



THE REGISTER

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA

MAY 23, 2025

TOGETHER, LET US BE DISCIPLES OF JESUS ON MISSION.

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'Peace be with you'



CNS PHOTO/VATICAN MEDIA

Newly-elected Pope Leo XIV appears at the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on May 8, 2025. Pope Leo XIV, known previously as Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, is from the United States, though he spent many years in Peru as a missionary before being elected head of the Augustinians.

Pope Leo XIV, first American Pope, takes office

BY HANNAH BROCKHAUS
CATHOLIC NEWS AGENCY

Pope Leo XIV greeted the world for the first time on Thursday, May 8, with the words "Peace be with you all."

The 69-year-old new pope, formerly Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, was elected the first pope from the United States on Thursday. A native of Chicago, Leo spoke in Italian from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, addressing the hundreds of thousands of people waiting in the square and streets below.

"Peace be with you all. Dearest brothers and sisters, this is the first greeting of the risen Christ, the Good Shepherd, who has given his life for God's flock. I too would like that this greeting of peace enters into your heart, reaching your families, and all people, wherever they are, to all peoples, to all the earth. Peace be with you," Leo said in his opening lines.

The identity of the new pope was announced just over an hour after white smoke billowed from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel. The cardinal electors watched from balconies flanking the central loggia of St. Peter's Basilica as Cardinal Dominique Mamberti declared in Latin: "Habemus papam!"

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Final homily: With the Lord, 'everything is new'

BY LORI LEISZLER
THE REGISTER

Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio, died on April 21, Easter Monday. He leaves behind a legacy of compassion, humility and reform. As the first pope from the Americas and the first Jesuit to hold the office, his election marked a historic moment for the Catholic Church.

Throughout his papacy, he was a voice for the marginalized, a champion of mercy, and a tireless advocate for dialogue and care for creation.

As the world reflects on his life and prays for his predecessor, The Register shares Pope Francis's Easter Homily, read by Cardinal Angelo Comastri on April 20, which encompasses a theme evident in Pope Francis' last months in office: hope.



COURTESY PHOTO, AGÊNCIA BRASIL

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Pope Francis greets the crowds during his visit to Brazil on July 27, 2013.

From Rome to Home: the Spirit alive in the Church

Like many of you, I was excited when Cardinal Robert Prevost was elected as our new Holy Father. Pope Leo XIV already seems a natural fit for the important work entrusted to him. He is a man of prayer and profound peace. His very first message as pope was centered on that peace.

He said, "Peace be with you. This is the peace of the risen Christ, a disarming and humble and preserving peace."

We all long for that kind of peace—one that grounds us in Christ and lifts our hearts above the noise of the world.

A few months ago, Pope Leo also spoke about the Jubilee Year of Hope, offering this reflection:

"We can live jubilee right here, and we can live hope when in our hearts we recognize that everything does not have to be doom and gloom and the pessimism which sometimes comes over us; it can truly color our vision."

With so much uncertainty and discouragement in the world today, his words invite us to fix our eyes on Christ, who fills our lives with light and calls us to a deeper hope.

And we have every reason for hope.

The Gospel is the best news the world has ever received: Jesus is God. He is alive. He is with us. He has saved us because He loves us. That truth is alive in our Church, and we see it in the many good things happening right here in our own diocese.

Later this month, three deacons will be ordained to the priesthood. Their generous response to God's call is a profound gift to all of us and a reason for great joy.

Around the world, conversions to the Catholic faith are rising. I recently met a young man who, after the death of his father, walked into a parish and asked to be baptized. His

heart was moved. He felt the call of Christ.

Another source of grace in our diocese is the increase in Eucharistic

Adoration. People are praying for peace—bringing their joys, struggles, and hopes before the Lord. That time with Christ is bearing real fruit in hearts, homes and communities.

Our works of charity also shine brightly. Catholic Charities continues to serve countless individuals and families in need. And every day, I hear stories of quiet kindness—neighbors helping neighbors, parishioners caring for the most vulnerable. These acts are not just good deeds. They are a witness to the Resurrection, living expressions of God's love. Pope Leo XIV reminds us:

"The world needs [Christ's] light. Humanity needs him like a bridge to reach God and his love."

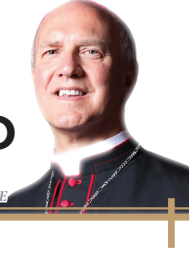
As we are in the midst of the Confirmation season, we also thank God for our young people who are stepping forward in faith. They are saying "yes" to God and embracing their mission as disciples in the world. Their courage and faith give us great hope now and for the Church's future.

Pope Leo offers us this encouragement:

"God loves us, all of us. Evil will not prevail. We are all in the hands of God."

In a world that often feels uncertain, we can take heart. New vocations, conversions, personal prayer, charitable works, vibrant faith and the steady leadership of our new Holy Father—these are all signs that the Spirit is alive and at work. God has not abandoned us. He is with us. And the Church is very much alive. With the Feast of Pentecost quickly approaching, together let us be disciples of Jesus on mission.

GERALD Vincke
BISHOP, SALINA DIOCESE



JUNE PRAYER INTENTIONS

Diocesan intentions:

Petition: For all those who have recently graduated — may they always know the deep love God has for them and trust in the path He has prepared. Lord, we ask you to guide their steps, strengthen their faith and use them to bring the light of Christ to the world. Amen.

DE ROMA A NUESTRA COMUNIDAD: EL ESPÍRITU VIVO EN LA IGLESIA

Al igual que muchos de ustedes, me sentí emocionado cuando el Cardenal Robert Prevost fue elegido como nuestro nuevo Santo Padre. El Papa León XIV ya parece encajar de manera natural con la importante misión que se le ha encomendado. Es un hombre de oración y de profunda paz. Su primer mensaje como papa estuvo centrado precisamente en esa paz.

Dijo: «La paz esté con ustedes. Esta es la paz de Cristo resucitado, una paz desarmante, humilde y que preserva».

Todos anhelamos ese tipo de paz: una que nos arraigue en Cristo y eleve nuestros corazones por encima del ruido del mundo.

Hace unos meses, el Papa León también habló sobre el Año Jubilar de la Esperanza, y ofreció esta reflexión:

«Podemos vivir el jubileo aquí mismo, y podemos vivir la esperanza cuando reconocemos en nuestros corazones que no todo tiene que ser oscuridad, y fatalismo y el pesimismo que a veces nos abruma; verdaderamente puede cambiar nuestra forma de ver el mundo».

Con tanta incertidumbre y desánimo en el mundo de hoy, sus palabras nos invitan a fijar la mirada en Cristo, quien llena nuestras vidas de luz y nos llama a una esperanza más profunda.

Y tenemos toda razón para tener esperanza.

El Evangelio es la mejor noticia que el mundo ha recibido: Jesús es Dios. Está vivo. Está con nosotros. Nos ha salvado porque nos ama. Esa verdad está viva en nuestra Iglesia, y la vemos en tantas cosas buenas que están ocurriendo aquí mismo, en nuestra diócesis.

A finales de este mes, tres diáconos serán ordenados sacerdotes. Su generosa respuesta al llamado de Dios es un regalo profundo para todos nosotros y razón de gran alegría.

En todo el mundo, las conversiones a la fe católica están en aumento. Recientemente conocí a un joven que, tras la muerte de su padre, entró a una parroquia

y pidió ser bautizado. Su corazón fue conmovido. Sintió el llamado de Cristo.

Otra fuente de gracia en nuestra diócesis es el aumento de la Adoración Eucarística. Las personas están orando por la paz—trayendo sus alegrías, luchas y esperanzas ante el Señor. Ese tiempo con Cristo está dando fruto verdadero en corazones, hogares y comunidades.

Nuestras obras de caridad también brillan con fuerza. Caridades Católicas sigue sirviendo a innumerables personas y familias necesitadas. Y cada día escucho historias de bondad silenciosa: vecinos que ayudan a vecinos, feligreses que cuidan de los más vulnerables.

Estos actos no son solo buenas acciones. Son un testimonio de la Resurrección, expresiones vivas del amor de Dios. Como nos recuerda el Papa León XIV: «El mundo necesita [la] luz [de Cristo]. La humanidad lo necesita como un puente para llegar a Dios y a Su amor».

Mientras estamos en plena temporada de Confirmaciones, también damos gracias a Dios por nuestros jóvenes que están dando un paso adelante en la fe. Están diciendo "sí" a Dios y abrazando Su misión como discípulos en el mundo. Su valentía y fe nos llenan de esperanza, hoy y para el futuro de la Iglesia.

El Papa León nos ofrece este aliento:

«Dios nos ama, a todos. El mal no prevalecerá. Todos estamos en las manos de Dios».

En un mundo que con frecuencia se siente incierto, podemos animarnos. Nuevas vocaciones, conversiones, oración personal, obras de caridad, fe vibrante y el liderazgo firme de nuestro nuevo Santo Padre: todos estos son señales de que el Espíritu está vivo y obrando. Dios no nos ha abandonado. Está con nosotros. Y la Iglesia está muy viva. Con la Fiesta de Pentecostés acercándose rápidamente, juntos seamos discípulos de Jesús en misión.

PRAYERS FOR GRINNELL

Communities across the western half of the state were impacted by severe weather on Sunday, May 18, as powerful storms swept through the region. Among the hardest hit was the city of Grinnell, which took a direct hit from a tornado that left a trail of devastation in its path.

Many homes in Grinnell suffered

significant damage and destruction. The community's Catholic Church, Immaculate Conception was also impacted, with the storm tearing off the building's roof. As the community begins the difficult process of recovery, our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have been affected by the storm.

BISHOP'S JUNE CALENDAR

4	Confirmation, IHM, Hays, 7 p.m.
7	Confirmation, St. Francis of Assisi, Norton, 5:30 p.m.
8	Confirmation, Stockton/Plainville at Stockton, 10 a.m.
8	Ordination Anniversary for Fr. Daryl Olmstead, Tipton, Mass at 4 p.m.
9-13	Bishop's Governance Seminar, University of Notre Dame, IN.
13-19	USCCB Bishop's Special Assembly, San Diego, CA.
22	Confirmation, OLPH, Concordia, 10:30 a.m.
26	Finance Council meeting, Chancery, Salina, 4 p.m.
28	Permanant Deacon Ordinations, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina, 11 a.m.
28	IHM-Hays, Feast Day Celebration, Mass at 4 p.m.

Dcn. Friess accepts tall order for Salina Diocese

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

Deacon Luke Friess considers himself a man of average height, measuring just under 6 feet.

On April 27, he walked to the ambo at St. Frances of Cabrini church in Hoxie and stood tall while looking out at the congregation, ready to proclaim the Gospel and give the homily during his first Mass as a deacon.

It was a big step, but Dcn. Luke was ready.

The day before, he had been ordained a transitional deacon at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina, then stood for more than two hours after the ceremony, graciously giving blessings to those who waited in line for the honor.

"It's a celebration of the Lord's goodness and ultimately a celebration for the diocese," Dcn. Luke said while reflecting on his ordination day. "Whether you know the person being ordained personally or not, it's a time to give thanks that the Lord is continuing to provide for his people."

But Sunday was a little different. On this particular morning, he was standing in front of people who had watched him grow up, some from the time he was a baby, and he was helping serve at the table of the Lord where he stood as an altar boy not all that long ago.

He welcomed "the opportunity to exercise for the first time that conformity of my love for Christ."

