESE OF SALINA

What a beautiful and comforting message that is for each of us. Unfortunately, too many people around us do not know God's love and do not know their value.

Through our baptism, we are called to be prophets who bring this message of love to all we meet. Jesus asks each of us this Lenten season to bring light into the world's darkness and show people how loved and valuable they are to God. Let's spend this Lenten season building up those around us and bringing them to Christ!

Salina Diocese March Family Prayer

The Litany of Humility

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart, Hear me.
From the desire of being esteemed,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being loved...
From the desire of being extolled ...
From the desire of being honored ...
From the desire of being praised ...
From the desire of being preferred to others...
From the desire of being consulted ...
From the desire of being approved ...
From the fear of being humiliated ...
From the fear of being despised...
From the fear of suffering rebukes ...
From the fear of being calumniated ...
From the fear of being forgotten ...
From the fear of being ridiculed ...
From the fear of being wronged ...
From the fear of being suspected ...



That others may be loved more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be esteemed more than I ...
That, in the opinion of the world,
others may increase and I may decrease ...
That others may be chosen and I set aside ...
That others may be praised and I unnoticed ...
That others may be preferred to me in everything...
That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should...

Scissors icon: Cut this out and pray with your family!

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