Dcn. Luke referenced the Gospel for Divine Mercy Sunday about Thomas doubting that the other apostles had actually seen Jesus risen from the dead.

"How many times in our own lives do we doubt the Lord's love?" Dcn. Luke asked. "Thomas reaches out to touch the Lord, and His life is transformed into one of deep faith. Just as in our human



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Bishop Gerald Vincke lays his hands on Luke Friess, ordaining him as a deacon for the Salina Diocese on April 26, 2025.



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

experience we can struggle with doubt and discouragement like Thomas, so also can our lives be transformed. 'Blessed are those who have not seen and believe.'"

A celebration for all

Following his first Mass, friends and family gathered in the parish hall for a potluck lunch to help celebrate a very special day for their native son.

"It was a real joy to be surrounded by my family and friends I've know from so many different aspects of my life, those who have been so impactful," Dcn. Luke said.

His mom and dad agreed.

"It's not just us who are proud," said Tom Friess, Luke's dad. "The entire parish is proud of him. The entire diocese is proud of him."

The entire Catholic universe is proud of him.

"It's an honor and a privilege to know that he would take himself out of the secular world and put himself in a world that is so much better. We all want to be that kind of person, but being a priest is a really special place in the church."

The Sacred Heart Cathedral was also full on Saturday as parishioners from all across the diocese and other family and friends came to help celebrate.

Dcn. Luke didn't mind the long line the day before, either.

"It was a way to experience the Father's love through the open love of so many around the

Christ."

Thanks for saying 'Yes'

During the ordination Mass, Bishop Gerald Vincke thanked Dcn. Luke for saying 'Yes' to God's call.

"Luke, we are happy for you, and I can't tell you how much happiness you have brought to everyone here," Bishop Vincke said. "The Lord has called you in a beautiful way and spoken to you personally."

With the ordination being on the same day as the funeral of Pope Francis, Bishop Vincke referred to one of the pope's most inspiring quotes.

"Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit. The sun does not shine on itself, and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature."

Dcn. Luke won't have long to wait to give his life to serve others. He has been assigned as deacon of Sacred Heart Parish in Colby for the summer months.

He will then return to St. John Vianney Seminary in Denver for his final year of preparation for his ordination to the priesthood in 2026.

It will be another big step for Dcn. Luke. And he will be ready.

"I am trusting that the Lord has been there for me and sustained me my entire life," he said. "It's a leap of faith in boldness. I put all my trust in Him to sustain me in the next step ... and the next step ... and the next step ..."



DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN, THE REGISTER

Deacon Luke Friess prays with IHM Sisters after his ordination to the diaconate at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina. Friess said the sisters have had a profound impact on his spiritual life.

diocese and to give the Father's love as well," Dcn. Luke said. "It was an opportunity to exercise for the first time that conformity of my love for



COURTESY PHOTO, LISA WEIMER

Deacon Luke Friess gathers with his family members after his first Mass as a Deacon. His younger brother Gabe (far right) is also a seminarian for the Salina Diocese, studying at St. John Vianney in Denver.



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Change of address?

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OFFICIAL PRIEST ASSIGNMENTS

**Effective April 22, 2025:**

Fr. Rich Daise concluded his appointment as Vicar for Clergy, while retaining all his other canonical appointments.

Fr. Fred Gatschet concluded his appointment as Vicar General, while retaining all his other canonical appointments.

Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt appointed as Vicar General for the Diocese of Salina. This was in addition to his other canonical appointments.

Effective July 1, 2025:

Fr. James Alaya, with the concurrence of Most Reverend Gabriel J. Anokye, Archbishop of Kumasi (Ghana), appointed as Parochial Vicar of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Hill City; St. Joseph Parish,

Damar; Christ the King Parish, WaKeeney; and St. Michael Parish, Collyer, where Fr. Ernest Amoake-Opare serves as Pastor.

Fr. Kyle Berens appointed part-time priest support to St. John the Baptist Parish, Beloit, where Fr. Jarett Konrade serves as Pastor. This is in addition to his current canonical appointment as Chaplain of In Ipso.

Fr. Rafael Indave Campos appointed as Parochial Vicar of Seven Dolores of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Manhattan, where Fr. Leo Blasi serves as Pastor.

Fr. Michael Elanjimattathil, CMI, with the concurrence of his superior, Reverend Biju John Vellakada, CMI, appointed as Pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Salina. Fr. Elanjimattathil is being transferred from his current assignment

as Pastor of St. Mary, Queen of Angels Parish, Russell and St. Mary Help of Christians Parish, Gorham.

Fr. Frederick Gruber, with the concurrence of Most Reverend David A. Zubik, Bishop of Pittsburgh, appointed as Parochial Vicar of Sacred Heart Parish, Colby; St. Joseph Parish, Oakley; and St. Paul Parish, Angelus where Fr. Brian Lager will serve as Pastor.

Fr. Steven Heina concludes his appointment as Pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish, Clyde and St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Clifton. Fr. Heina will be appointed by the Diocese of Wichita as a Hospital Chaplain.

Fr. Vincent John, CMI, with the concurrence of his superior, Reverend Biju John Vellakada, CMI, appointed as Parochial Vicar of St. Andrew Parish, Abilene; St. Francis Xavier Parish, Junction City; and St. Michael Parish, Chapman, where Fr. Peter O'Donnell serves as Pastor.

Fr. Joseph Kieffer is relieved from service as member of and Moderator of the in solidum team of priests who pastor St. Edward Parish, Belleville; St. Isidore Parish, Cuba; St. George Parish, Munden; St. Theresa Parish, Mankato; and Sacred Heart Parish, Esbon. Fr. Kieffer will continue as Pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Concordia and St. Peter Parish, Aurora.

Fr. Jarett Konrade is relieved from his service as pastor SS. Peter and Paul Parish, Cawker City. Fr. Konrade will continue as Pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish, Beloit.

Fr. Brian Lager appointed as Pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Oakley and St. Paul Parish, Angelus in addition to his current canonical appointment as Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Colby. Fr. Lager is also appointed member and Moderator of the in solidum team of priests who pastor St. Frances Cabrini Parish, Hoxie and St. Martin of Tours Parish, Sequin. Fr. Lager is primarily serving at Sacred Heart Parish, Colby; St. Joseph Parish, Oakley; and St. Paul Parish, Angelus.

Fr. Simon Peter Luswata, with the concurrence of Reverend Jose Ricardo Cruel Angulo, Diocesan Administrator of Tumaco (Colombia), appointed as Parochial Vicar

of Sacred Heart Cathedral Parish, Salina, where Fr. John Schmeidler serves as Pastor.

Fr. Ryan McCandless appointed as Pastor of St. Edward Parish, Belleville; St. Isidore Parish, Cuba; St. George Parish, Munden. Fr. McCandless is also appointed member and Moderator of the in solidum team of priests who pastor St. Theresa Parish, Mankato and Sacred Heart Parish, Esbon; and St. Mary Parish, Smith Center. Fr. McCandless is primarily serving at St. Edward Parish, Belleville; St. Isidore Parish, Cuba; and St. George Parish, Munden.

Fr. Emmanuel Mensah, with the concurrence of Most Reverend John Baptist Attakruh, Bishop of Sekondi-Takoradi (Ghana), appointed as Parochial Vicar of St. Boniface Parish, Tipton; St. Mary Parish, Downs; St. Aloysius Gonzaga Parish, Osborne; and SS. Peter and Paul Parish, Cawker City, where Fr. Luke Thielen will serve as Pastor.

Fr. Kade Megaffin appointed as Parochial Vicar of St. Andrew Parish, Abilene; St. Francis Xavier Parish, Junction City; and St. Michael Parish, Chapman, where Fr. Peter O'Donnell serves as Pastor.

Fr. Kerry Ninemire is concluding his appointment as Pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish, Junction City and granted full retirement.

Fr. John Paul Nti, with the concurrence of Most Reverend John Opoku-Agyemang, Bishop of Konongo-Mampong (Ghana), appointed as part-time Parochial Vicar of St. Isidore Catholic Student Center Parish, Manhattan where Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt serves as Pastor.

Fr. Jesse Ochs appointed as Parochial Vicar of Sacred Heart Parish, Colby; St. Joseph Parish, Oakley; and St. Paul Parish, Angelus where Fr. Brian Lager will serve as Pastor.

Fr. Peter O'Donnell appointed as Pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish, Junction City in addition to his current canonical appointment as Pastor of St. Andrew Parish, Abilene and St. Michael Parish, Chapman.

Fr. Daryl Olmstead appointed as Parish Administrator of St. Mary,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

SAVE THE DATE!



BISHOP JERRY VINCKE INVITES YOU TO ATTEND THE

ANNUAL Seminarian FUNDRAISING DINNERS

MANHATTAN

July 30 5:15PM

📍 Hilton Garden Inn

HAYS

July 31 5:15PM

📍 Rose Garden

DETAILS TO COME



PRIESTS CONTINUED

Queen of Angels Parish, Russell and St. Mary Help of Christians Parish, Gorham. Fr. Olmstead is concluding his current canonical appointment as Pastor of St. Boniface Parish, Tipton; St. Mary Parish, Downs; and St. Aloysius Gonzaga Parish, Osborne.

Fr. Charles Oppong, with the concurrence of Most Reverend John Baptist Attakruh, Bishop of Sekondi-Takoradi (Ghana), appointed to the *in solidum* team of priests who pastor St. Theresa Parish, Mankato; Sacred Heart Parish, Esbon; and St. Mary Parish, Smith Center.

Fr. Andrew Rockers appointed as Pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish, Clyde and St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Clifton.

Fr. Trinity Savariyar is relieved from his service as a member of the *in solidum* team of priests who pastor St. Mary Parish, Smith Center. Fr. Savariyar will continue as member of the *in solidum* team of priests who Pastor of SS. Philip and James Parish, Phillipsburg and St. John the Evangelist Parish, Logan.

Fr. Luke Thielen appointed as Pastor of St. Boniface Parish, Tipton; St. Mary Parish, Downs; St. Aloysius Gonzaga Parish, Osborne; and SS. Peter and Paul Parish, Cawker City. Fr. Thielen is being transferred from his current canonical appointment

as Pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Oakley and St. Paul Parish, Angelus.

Fr. Vincent Thu Laing transferred from his current canonical appointment as Pastor of St. Frances Cabrini Parish, Hoxie and St. Martin of Tours Parish, Seguin and appointed member of the *in solidum* team of priests who pastor St. Frances Cabrini Parish, Hoxie and St. Martin of Tours Parish, Seguin.

Fr. Adam Urban appointed as Parochial Vicar of St. Mary Queen of the Universe Parish, Salina and Chaplain of Sacred Heart Junior Senior High School where Fr. Kevin Weber serves as Pastor.

Fr. Keith Weber is concluding his appointment as Pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Salina and granted full retirement.

Fr. Joshua Werth is relieved from his service as a member and Moderator of the *in solidum* team of priests who pastor St. Mary Parish, Smith Center. Fr. Werth will continue as member and Moderator of the *in solidum* team of priests who Pastor of SS. Philip and James Parish, Phillipsburg and St. John the Evangelist Parish, Logan, in addition to his other canonical appointments.

Understanding teams of *in solidum* priests

By COREY LYON
CHANCELLOR, DIOCESE OF SALINA

In the Diocese of Salina, you may find that your parish is being served by a team of priests rather than a single pastor. This arrangement is known as *in solidum* pastoral care, and it's becoming more common as dioceses address the challenges of fewer priests and the need for collaborative ministry.

So, what does it mean for a parish to be served *in solidum*? The term *in solidum* comes from canon law and refers to a situation where several priests are jointly responsible for the pastoral care of one or more parishes. Instead of one priest being solely in charge, a team of priests works together, sharing their gifts and talents to serve the needs of the community.

Here are some key aspects of *in solidum* ministry:

- Shared Responsibility:** Each priest on the team is responsible for the spiritual care of the entire parish or group of parishes. They work together to provide the sacraments, preach the Gospel, and offer pastoral guidance.
- Moderator:** While all priests on the team share responsibility, one of them is appointed as

the moderator. The moderator's role is to coordinate the team's efforts, ensure good communication, and represent the team in juridic matters. He is considered "first among equals."

Collaboration: *In solidum* ministry emphasizes collaboration and shared decision-making. The priests work together, pooling their diverse skills and experiences to serve the community effectively.

Continuity: Although priests may rotate responsibilities, the goal is to provide consistent pastoral care to the parishioners. However, it's also recognized that the rotation of priests can be confusing, because the faithful naturally identify with their parish priest. For this reason, you may still see one of the priests more frequently than others at your parish.

While having multiple priests serve a parish may seem different from the traditional model, it can be an effective way to meet the needs of today's Church. By working together, *in solidum* teams of priests can bring a variety of gifts and experiences to the parish, fostering a vibrant and engaged faith community.

THANK YOU
Diocese celebrates Priestly Jubilees

Several priests across the diocese are celebrating significant milestones in this year. These major anniversaries, known as jubilees, mark years ending in 5 or 0 since ordination. Below are the priests being honored for 10+ years of faithful service to the priesthood.

Celebrating 65 years:

Monsignor James Hake was ordained May 29, 1960, by Bishop Frederick Freking at St. Boniface Church in Tipton. He served the diocese until his retirement in 2012. He held key leadership roles including Vice Chancellor (1964–1975), Chancellor (1975–2002), and Vicar General (1988–2014). He was named Monsignor in 1974.

Father Earl Meyer was ordained by Cardinal John Wright, then the bishop of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on June 6, 1960. Fr. Earl is a Capuchin Franciscan Friar in Victoria.

Celebrating 60 years:

Father Daniel Scheetz was ordained May 27, 1965, at St. Joseph Church in Oakley by Dodge City Bishop Marion Forst. He retired in 2009. He ministered in numerous parishes and was the founding pastor of St. Nicholas of Myra in Hays (1983). He held various diocesan roles, including Director of the Propagation of the Faith. He now resides in Russell.

Celebrating 50 years:

Father Daryl Olmstead was ordained June 7, 1975, at St. Mary, Queen of the Universe Church in Salina by Bishop Cyril Vogel. Since 2015, he has led parishes in Tipton, Downs, and Osborne, and in 2025 will be Parish Administrator of St. Mary Queen of Angels Parish, Russell and St. Mary Help of Christians Parish, Gorham.

Father Kerry Ninemire was ordained June 13, 1975, at St. Joseph Church in New Almelo by Bishop Cyril Vogel. He has held assignments in Manhattan, Salina, Oberlin, Herndon, Phillipsburg, Claudell, Junction City, Clay Center, and Miltonvale. He held leadership roles including Vicar General (2014), head of priest continuing education, and master of ceremonies. He has twice pastored St. Francis Xavier in Junction City and is retiring this year.

Father Donald Pfannenstiel was ordained June 14, 1975, at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Munjor by Bishop Cyril Vogel. He retired in 2019. He pastored parishes in Salina, Aurora, Miltonvale, Plainville, Herington, WaKeeney, Collyer, Oakley and Angelus, often overseeing multiple churches at once. He retired to Hays in 2019.

Celebrating 35 years:

Father Henry Baxa was ordained to the priesthood on May 26, 1990, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Con-

cordia by Bishop George Fitzsimons. He retired in 2024. His service included pastorates in Junction City, Abilene, Beloit, and Belleville. He also served as priest supervisor for several parishes and supported parochial schools.

Celebrating 30 years:

Father Curtis Carlson was ordained May 29, 1995. He is a Capuchin Franciscan Friar based in Victoria. In 2022 he became pastor of Our Lady Help of Christians in Antonino and St. Anthony in Schoenchen, and is current pastor of The Basilica of St. Fidelis in Victoria, St. Boniface Parish in Vincent and St. Ann Parish in Walker.

Celebrating 25 years:

Father Larry Letourneau was ordained a priest on May 20, 2000, by Bishop George Fitzsimons at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Concordia. He served the Salina Diocese from 2000 until his retirement in 2015. He held pastorates in Hanover, Greenleaf, Ellis, Beloit, Clyde, Clifton and Aurora, and also served as a priest supervisor for parishes in Washington and Morrowville.

Father Vincent John was ordained May 29, 1995. Fr. Vincent is an Indian Carmelite who served as Parochial Vicar at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Parish in Salina in 2024, and will soon begin serving as Parochial Vicar of St. Andrew Parish, Abilene; St. Francis Xavier Parish, Junction City; and St. Michael Parish, Chapman.

Celebrating 20 years:

Father Jarett Konrade was ordained May 28, 2005, by Bishop Paul Coakley at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina. He has served the Salina Diocese with roles as parochial vicar, high school chaplain, and Vocations Director (2008–2014). He has pastored parishes in Wilson, Manhattan, Hays, Beloit, and Cawker City, and served in campus ministry at both K-State and Fort Hays State. This year he will continue as pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish, Beloit.

Celebrating 15 years:

Father Richard Daise was ordained May 22, 2010, by Bishop Paul Coakley at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina. He was pastor in Ellis, Colby, Hays, and most recently St. Francis and surrounding rural parishes. He has also served as Rural Life Moderator and Vicar of Priests. In 2024, he was assigned to multiple parishes as part of a team of priests *in solidum*, residing in St. Francis.

Father Lourthu Kulandaijesu was ordained May 4, 2010, by Bishop Jude Paulraj at St. Anthony Church in Agarakattu at Tamilnadu, India. He began serving in the Salina Diocese in 2016 in Russell and Hays. In 2019, he was appointed pastoral administrator of St. Wenceslaus Parish in Wilson.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



Religious Sisters honored at Appreciation Mass

By LORI LEISZLER

THE REGISTER

“Religious sisters are like flowers. You can never get enough of them,” shared Bishop Vincke with a warm smile at the Religious Sisters Appreciation Mass on May 8.

The celebration, held at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina, gathered religious women from across the diocese to pray with each other and to recognize their service to the community.

The Sisters were treated to lunch after Mass, and, after introducing themselves, they took time to reflect on their calling.

Sister of St. Joseph Sarah Ganser shared her advice for young women discerning a call to becoming a Sister: Try it!

“The gift of being a Sister is the joy of the freedom to be present to all people. It’s giving love back to Jesus. Be open to the adventure of exploring religious life.”



LORI LEISZLER, THE REGISTER

Religious sisters gathered together at Sacred Heart Cathedral on May 8 to celebrate the joys of being a Sister and to pray for each other.

Several of the sisters gathered echoed her thoughts that religious life is an adventure, saying, “Become a sister, travel the world.”

Sister Dian Hall, a Sister of St. Joseph for 12 years, said the

beauty of religious life lies in its shared mission.

“My favorite part about being a religious sister is being part of something that’s bigger than myself,” Hall said. “We’re all from different communities, but we’re

all one family of Sisters together.”

For Sister Tien, a Dominican Sister with 15 years of service, this unity holds true across borders. She grew up in Vietnam and, in 2022, came to the United States with three fellow Dominican Sisters from Go Vap, a district in Ho Chi Minh City. The Sisters of St. Joseph in Concordia welcomed them and supported their studies.

Sister Tien said that the greatest part of being a sister is finding joy in every moment.

“When you stand outside, you just get the surface. When you enter religious life, you go deeper and discover a lot of miraculous things.”

The Sisters of St. Joseph are keeping busy, as they recently welcomed several more neighbors from Vietnam to Concordia, including three Sisters and two Candidates for their community. Their stories are shared below.

Welcoming our neighbors from Vietnam

By DEANNA KYMER

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR FOR THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH, CONCORDIA. ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN THE MESSENGER

2025 has proven to be an exciting year right off the bat, as we have welcomed six neighbors from Vietnam to join us in Concordia. Two are Candidates for our Community.

Sr. Rose Ngoan Pham is a Dominican Sister from the Thai Binh Diocese. She will be attending classes at Cloud County Community College (CCCC). Sister Rose’s story is as follows in her writing:

“My full name is Rosa Phạm Thị Ngoan. I am a nun of the Dominican Sisters of Thai Binh, located in Northern Vietnam. I was born and raised in a family with three sisters, and all of us are nuns. My older sister belongs to the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Tan Lap, while my second sister and I belong to the same congregation. My parents are farmers, but they are very devout and fully supported all three of us in our decision to become nuns, dedicating our lives to serving God.

Since I was a child, I have had a deep affection for Saint Thérèse of Lisieux through her autobiography, which I happened to read. This book inspired me to dream of becoming a nun like her, living a life dedicated to God. In addition, my family provided a solid foundation, which became a great source of motivation for us to follow our calling.

Furthermore, we had an uncle who was a priest, and he became a guide and role model for us to follow in our vocation journey. Although he passed away twenty years ago, I believe he will always

be a shining example for us to follow throughout his devoted life as a priest.

When I came to the United States, I carried with me the mission entrusted by my congregation to study special

She received the opportunity to change her mission and studied English for three months. She took a test to receive her Visa and failed three times. Finally, on the fourth, she was granted her Visa. “I feel like God was not done with



Sr. Rose Ngoan Pham



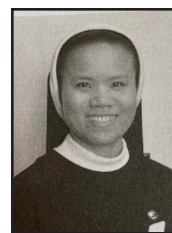
Chung Nguyen



Nhung Pham



Sr. Trang Tran



Sr. Lan Pham

education. This field is particularly important for Vietnam today, as many children with autism spectrum disorders have not received proper attention from their families and society. Before this journey, I was truly anxious because I hadn’t studied much English. However, a voice inside me urged me: ‘If I can help even one child integrate into the community, it would be like giving them a new life.’ This motivation pushed me forward, even though I knew there would be many challenges ahead. I hope these difficulties are only the first steps toward achieving success in the future.

Chung Nguyen and Nhung Pham had been trying to get their Visas since last fall. They were finally approved and arrived here on January 1st. We welcome them as candidates for our community.

Chung comes from a family of farmers and taught Kindergarten for one year in Vietnam. She was planning to join the Dominican Holy Gospel Convent in Vietnam. She was not at peace when it was time for her to take her final vows.

me,” she said. “It is a miracle that I’m here!”

Chung will take classes at CCCC to improve her English.

Nhung comes from a large family of small business owners. One of her brothers is a priest in Vietnam, and her parents are retired. Nhung was a Dominican Sister in Vietnam but didn’t feel it was the proper vocation for her when the time to take final vows came around. “I talked to the Mother Superior and my family and prayed about it and decided that I wanted to become a Sister of St. Joseph.” She will take classes to improve her English and for music at CCCC.

Sr. Trang Tran is a Sister from the Mary Queen of Peace Congregation in Vietnam.

She said, “I feel that I am lucky because I am one of the few Sisters chosen by my superior to come to the United States.”

She is the youngest of ten children in her family, which is comprised of farmers. As a child, Trang spent much time with the Sisters while her family worked. She didn’t think of becoming a

Sister in high school, but after high school, she felt a calling to join a community. Trang was a nurse in Vietnam and will take classes to improve her English at Cloud County Community College, and maybe some nursing classes.

Sr. Lan Pham is also from the Mary Queen of Peace Congregation. Lan comes from a large family with four brothers and three sisters. Farming is the primary profession of the family members; one brother is an engineer, and one sister is a nun. Lan went to school to be a nurse and came to the U.S. to learn more about nursing while improving her English skills. She worked at a boarding house in Vietnam with children aged one to twelve.

Lan chose to become a Sister to help others.

“I want the whole world to believe in God. I want to help people have a good life and help children and poor people in Vietnam to have a better life,” she explained.

In addition to the five women living with the Sisters of St. Joseph in Concordia, several priests and male students from Vietnam have also recently come to the Salina Diocese.

Two priests from the Diocese of Thai Binh in Vietnam—Fr. Joseph Tuyen and Fr. Dominic Thoa—are currently studying English at CCCC. They are preparing for graduate studies then will return to serve in their home diocese.

Fr. Tuyen said he is very thankful for the Sisters of St. Joseph Community.

“With the help of the Saint Joseph Community,” he said, “I

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

WHAT'S HAPPENING

June

Month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

JUNE IS DEDICATED TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.
THE SOLEMNITY OF THE SACRED HEART IS ON JUNE 27.

“The door of Heaven is the Heart of Jesus. The key to this door is prayer and love.”

—St. Andre Bessette



June 6

• Fr. Earl Befort Golf Classic, TMP, Hays, 6:30 a.m.

June 8

• Pentecost Sunday.

• 50th Anniversary Ordination Mass for Fr. Daryl Olmstead, St. Boniface Parish, Tipton, 4-9 p.m.

June 15

• Father's Day.

June 22

• Reception for Fr. Keith Weber, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Salina, 2-4 p.m.

June 28

• Permanent Deacon Ordination, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina, 11 a.m.

June 29

• Peter's Pence Collection

Seminarians recognized in Candidacy Rite



LORI LEISZLER, THE REGISTER

Bishop Gerald Vincke accepted candidates Collin Thielen, Max Megaffin and Joseph Schones during a special Mass on April 25.

BY LORI LEISZLER

THE REGISTER

On the evening of April 25, Sacred Heart Cathedral was filled with joy as three young men declared their commitment to continue discerning the priesthood. Surrounded by family, clergy, and fellow parishioners, Max Megaffin, Joseph Schones and Collin Thielen were formally admitted as candidates for Holy Orders during a special Mass celebrated by Bishop Gerald Vincke.

The ceremony, known as the Rite of Admission to Candidacy for Holy Orders, marks a significant milestone in the journey toward priesthood. In this rite, the Church recognizes a seminarian's intention to complete his formation and discernment, officially welcoming him as a candidate for ordination.

Megaffin and Schones have four years left of study before priesthood, while Thielen has five left.

After the Mass, the community gathered for a potluck, followed by a holy hour offered for Luke Friess, who was

ordained a deacon the next morning.

Emotions ran high as the evening unfolded. Joseph Schones's mother had tears in her eyes as she listened to her son speak about his vocation and the vital role his family has played in his journey.

"It means a lot to know that they support me, that they've been behind me, every step of the way, and I couldn't have done it without them," Joseph said. "I'm feeling an infinite joy to have the Church acknowledge my calling."

Max Megaffin reflected on the rare opportunity to share this moment with his fellow candidates. "All three of us go to different seminaries, so there's a uniqueness in getting to be all together here for this with all of our brothers. I'm just overjoyed."

Fr. Andrew Hammeke, Vocations Director, also shared historic news with the evening's attendants:

"For the first time in 70 years, we will be sending some seminarians to study in Rome." Both Megaffin and Thielen will begin theological studies there this fall.

WELCOME, FROM PAGE 6

have a supportive environment to improve my English skills before entering university ... The community cultivates a strong sense of friendship, warmth and joy in welcoming others."

Alongside the priests are four Vietnamese students—Tien Nguyen, Phong Tran, Trung Nguyen, and Dung

Dau—who have been studying English at CCCC since last fall. They are in the process of applying to become seminarians for the Diocese of Salina, as well as to the English & Culture Studies program at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology in Hales Corners, Wisconsin.

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Safe Environment Office increases awareness

BY LORI LEISZLER

THE REGISTER

The Safe Environment Office kept busy this past April, increasing awareness in schools and recognizing accomplishments in the diocese.

As Child Abuse Prevention Month, it serves as a reminder of the importance of vigilance, education, and advocacy in creating safe spaces for all children.

This spring, the Safe Environment Office focused on raising awareness and recognizing those who help lead these efforts at the local level. In Clay Center, parish safety coordinator Tomi Moos was honored for her dedicated service. In Beloit, Marcy Kee, who serves as both principal and school safety coordinator, was also recognized for her commitment to protecting and nurturing the young people in her community.

On April 8, Chancery staff marked Wear Blue Day, joining others across the country in showing support for child abuse prevention efforts. In addition to wearing blue, staff participated in a Mass, praying for children and their safety. Afterwards, the staff discussed practical steps everyone can take to help prevent abuse — including recognizing warning signs, educating others, advocating for strong community services and, most importantly, investing in children's lives.

The Diocese of Salina continues to strengthen its policies and programs to protect children.



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Chancery staff participated in Wear Blue Day on April 8, to spread awareness of child abuse and as a promise to protect people in their care.

audit are a testament to the dedication and vigilance of so many throughout our diocese who are committed to protecting our children," Bishop Vincke said.



COURTESY PHOTO

In Beloit, Geoff Andrews, Marcy Kee (principal, safety coordinator) Wendy Backes and Fr. Jarett Konrade recognized Kee's service to her community.

"I am grateful for their ongoing efforts and for the strong foundation we've built together. Safe Environment is such an important ministry and it's rooted in our call to safeguard the dignity of every child. We remain committed to fostering trust,

This dedication was reaffirmed through a recent on-site audit by StoneBridge Business Partners, which found the Diocese fully compliant with all audited articles of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The audit covered the period from July 1, 2021, to September 30, 2024, and its conclusions were based on in-depth reviews, observations, and documentation.

Bishop Gerald Vincke reflected on the audit and on Safe Environment's impact, emphasizing the importance of ongoing commitment and care.

"The positive results of this

At Clay Center, Coordinator Tomi Moos was recognized for her service as a parish safety coordinator. Front (L-R): Jennifer Hood, Dianne Waggoner, Tomi Moos, Back: Wendy Backes and Fr. Michael Leiker.



COURTESY PHOTO

accountability and spaces where all children are truly safe and supported."

The Safe Environment Office remains committed to its mission: protecting children, educating communities, and supporting those who have experienced abuse. For resources and information, visit salinadiocese.org/office/safe-environment-office or call 785-827-8746.

DID YOU KNOW?

One of the spiritual works of mercy is to "comfort the sorrowful." The Safe Environment Office embraces this call by offering support to those who are hurting and working proactively to create a safe, healing environment that helps prevent future harm.



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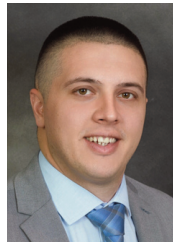
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2025-2026 Scholarship Winners Announced

BY CORRINA HUDSONPILLAR

The Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina is excited to announce the scholarship recipients for the 2025–2026 academic year. Students were invited to share a personal reflection on the theme “What does your Catholic faith mean to you?” as part of the application process. Submissions were also reviewed for community involvement through volunteer work, financial need, and the completeness of their application. An impartial panel of judges selected recipients using established criteria and scoring rubrics for each scholarship.

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 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. Susie 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 and 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.



MONSIGNOR CLEMENT A. KRUSE SCHOLARSHIP

- **Alliana Thomasson** from Ellsworth, attending Fort Hays State University
- **Allison Zimmerman** from Colby, attending Colby Community College
- **Amelia Bowles** from Atwood, attending Garden City Community College
- **Breanna Seiler** from Hays, attending Kansas State University
- **Joey Mindrup** from Hays, attending Kansas State University
- **Natalie Wederski** from Colby, attending Colby Community College
- **Serenity Smith** from Quinter, attending Kansas State University
- **Teagan Gottschalk** from Hays, attending Kansas State University

MARYMOUNT MEMORIAL EDUCATIONAL TRUST SCHOLARSHIP

- **Aubrey Gengler** from Beloit, attending Benedictine College
- **Benjamin Dome** from Hays, attending the University of Notre Dame
- **Gianna Horinek** from Beloit, attending Benedictine College
- **Julia Meitner** from Hays, attending the University of Notre Dame
- **Meredith Baumann** from Manhattan, attending Benedictine College
- **Michelle Zarybnicky** from Hanover, attending Benedictine College

SUSIE DEGES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

- **Jolie Girard** from Clyde, attending Kansas State University



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There is another area of life that requires good planning. That has to do with **your estate plan**. A good estate plan can also help ensure you are prepared so that you have what you need when you need it.

One approach that may help you with your planning is to think about the **WHO**, the **WHAT** and the **HOW** of your plan.

WHO MATTERS TO YOU?

Your will or living trust can be used to provide for family, friends and cherished causes. Consider who is important to you and the legacy that you want to leave.

WHAT DO YOU OWN?

You may own real estate or have personal property such as furniture, cars and other items. Perhaps you have an insurance policy or retirement, bank and investment accounts. You should ensure that your plan accounts for all that you own.

HOW SHOULD YOU GIVE?

There are many ways for you to provide for the people you love, using what you own. You may want your plan to include charitable vehicles, such as gift annuities and charitable remainder

trusts. These can accomplish your charitable goals, give you income and tax benefits, and can provide for your family and friends.

No matter what your goals, we have information that can help put together a plan that is right for you. Please call 785-827-8746 or contact us by email at development@salinadiocese.org so that we can assist you.



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Matea Gregg, Communications

POPE FRANCIS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Mary Magdalene, seeing that the stone of the tomb had been rolled away, ran to tell Peter and John. After receiving the shocking news, the two disciples also went out and — as the Gospel says — “the two were running together.” The main figures of the Easter narratives all ran! On the one hand, “running” could express the concern that the Lord’s body had been taken away; but, on the other hand, the haste of Mary Magdalene, Peter and John expresses the desire, the yearning of the heart, the inner attitude of those who set out to search for Jesus. He, in fact, has risen from the dead and therefore is no longer in the tomb. We must look for him elsewhere.

This is the message of Easter: we must look for him elsewhere. Christ is risen, he is alive! He is no longer a prisoner of death, he is no longer wrapped in the shroud, and therefore we cannot confine him to a fairy tale, we cannot make him a hero of the ancient world, or think of him as a statue in a museum! On the contrary, we must look for him and this is why we cannot remain stationary. We must take action, set out to look for him: look for him in life, look for him in the faces of our brothers and sisters,

look for him in everyday business, look for him everywhere except in the tomb.

We must look for him without ceasing. Because if he has risen from the dead, then he is present everywhere, he dwells among us, he hides himself and reveals himself even today in the sisters and brothers we meet along the way, in the most ordinary and unpredictable situations of our lives. He is alive and is with us always, shedding the tears of those who suffer and adding to the beauty of life through the small acts of love carried out by each of us.

For this reason, our Easter faith, which opens us to the encounter with the risen Lord and prepares us to welcome him into our lives, is anything but a complacent settling into some sort of “religious reassurance.” On the contrary, Easter spurs us to action, to run like Mary Magdalene and the disciples; it invites us to have eyes that can “see beyond,” to perceive Jesus, the one who lives, as the God who reveals himself and makes himself present even today, who speaks to us, goes before us, surprises us. Like Mary Magdalene, every day we can experience losing the Lord, but every day we

can also run to look for him again, with the certainty that he will allow himself to be found and will fill us with the light of his resurrection.

Brothers and sisters, this is the greatest hope of our life: we can live this poor, fragile and wounded existence clinging to Christ, because he has conquered death, he conquers our darkness and he will conquer the shadows of the world, to make us live with him in joy, forever. This is the goal towards which we press on, as the Apostle Paul says, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead. Like Mary Magdalene, Peter and John, we hasten to meet Christ.

The Jubilee invites us to renew the gift of hope within us, to surrender our sufferings and our concerns to hope, to share it with those whom we meet along our journey and to entrust to hope the future of our lives and the destiny of the human family. And so we cannot settle for the fleeting things of this world or give in to sadness; we must run, filled with joy. Let us run towards Jesus, let us rediscover the inestimable grace of being his friends. Let us allow his Word of life and truth to shine in our life. As the



COURTESY PHOTO, EUROPEAN UNION

great theologian Henri de Lubac said, “It should be enough to understand this: Christianity is Christ. No, truly, there is nothing else but this. In Christ we have everything.”

And this “everything” that is the risen Christ opens our life to hope. He is alive, he still wants to renew our life today. To him, conqueror of sin and death, we want to say:

“Lord, on this feast day we ask you for this gift: that we too may be made new, so as to experience this eternal newness. Cleanse us, O God, from

the sad dust of habit, tiredness and indifference; give us the joy of waking every morning with wonder, with eyes ready to see the new colours of this morning, unique and unlike any other. [...] Everything is new, Lord, and nothing is the same, nothing is old.”

Sisters, brothers, in the wonder of the Easter faith, carrying in our hearts every expectation of peace and liberation, we can say: with You, O Lord, everything is new. With you, everything begins again.

Pope Francis and the radical demands of love

BY ANDY BRANDT

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Looking back over a papacy that lasted for more than a decade, there are any number of “markers” one could use to summarize what it all meant, or what the Holy Father hoped to teach. Many of them are insightful and uncover new aspects of his teaching, but there’s also quite a bit of value in simply turning to the things that he thought were important enough to dedicate an Encyclical to them. This is especially valuable as we approach the ten year anniversary of *Laudato Si*, and this paper comes out right before the month of the Sacred Heart, the core of his last encyclical, *Dilexit Nos*.

What can we say about Pope Francis looking back over his encyclicals? The

first overarching theme is that his prayer is aligned with Jesus’ High Priestly prayer in Chapter 17 of the Gospel of John: “That they all may be one.” From *Lumen Fidei* through *Dilexit Nos*, the Holy Father was concerned with our failure to keep up our end of the bargain there, and he prayed for us and counseled us how we might grow in greater unity: through the shared gift of faith, through understanding what was common to us as creatures and humans, and through our shared identity as objects of the Love of God. Looking at the world, it is clear that these prayers are more needed than ever, and that the counsel he gave us is more than ever worthy of our attention.

Another theme, closely related to the first, is our participation in the work of God. In *Laudato Si*, *Fratelli Tutti*, and *Dilexit Nos*,



Pope Francis builds out of his first encyclical, on faith, and demonstrates that faith is not meaningful unless it leads to some kind of action. Especially in *Dilexit Nos*, he explains that Christ “shows the depth of his love... by concrete actions.” (33)

Christ’s actions in love, he adds, are the outpouring of The Father’s love and mercy, and it is this which we are called to imitate. The most troubling clause in the Our Father prayer forces us to pray that we would be forgiven to the extent that we forgive.

Pope Francis, leading as he always did with mercy, builds that by saying we have already been forgiven much, we have received an abundance of love and grace, so now the task is simply to live out of the abundance we have been given.

That abundance is the final theme I want to point out, and I think it is the key to understanding His teaching. For the Holy Father, there was never a question about whether there is enough mercy,

love, grace, earth. The question was always whether we would recognize that the gifts of God are in fact unlimited and abundant, and share them as though we were not worried they would run out. This can be seen clearly in *Laudato Si*, but I think it’s recognizable in everything the Holy Father wrote, once you learn to look for it. In a world that believes that all goods, even love, are scarce, and that we have to limit our love only to those nearby, or to the “deserving”, Pope Francis preached against a “throwaway culture” that treats some people as disposable. There is enough, he pleads with us, if you just look again. The One who fed five thousand with only a few loaves seeks to share His merciful

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Pope Leo XIV offers message of peace

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Minutes later, Pope Leo XIV appeared to enormous cheers from the excited crowd.

The peace of the risen Christ, he said, is a “disarming, humble, and persevering peace” that comes from God — a God who “loves us all unconditionally.”

He recalled his predecessor, the late Pope Francis, who blessed Rome on Easter Sunday just hours before his death. “Allow me,” Leo said, “to follow that same blessing.”

“God loves us, God loves all of us, and evil will not prevail. We are all in the hands of God. Therefore, without fear, united, hand in hand with God and among ourselves, let us go forward. We are disciples of Christ. Christ precedes us. The world needs his light. Humanity needs him like a bridge to be reached by God and his love,” Leo said.

The pope asked those present to help the Church to build bridges through dialogue and encounter, working for unity and peace. He thanked Pope Francis and the cardinals who chose him to be the successor of St. Peter, history’s first pope.

The pope added that he wants to “walk together ... as a united Church, always searching for peace, justice, and trying to



CNS PHOTO/VATICAN MEDIA

Pope Leo XIV embraces tradition in his official portrait, donning classic papal vestments. He was elected on May 8, a decision that took only 33 hours.

always work as men and women faithful to Jesus Christ, without fear to proclaim the Gospel, to be missionaries.”

Pointing out that he is a member of the Augustinian religious order, Leo paraphrased the words of his founder,

St. Augustine, who once said in a sermon: “With you I am a Christian and

for you I am a bishop.”

In a special greeting to the Catholic Church of Rome, of which he is bishop, Leo said: “We must learn together how to be a missionary Church, a Church that builds bridges, dialogue, always open to receive, like this square with its ‘arms’ open to all, everyone who sees our charity, our presence, dialogue, love.”

Breaking off from Italian into Spanish, the pope greeted the people of the Diocese of Chiclayo in Peru, where he was bishop from 2015 until Pope Francis brought him to the Vatican as prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops in 2023.

Speaking again in Italian, the pope said the faithful want “a synodal Church, one that looks always for peace, for charity, and to be close to those who suffer.”

Recalling the day’s feast day of Our Lady of Pompei, Pope Leo invited those present to pray a Hail Mary with him “for this new mission, but for the whole Church, for peace in the world.”

After the prayer asking for the intercession of the Virgin Mary, the new pope then bestowed his first apostolic blessing, “urbi et orbi,” on the city and the world.

ENCYCLICALS THAT SPEAK, FROM PAGE 10

heart with all of us, and who are we to hoard it for ourselves?

It is easy to categorize and dismiss any papal encyclical as simply “The Pope Addresses a Topic,” especially in our age of mass-media where they are covered by secular press (many of which don’t seem to actually read them, resulting in a game of papal telephone). Thus, many people know Lumen Fidei as “Pope Francis talks about Vatican II”, Laudato Si as “The Environment” and Fratelli Tutti and Dilexit Nos as a pair of pleas to be nice to each other. While this can be a helpful means of categorization, it also

tends to help people ignore them, as they already know how they feel about a given topic. This leads us to miss the connections between encyclicals, and reduces a letter from the chair of St. Peter to a pronouncement of policy preference having little to do with our actual lives. This is one of the most important mistakes we make.

While Pope Francis was not shy in sharing his opinions on policies around the environment, care for the poor and marginalized, and other topics, the focus of these encyclicals is on our conversion. He is asking you to grow in faith and

love, to recognize the gifts you hold in common with everyone else as a creature and as a human being, and to be converted more and more into conformity with Christ’s way of life.

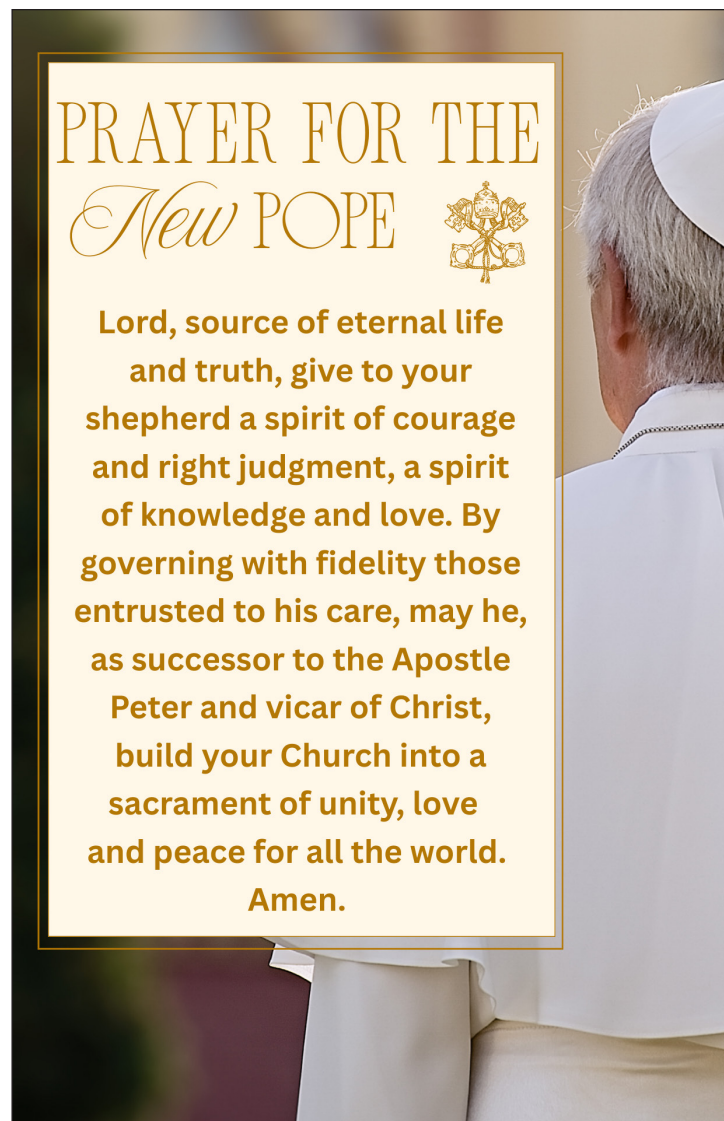
In the last few days I have had many conversations about Pope Francis with a variety of people, many of whom are not believers or who feel themselves to be on the periphery of the church. In these conversations, they have said over and over that “he really seemed to care,” about them, about the poor, about our common inheritance of the earth. May his writings continue to teach us to care as much as he did.

PRAYER FOR THE New POPE



Lord, source of eternal life and truth, give to your shepherd a spirit of courage and right judgment, a spirit of knowledge and love. By governing with fidelity those entrusted to his care, may he, as successor to the Apostle Peter and vicar of Christ, build your Church into a sacrament of unity, love and peace for all the world.

Amen.



Welcome to the Catholic Church, Mom!

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

With all the church services that seminarians attend during their journey toward priesthood, there are surely some moments that leave an indelible mark in their memories.

One of those ranking at the top of the list for Kyle Pfeifer will be Easter 2025.

That's when Kyle, a seminarian for the Diocese of Salina, stood in St. Catherine of Siena church in Wichita and witnessed a family member join the Catholic Church.

Kyle has attended numerous Easter Vigils over the years, but this one was special. He served as the OCIA sponsor for this newly baptized and confirmed Catholic – his own mother, Gina Pfeifer.

Kyle, an only child of Randy and Gina Pfeifer, grew up in the Catholic faith although his mother had never been baptized Catholic.

He said his paternal grandmother, Helen Pfeifer, who lived with his family for several years, was a big influence in his religious life. And both his father and mother supported Kyle's decision to join the seminary.

Kyle's and Gina's lives changed dramatically in 2023 when Randy died of a heart attack at the age of 57. Randy and Gina had just recently moved to Wichita from Manhattan, where Kyle grew up.

Following Randy's funeral, Gina started attending services at St. Catherine in Wichita.

"Mom witnessed the bishop and priests and seminarians coming to Dad's funeral," Kyle said. "And that really moved her heart. I think it made her realize how loving and supportive the church is, and I think that was one of the reasons for her conversion."

Kyle, who attends seminary at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary near St. Louis, Mo., was ready to enter his pastoral internship year in the diocese last fall, and he was placed at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Parish in Salina.

In addition to numerous services for the church, including helping out with religious education classes on Wednesday evenings and OCIA classes on Sunday, Kyle also taught theology classes at Sacred Heart High School.

Every Thursday evening from September through Easter week, he was able to make the 80-mile drive to Wichita to attend OCIA classes with his mother.

"There was definitely a lot of providence with being placed in Salina," Kyle said.

Gina said she drew closer and closer to God after she started attending Mass at St. Catherine's and decided to go through the OCIA process.

Kyle was privileged to be his mother's sponsor and be by her side as she was baptized, made her first Holy Communion and was confirmed.

"It's kind of weird being your mother's godparent," he said with a chuckle. "I was amazed by the Holy Spirit's action in her life."

Gina agreed, and she is looking forward to continuing her son's journey to priesthood – and beyond – with him. He is on schedule to be ordained a priest in 2027.

"The whole process was so moving," Gina said of OCIA. "And Father Dan (Spexarth) is such a good teacher."

Gina said while attending events with Kyle in the past, she was a little hesitant when people would ask what parish she belonged to.

Now, she can say St. Catherine of Siena.



COURTESY PHOTO

Gina Pfeifer, mother of seminarian Kyle Pfeifer, attended OCIA classes over the last year and entered the Catholic Church this Easter with Kyle as her sponsor.

Seminarian crafts new ambry for St. John Nepomucene Parish

BY ANDREA HAGLER
SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

St. John Nepomucene Parish in Beardsley is excited to have a new ambry handcrafted by its very own parishioner and seminarian, Gus Hanson!

A couple of years ago, Fr. Joseph Asirvatham requested that we replace our previous ambry with a new ambry that has glass windows so that the people can see the holy oils inside of the ambry.

As a high school senior, Gus volunteered to take on this project. He designed and built the ambry in his high school woods class, and matched details on it with details in the church.

Tim Lindenberger painted the ambry to match the colors of the altars inside of the church and Jolene Reeh added gold leaf flaking. Fr. Rich Daise blessed it on Divine Mercy Sunday.



COURTESY PHOTO

Gus Hanson, who helped build the ambry for St. John Nepomucene Parish, entered seminary at the St. Joseph House of Formation in the fall of 2024 and is taking classes at Newman University, where he is majoring in philosophy for theology studies.

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TMP-M student: A man of many uniforms

By DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN

THE REGISTER

As a student attending Catholic schools in Hays his entire life, Caleb Marintzer is no stranger to dressing in some type of uniform every school day.

A couple of different uniforms represent significant events to the Thomas More Prep-Marian senior during his last semester of high school.

Marintzer was honored while wearing his Boy Scout gear in January when he was recognized for having completed his Eagle Scout project last year.

He will don yet another uniform later this month.

Just one week after graduation, Marintzer will take off for Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., for 10 weeks of basic training with the Army National Guard.

Those green fatigues have special meaning to Marintzer. Besides the overall experience he will gain, his commitment to serving in the military will help pay for his college education.

Following basic training, Marintzer will attend nine weeks of advanced individual training to become a CBRN officer (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear officer).

So his college career won't begin until the January 2026 school year, when he begins work on his nuclear engineer major at Kansas State University.

But he's OK with that.

Marintzer will get to enjoy a little break from school and activities when he returns to Hays from Missouri – something to which he isn't accustomed.

At TMP-M, Marintzer competed in sports all three seasons. This year, he is a student council representative for the senior class. He is a member of FFA and his school's liturgy team. And he helped the Monarch scholars bowl team qualify for state four years.

This semester has been an especially busy one for Marintzer, whose Eagle Scout project was coordinating the restoration of a large crucifix and its foundation in the St. Joseph Cemetery.

He also is active in his parish at St. Nicholas of Myra, where he helps coach younger altar servers.

As the oldest of seven siblings, he helps out around his home, including the family mow-



COURTESY PHOTOS

TMP-Marian senior Caleb Marintzer gives the three-finger Scout sign at his Eagle Scout ceremony. Marintzer will be donning military fatigues soon after his high school graduation. Marintzer's Eagle Scout project was helping restore the huge crucifix in St. Joseph Cemetery in Hays.

ing business.

An honor student, Marintzer knew he had several academic scholarship opportunities with high grades and ACT score.

But he also knew how expensive college can be, and he was familiar with the National Guard, in which an uncle of his served.

So after talking to a recruiter at a career fair, he looked more into it and decided to join.

"That's Caleb. He knows he's not the only child his parents have to raise, so he's going to make his own way," said Bob Leikam, a former teacher of Marintzer's at TMP-M. "He's a very unselfish person."

Marintzer is finishing up his last season competing in sports for the Monarchs as a distance runner for the TMP-M track team.

Should he or any of his teammates qualify

for the state meet the last weekend of this month at Wichita, he will have to miss it for basic training.

"I have really enjoyed being a senior leader on the team," Marintzer said. "So I'll miss that. More than just competing myself, I enjoy cheering my teammates on, helping them out. So I can see myself being a coach someday."

Engineer. Coach. Military Officer. Whatever the future holds for Marintzer, Leikam is confident he will succeed.

"In my opinion, he will go a long, long way in life whatever he does," Leikam said. "He's a leader, not a follower. He knows what's right, he knows what he's been taught, and he is going to do the right thing. He has a tremendously level head on his shoulders. I give credit to his parents for that."

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Hearts full of hope at Catholic Charities

By JEREE HUGHBANKS

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER,
CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF NORTHERN
KANSAS

Bertha and Yunior, proud parents of six children, work tirelessly to create a stable and loving home. Life hasn't been easy, but their resilience and hope have carried them through tough times. When a friend saw them struggling to pay bills and meet their children's needs, she introduced them to Catholic Charities—a connection that changed everything.

From their first visit, Bertha and Yunior felt kindness and support.

"You were there when we didn't know what to do," Bertha said. "You helped us with diapers, food, hygiene, and clothing. Let's just say, you've helped us with everything! It's been a blessing."

Melissa Herrera, Emergency Assistance Coordinator, went beyond the basics to truly understand their needs. She connected them to other local resources like weekly food assistance programs and even helped Bertha's oldest son learn to use his phone to fill out applications—a skill that's helped the family access even more support.

"Thank God we found you," Bertha shared, reflecting on Melissa's compassion and extra care. "You're like the best friend we can trust."

Yunior echoed her gratitude. "We've never

had this kind of support before. We don't feel alone anymore. It feels like we have a family here—someone we can count on."

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this possible. Simple things, like monthly diapers, save

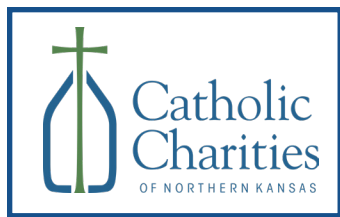
Bertha and Yunior around \$40 a month—a significant relief for their stretched budget.

"It all adds up," Bertha explained. "Over a whole year, that's a huge help!"

For Bertha and Yunior, it is about more than just meeting physical needs. It's about the hope and encouragement that come from knowing someone cares.

"We are so blessed," Bertha said. "We pray God blesses you all for what you've done for us. God knew what He was doing when He put you in our path. Thank you!"

Because of you, Bertha and Yunior are building a brighter future for their children. Their story is a powerful reminder of how your support transforms lives and creates lasting hope for local families.







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BAPTISMS

Noah David Barksdale, son of Scott and Victoria Barksdale, was baptized April 27, 2025, by Fr. Leo Blasi at Seven Dolores Parish in Manhattan.

Celine Angelica Berg, daughter of Chase and Julie (Schroeder) Berg, was baptized April 13, 2025, by Fr. Brian McCaffrey at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays.

Avery Rae Brumfield, daughter of Bailen Brumfield and Lauren Pharr, was baptized March 29, 2025, by Fr. Kerry Ninemire at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Godparents are Dalton Brumfield and Maya Khan.

Caiden Jon Cruz, child of Coby Gene Cruz and Jonica Ma’Alia Baza Narcis, was baptized January 10, 2025, by Fr. Kerry Ninemire at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Godparent is Toby Jay Quichocho.

Noel Santiago Diaz, child of Kevin Joel Diaz and Josselyn Rios, was baptized October 26, 2024, by Fr. Kerry Ninemire at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Godparent is Juan Valencia.

Brett Hayes Fairbanks, son of Ryan Joseph Fairbanks and Lindsey (Wey) Fairbanks, was baptized March 30, 2025, by Fr. Kerry Ninemire at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Godparents

are Jaren Nittler and Abigail Nittler.

Kevin Daniel Hilger, son of Daren and Jenny (Wilkerson) Hilger, was baptized March 2, 2025, by Fr. Brian McCaffrey at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays.

Grayson Wilder Jones, son of Kyle and Christy (Moeder) Jones, was baptized April 26, 2025, by Fr. Nick Parker at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays.

Weston James Kohler, son of Hunter and Mackinzie Kohler, was baptized April 26, 2025, by Fr. Ryan McCandless at St. Theresa Parish in Mankato. Godparents are Claire Dougherty and Ian Chestnut.

Krew John Kropp, son of Wyatt and Morgan Kropp, was baptized April 5, 2025, by Fr. Frank Coady at St. Thomas More Parish in Manhattan.

Felix Marian Misiak, son of Adrian and Shaelyn (Klaus) Misiak, was baptized January 18, 2025, by Fr. Nick Parker at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays.

Naomi Dae Morales, daughter of Geovani and Christine (Hernandez) Morales, was baptized November 16, 2024, by Fr. Brian McCaffrey at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays.

Eliot Ekoui Mpem, child of

Sostene Ekoui Mpem and Aolele Nicaise Alima, was baptized February 8, 2025, by Fr. Kerry Ninemire at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Godparent is Mpem Samaki.

Dean Ignatius Ptacek, son of Doug Ptacek and Kelsi (Ihrig) Ptacek, was baptized April 20, 2025, by Fr. Vincent Manuel at St. Mary Queen of Angels Parish in Russell.

Rosemary Luu Rawls, daughter of Maximilian and Michelle Rawls, was baptized April 26, 2025, by Fr. Randall Weber at St. Patrick’s Church in Ogden.

Bailor Raine Schwartz, daughter of Syrus Schwartz and Kendra Sander, was baptized March 8, 2025, by Fr. Nick Parker at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays.

Isabella Grace Spikes, daughter of Gabriel and Kelly Spikes, was baptized April 10, 2025, by Fr. Frank Coady at St. Thomas More Parish in Manhattan.

Avyn Lane Talamantes, son of Omar and Tressa (Becker) Talamantes, was baptized April 27, 2025, by Fr. Damian Richards at St. Nicholas of Myra Parish in Hays.

Ellie Jo Timmons, daughter of Gregory Timmons and Zoie Barriger, was baptized May 3, 2025, by Rev. Nick Parker at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays.

WEDDINGS

Richard Lee Rajewski and Yvonne Annette Yost were married April 26, 2025, at St. Nicholas of Myra Parish in Hays. Fr. Damian Richards witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Howard and Aquina (Leiker) Rajewski. Parents of the bride are Harold and Betty (Black) Byer. Witnesses were Joshua Rajewski and Kimberly Fellhoelter.

Jarel Eugene Russell and Tayanne Caroline Alves were married April 19, 2025, at St. Patrick’s Church in Ogden. Fr. David Voss witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are James and Vanessa Russell. Parents of the bride are Geraldo Afonso and Seoneida das Gracas Pereira Alves.

Joseph Schmidtberger and Jasmine Zerr were married March 1, 2025, at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays. Fr. Nick Parker witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Gregory and Lori Schmidtberger. Parent of the bride is Melissa Zerr. Witnesses were Jacob Schmidtberger and Jackie Baxter.

Kenneth Weaver and Haylee Nichole Weaver were married April 14, 2025, at St. Patrick’s Church in Ogden. Fr. David Voss witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Rodney and Anna Weaver. Parents of the bride are Kenneth and Angela Thompson. Witnesses were Stephen and Misty Marshall.

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FUNERALS

Randy Amrein, 48, died April 18, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 25 at St. Mary's Parish in Ellis. Fr. Dana Clark presided. Burial at St. Mary's Cemetery, Ellis.

Gilbert F. Brungardt, 84, died April 4, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 12 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays. Fr. Nick Parker presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery, Hays.

Donald Ray "Doc" Harrier, Sr., 93, died March 24, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated May 9 at Sacred Heart Parish in Oberlin. Fr. Henry Saw Lone presided. Burial in Oberlin Cemetery.

Jackie Hecker, 90, died October 13, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated October 22 at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Fr. Kerry Ninemire presided. Burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Junction City.

Patricia Herron, 94, died March 7, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 14 at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Fr. Kerry Ninemire presided. Burial on March 17 at Fort Riley Main Post Cemetery.

Nora Jean "Jeannie" (Wiesner) Keller, died January 29, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated February 15 at St. Mary's Parish in Garden City. A graveside service was held April 26 at St. Mary's Cemetery in Ellis. Fr. Dana Clark presided.

Lawrence M. "Larry" Koirth, 75, died April 21, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 25 at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Munjor. Fr. Damian Richards presided. Burial in St. Francis Cemetery, Munjor.

Steven Matthews, 73, died January 19, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated January 31 at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Fr. Kerry Ninemire presided. Burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Junction City.

LaVon McGinnis, 87, died April 1, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 8 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Hays. Fr. Brian McCaffrey presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery, Hays.

Max Allen Peters, 73, died April 29, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated May 3 at St. John the Baptist Parish in Beloit. Fr. Jarett Konrade presided. Burial in St. John's Cemetery, Beloit.

Delores Petz, 95, died April 23, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 28 at St. Mary's Parish in McCracken. Fr. Dana Clark

presided. Burial in McCracken Cemetery.

Edna Mae Quinton, 98, died March 18, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 29 at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Fr. Kerry Ninemire presided. Interment at St. Mary's Cemetery, Junction City.

Judith "Judy" Rosa, 84, died November 4, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated November 15 at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Fr. Kerry Ninemire presided. Burial in Kansas Veterans' Cemetery.

Linda Rubash, 73, died October 19, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated November 8 at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Fr. Kerry Ninemire presided. Private burial followed.

Marcos Sanchez, 94, died March 16, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated March 25 at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Fr. Kerry Ninemire presided. Burial on March 27 in Kansas Veterans' Cemetery.

Cesario Sarsozo, 79, died October 23, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated November 1 at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City. Fr. Kerry Ninemire presided. Burial on November 4 at the Fort Riley Post Cemetery.

Janette T. Zuendel, 96, died January 11, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated April 30 at St. John the Baptist Parish in Beloit. Fr. Jarett Konrade presided. Burial in St. John's Cemetery, Beloit.

JUBILEES, FROM PG 10

Father Peter O'Donnell was ordained May 22, 2010, by Bishop Paul Coakley at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina. His service began in Salina, Hays and Junction City. He later pastored parishes in Herington, Hope, Elmo, Abilene and Chapman. In 2025 he was appointed pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish in Junction City, and will continue to lead St. Andrew in Abilene and supervise St. Michael in Chapman.

Celebrating 10 years:

Father Kyle Berens was ordained by Bishop Edward Weisenburger May 30, 2015, at Sacred Heart Cathedral. He first served in Goodland, Sharon Springs, St. Francis and Bird City, and in 2017 was pastor of St. Francis Xavier in Junction City. In 2025 he was appointed part-time priest support to St. John the Baptist Parish, Beloit. This is in addition to his current canonical appointment as Chaplain of In Ipso.

Father Michael Raj Kothalamuthu was ordained April 25, 2015. He was appointed Parochial Vicar at St. Joseph parish in Hays in 2022 and in 2024 was 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.

Father Andrew Rockers was ordained May 30, 2015, at Sacred Heart Cathedral by Bishop Edward Weisenburger. He has served in Salina, Goodland, Sharon Springs, St. Francis, Bird City, Cawker City and Beloit. In 2025, he was appointed pastor of St. John the Baptist in Clyde and St. Mary of the Assumption in Clifton.

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COURTESY PHOTO

The Kansas State Daughters of Isabella held their biennial state convention April 4-6 in Lawrence. The new state officers are as follows: **Peggy Feltis, Isabella Circle #254, Hays; Jeanette Gunkel, Vincent DePaul Circle #211, Spearville; Bobbie Graff-Hendrixson, Little Flower Circle #503, Topeka; Karla Dick, St. Rose of Lima Circle #832, Mt. Hope; Geri Augustine, St. Gilbert Circle #323, Ellis; Deb Britain, Holy Trinity Circle #421, Lenexa; Donna Lies, St. Rose of Lime Circle #832, Mt. Hope; Dana Hollerich, St. Rose Circle #205, Tipton; Deborah Kurtz, St. Jude Circle #1127, Lawrence; Helen Wales, St. Augustine Circle #235, Wichita.**

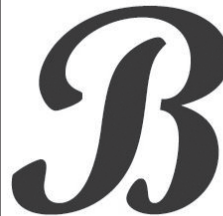
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Family celebrates triple sacraments on Divine Mercy weekend

By SHERRI JEFFERY
SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Divine Mercy Saturday, April 26, 2025, was a special weekend filled with the sacraments at St. Theresa's Catholic Church in Mankato. For the Kohler family, it was a day to grow closer to Christ and to each other. That day, Mackinzie Kohler was confirmed into the church through the OCIA program. Following her Confirmation, Mackinzie and

her husband, Hunter, were married in the Church, with witnesses of Claire Dougherty and Ian Chestnut standing with them. After their wedding vows, Mackinzie and Hunter Kohler had their three-year-old son, Weston, baptized into the church. Godparents were Claire Dougherty and Ian Chestnut. Fr. Ryan McCandless presided at each of the services for the family.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS



St. John's, Beloit, April 6
Front (L-R): Alexandra Ludwig, Mercedes Niewald, Esther Clark, Isaac Clark, Iris Letourneau, Amelia Jankowski, Axton Emerson and Tinley Weidenhaft. Second Row: Kason McMillan, Paul Lueger, Saul Cabrera, Arabella Roderick, Emma Thomas, Leland Sanders and Margaret Woods. Third Row: Fr. Andrew Rockers, Judd Pruitt, Liam Deverman, Clayton Dowell, Royce Litton, Renleigh Dunstan, Isabel Strathman, Logan Wilson and Fr. Jarett Konrade.



St. Mary's, Ellis, April 27
Front (L-R): Silas Wagner, Brandt Seibel, Adeline Seibel, Avri Kroeger, Reagan Deutscher, Emersyn Gaschler and Vincent Eck. Back: Nolan Reed, Easton Hines, Sutton Dinkel, Easton Aschenbrenner, Julian Gottschalk and Fr. Dana Clark.



Seven Dolors, Manhattan, April 27
Front (L-R): Dylan Rios Ramirez, Emmett Lawson, Ximena Baltierra, Vanessa Baltierra, Dana Jaramillo Rodriguez, Kaylee Estrada Moreno, Haley Sosa, Vadir Espino Sanchez, Damian Regules and Raphael Felderhoff. Back: Leah Flores Hernandez, Jacob Jaramillo Rodriguez, Anibal de los Santos Sosa, Jessi Austin, Matthew Ramirez Hernandez, Matteo Sosa Carrillo, Ashley Zavala and Fr. Leo Blasi.



Sacred Heart, Oberlin, April 27
Front (L-R): Leonardo Rodriguez, Alexandra Feyes, Miriam Abbott and Ryker Scott. Back: Becca Mondero, teacher, Valentina Rodriguez, Ailin Rodriguez, Maria Rodriguez and Father Chacko.

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL
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Your gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal – Call to Share helps support vital programs and ministries in our diocese, like First Communion! Give today via the QR code or at join.givecfds.org. More photos of spring celebrations throughout the diocese can be found on individual parish social media.





St. Mary, Smith Center, April 27
Frankie Hughes, Tucker Stansbury, and Elliot Laumann with Fr. Trinity Savariyar.



St. Aloysius Gonzaga, Osborne, April 27
Front (L-R): Clara McKain, Olivia Cheney, Elle Cook and Cutter Kendig. Back: Maddox Towery, Emery Wilson, Harper Wilson, Jace Mans and Fr. Daryl Olmstead.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS

**St. Michael's, Chapman, April 27**

Front (L-R): Maggie Brungardt, Harper Sander, Riley Andrade, Lily Karlin, Hudson Schmidtberger and Ellie Robben. 2nd row: Carter Koerner, Hunter Hoffman, Collins Gagnon, Harper Dreiling and Mya Bucher. 3rd row: Braxton Dempewolf, Ben Schulte, Vincent Sander, Emmett Herl and Nash Pfeifer. Back: Jeanna Wellbrock, Fr. Curtis Carlson OFM Cap. and Jana Fross.

**St. John Nepomucene, Beardsley, April 27**

Front (L-R): Lydia Hanson and Breckyn Pochop. Back: Marci Sis, Instructor, and Fr. Rich Daise.

**St. Theresa, Mankato, April 26**

Front (L-R): Roland Bonjour, Hazel Jeffery, Eleanor Porter, and Braden Wirth and Fr. Ryan McCandless.

**St. Joseph, Oakley, April 27**

Front (L-R): CCD Teacher Jenna Jenkins, Vera Helus, Lynn Bretz, Breckyn Stramel, Ryan Ottley, Adrianna Macias and Blakely Krier. Middle Row: CCD Teacher Krista Stramel, RJ Fellhoelter, Nolan Zerr, Owen Thompson, Zane Chrisler, Nau Apodaca and St. Joe's Teacher Bryn Kuhlman. Back: Deacon Dennis, Brexton Munk, Finn Jenkins, Father Luke Thielen, Seth Kuhlman and Deacon Mike.

**St. Mary's, Herndon, May 11**

(L-R): Deacon Mark Vrbas, Trevor Rippe, Khloe Green, Nick Nickel and Father Henry Saw Lone

**St. Michael's, Chapman, May 4**

(L-R) Abby Anderes (catechist), Ryle Langvardt, Maizy Krinhop and Fr. Peter O'Donnell

**Sacred Heart, Atwood, April 27**

Front (L-R): Front Row: Maribel Chacon, Pablo Hernandez, Erlene Garcia, Geovanni Hernandez and Angelica Gomez. Back: Deacon Mark Vrbas, Brandon Salas, Lenny Garcia, Joe Rojo and Fr. Henry Saw Lone.

CONFIRMATIONS

**St. Joseph, Oakley, March 23**

Front (L-R): Deacon Dennis Engel, Brooke Smith, Peyton Kuhlman, Jayde Kahle and Deacon Mike Brundgardt. Back: Fr. Luke Thielen, Cody Polley, Jantz Lowry, Jonah Kuhlman, Levi Kuhlman, Carter Selensky and Most Reverend Bishop Vincke.

**St. Mary, Ellis, March 23**

Front (L-R): Sophia Gaschler, Addalyn Haas and Emma Flax. Middle: Amethyst Moses, Maggie Downing, Taryn Boydston, Chevella Morton and Bishop Vincke. Back: Fr. Dana Clark, Cayson Boydston, Jack Reed, Colt McCoy and Hunter Honas.

**St. Michael's, Chapman, April 27**

Front (L-R): Sara Cook (catechist), Jazzmin Won, Riley DeLorenzo, Reese Whitehair, Anna Martinez, Victoria Pelfrey and Alyssa Calovich. Back: Fr. Peter O'Donnell, Ivy Beck, Savannah Valenzuela, Brody Calovich, Logan Abel, Callie Cook, Addison Acheson and Bishop Vincke.

EASTER CELEBRATIONS



Seven Dolors, Manhattan
(L-R): Niklas Ward, Carlos Palacian, Formations Co-Director, Jonathan Daniels, and Noah Ward. Palacian prepared all three catechumens to receive the three Sacraments of Initiation. Other adult catechumens not pictured who received all Sacraments were Lesley Brecken and Jeremy Brecken, Leona Mentz, Adriel Garcia-Samaniego, Yeisel Garcia-Samaniego, Tommy Brecken, Alynna Dominguez and Camila Lopez Dueñas. Additionally, during the Easter Vigil a Profession of Faith was made by Jeshua Pence and Thomas Weiss. Confirmations included Devaney Gonzalez Uribe, Taisa Larson and Lauren Swoboda.



St. Mary of the Assumption, Clifton, and St. John the Baptist, Clyde
Front (L-R): Front row: Fr. Steven Heina, Candidate for Confirmation Matthew Bulleigh, Candidate for Confirmation Kristin Oestreich, Candidate Katie Girard, Candidate Kalli Deaver, Candidate for Confirmation Judy Deaver and Sister Beverly Carlin. Back: Lucas Bulleigh, Melverna Knoettgen, Elias Girard, Drew Deaver, Daniel Deaver.



St. Ignatius of Loyola, Kanopolis
(L-R) Candidate Ryan Homolka, Fr. Stanley Basil and Candidate Carissa Nelson.



St. John the Baptist, Beloit
(L-R and down) Candidates James Deverman, Scarlett, Isabella, and Katherine Ludwig.



St. Mary, Ellis
(L-R): Candidate Robert Schiffner, Catechumen Crista Geyer, Fr. Dana Clark, Catechumen Sydney Jacques and Candidate Tava Deines.

GRADUATION CELEBRATIONS



St. Joseph, Oakley, May 4
(L-R): Taylor Sammons, Fr. Luke Thielen and Carter Krier.



St. Mary's Herndon, May 11
(L-R): Deacon Mark Vrbas, Makadyn Ketterl and Fr. Henry Saw Lone.



Sacred Heart Parish, Atwood May 4
(L-R) Deacon Mark Vrbas, Ryan Sramek, Antoinette Brungardt, Allison Rippe, Amelia Bowles and Fr. Henry Saw Lone

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An hour with Jesus: Finding peace in the Blessed Sacrament

By SHEA FINLEY

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

I felt called to start attending adoration in September of 2024. I had never gone before, and, at the time, I had no idea what to expect. However, when I started going to Eucharistic Adoration, I instantly felt closer to Jesus.

When we are in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, we are nurturing our relationship with God, worshiping Him, and growing closer to Him. My time in adoration is filled with prayer, meditation, reading scripture, gazing upon Him in the monstrance and speaking to Him. Sometimes I offer up my hour for special intentions: the Church, my family, friends, our Holy Fathers, world peace, the sick and dying, souls in purgatory; or in giving thanks, offering sacrifice and our sufferings.

My time spent in adoration has been incredible, and I've had some unique experiences. A sense of peace comes from going and adoring our Lord. The growth that happens when you pour yourself into Jesus, as he wants to pour himself into us, is amazing. He adores us, and we are meant to adore Him.

I was asked a few months ago by someone, "Why do you need to go to adoration to be with Jesus when he is always with us?" The difference is, we have Jesus's spiritual presence with us all the time, but going to adoration, we get to experience his physical presence. His body is there waiting for us. We get to go and sit with Him and share our hearts.



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

How blessed are we that we get that opportunity?

I'm currently reading 33 Days to Eucharistic Glory and as I was reading the other day, these words by Matthew Kelly spoke so powerfully to me: "Jesus waits for you in the Eucharist, in our tabernacles and monstrances, and on the altar at every mass. His message to you is unmistakable. Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

I was hesitant at first about going to adoration, but God's nudge was strong. It has changed my life in the most amazing ways. My relationship with Jesus has grown, and each week I look forward to being in His physical presence. I remember Matthew 26:40 when Jesus was praying in the garden, saying, "When He returned to his disciples He found them asleep. Jesus said to Peter, 'So you could not keep watch with me for one hour?'" In this scripture, perhaps Jesus wanted them to keep watch for Him, or maybe He wanted them to join Him in

prayer from a distance, or possibly He just wanted the comfort of their presence nearby. I know that our presence in adoration means something to Jesus. I feel like, just as he asked of his apostles, we can also offer Him our protection, prayer, and comfort, as we draw nearer to Him.

The other day I spoke with a relative of mine, who had never gone to adoration, but expressed a great desire to go. Due to her family situation, she was unable to make a weekly commitment to an hour shift and was unaware that she could still come in to adore Him at any time, even if it was just for a few minutes. She was under the impression that to go at all, you had to sign up. I

encourage everyone to sign up if your schedule allows, but that's not necessary to come to adoration: anyone is invited.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta said "The time you spend with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the best time that you will spend on earth. Each moment you spend with Jesus will deepen your union with Him and make your soul everlastingly more glorious and beautiful in heaven."

Lastly, Saint Pope John Paul II wrote, "The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic worship. Jesus awaits us in this sacrament of love. Let us not refuse the time to go to meet Him in adoration, let our adoration never cease."

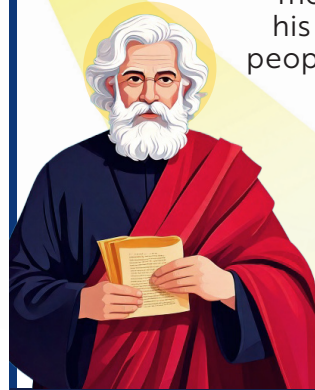
SPOTLIGHT ON THE SAINTS

St. Barnabas was one of the very first Christians and a good friend of St. Paul. His first name was Joseph, but the apostles gave him the name Barnabas, meaning "son of encouragement," because he helped and cheered people up!



He followed Jesus after hearing the Good News. His heart was so full of love that he sold his land and gave the money to support the Church. He dedicated his life to spreading the Gospel, especially to people who weren't Jewish—an important step in early Christianity.

Barnabas and Paul worked as a team, telling people about Jesus all over the world.



SAINT BARNABAS

He is the patron saint of peacemakers and missionaries.

FEAST DAY: JUNE 11

The gift of Guardian Angels

Guardian angels are one of those quiet treasures of our faith — always there, always working, but so easy to forget in the busyness of life. I'll admit, I didn't always give much thought to mine. The more I've come to understand their role, however, the more I've realized what a gift they truly are.

God, in His goodness, has assigned each of us a guardian angel — from the very moment of our conception. Not just to protect us from harm, but to guide, encourage, and help us become the saints we're called to be. St. Thomas Aquinas taught that "from the very moment of his birth, man has an angel guardian appointed to him." St. Bonaventure went even further, saying that "the very sight of your guardian angel suffices to make the devil flee." Think about that — the devil himself trembles at the presence of the angel walking beside you. That's how powerful their protection is.

Our guardian angels aren't just

hovering nearby for emergencies. They're companions on the journey — spiritual mentors who want nothing more than to see us grow in holiness. When we're tempted, they prompt us toward virtue. When we're discouraged, they remind us of the hope we have in God. When we feel alone, they are still there.

It's a good practice—one I'm getting better at—to ask our guardian angel for help throughout the day. A simple prayer in the morning to start our day gives permission to our angel to guide, protect, and encourage us throughout the day. I have included my favorite guardian angel prayer as this month's family prayer, but you don't have to use that one. You can make your own or just use the angel of God prayer.

Another beautiful habit I would encourage is to pray to the guardian angels of your kids and grandkids, asking their angels to watch over them, especially when we can't. One of the toughest

things about being a parent or grandparent is realizing that we can't always be there, but their guardian angels can. I wish I had started this a long time ago, but now I make sure to start the day by praying to the guardian angels of my children, their future spouses and even all the young

men on our basketball team.

The Church, the Saints, and Scripture all affirm the reality of guardian angels, not as a sweet idea, but as a spiritual reality. So let's not overlook them. Let's talk to them. Thank them. Most of all, let's trust that we never walk alone.

BILL Meagher
DIOCESE OF SALINA



Salina Diocese Family Prayer Guardian Angel Prayer

Dear Angel,
In His goodness, God gave you to me to guide, protect, and enlighten me, and to bring me back to the right way when I go astray.

Encourage me when I am disheartened, and instruct me when I err in judgment.

Help me to become more Christlike, and to someday to be accepted into the company of Angels and Saints in heaven.
Amen.

Cut this out and pray with your family! ✂