



THE REGISTER

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALINA

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

TOGETHER, LET US BE DISCIPLES OF JESUS ON MISSION.

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New young saints encourage faithful to live life to the full, pope says

CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

The greatest risk in life is to waste it by not seeking to follow God's plan, Pope Leo XIV said, proclaiming two new saints — two young laymen of the 20th and 21st centuries.

"Sts. Pier Giorgio Frassati and Carlo Acutis are an invitation to all of us, especially young people, not to squander our lives, but to direct them upward and make them masterpieces," the pope said Sept. 7. "The simple but winning formula of their holiness," he said, is accessible to everyone at any time. "They encourage us with their words: 'Not I, but God,' as Carlo used to say. And Pier Giorgio: 'If you have God at the center of all your actions, then you will reach the end.'"

In his homily, the pope underlined Jesus' call in the day's Gospel reading "to abandon ourselves without hesitation to the adventure that he offers us, with the intelligence and strength that comes from his Spirit, that we can receive to the extent that we empty ourselves of the things and ideas to which we are attached, in order to listen to his word."

That is what the two new saints did



CNS PHOTOS/ LOLA GOMEZ

Above: More than 80,000 people gather in St. Peter's Square and the wide boulevard leading to it for the canonization Mass for Sts. Pier Giorgio Frassati and Carlo Acutis, while at left Pope Leo XIV receives the offertory gifts from Antonia Salzano, mother of St. Carlo Acutis, and her family.



and what every disciple of Christ is called to do, he said. The saints of the church are often portrayed as "great figures, forgetting that for them it all began when, while still young, they said 'yes' to God and gave themselves

to him completely, keeping nothing for themselves," the pope said.

Turn to page 6 for testimony from members of the diocese with close connections to the new saints.

St. Paul Church a beacon for Angelus native – and vice versa

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

Ray Schroeder has traveled to many states in his lifetime. He's gone on several cruises. He even visited the Vatican in Rome one year.

But ask this Sheridan County farmer where he feels the most comfortable, and he is quick to answer "home."

The tiny town of Angelus (population 22) is home in every sense of the word for Ray.

He still lives in the house he was born in, where he grew up in a family of 10. It's just up the road from where he and his wife started raising six children before moving back to the "big house."

And just a quarter mile south of his farm is St. Paul Church, another "home" that is near and dear to his heart.

Ray was baptized at St. Paul. He received his First Holy Communion and was confirmed there. And he watched all six of his children baptized and two married there.

He met his future wife, Dorothy Zerr, at his sister's wedding in Angelus, and they raised their family in the Catholic faith in his hometown parish.

Sadly, he also attended Dorothy's funeral at St. Paul after she died in their home one October evening in 2010.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



COURTESY PHOTO



DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN, THE REGISTER

Climbing the stairs at St. Paul to sing in Sunday choir is just one of several weekly parish occurrences for lifetime Angelus resident Ray Schroeder.

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Suffering and the hidden hand of God

Sin and evil have always hindered humanity, but it seems to be ramping up more in our world—and even in the Church. From the shooting at a Catholic church in Minneapolis to the shooting of Charlie Kirk in Utah, and in so many other ways, evil is making itself felt.

Where is God in all this?

One of my go-to books is “Into Your Hands, Father: Abandoning Ourselves to the God Who Loves Us” by Wilfred Stinissen. He has a lot to say about evil and God’s will for us.

Stinissen writes that we most often miss the point of God’s will in our lives when we focus on others and their failings.

“For every one of us there is a chalice that the Father offers us to drink,” Stinissen writes. “We have difficulty recognizing it as coming from him, since a great deal of its content comes from other

people. Nevertheless, it is the Father who asks us to drink the bitter cup. It was so for Jesus, and it is the same for us.”

That God allows so much evil is a stumbling block for us.

Why does He not intervene? God did not prevent His beloved Son from

dying on the Cross.

How can we make sense of our own suffering and pain?

Stinissen writes that “suffering and even total ruin do not signify a lack of love on the part of the Father,” and that “suffering is not in vain; it bears fruit and has redeeming power.”

Stinissen states that, “God makes use of evil in such a superb way and with such skill that the result is better than if there had never been evil.”

This isn’t probably what we want to hear. We would rather have God prevent evil rather than allow it.

St. Augustine wrote, “There is indeed much done against God’s will by evil men, but his wisdom and power are so great that everything seemingly contrary to it, in reality, works toward the good outcome or end that he has preordained.”

Stinissen explains that what God permits is also a part of his universal, all-embracing will. He has foreseen it from the beginning and decided how he will use it. Everything that happens has a purpose in God’s plan.” He quotes a spiritual father writing to a religious sister: “Be profoundly persuaded that nothing takes place in this world either spiritually or physically, that God does not will, or at least permit; therefore, we ought no less to submit to the permissions of God in all things that do not depend on us, than to His absolute will.”

In the midst of evil, God desires us to surrender to his will for us.

Stinissen says, “The life of Jesus

is an excellent example of how what appeared to be an obstacle was in fact an effective means. The Pharisees, who rejected Jesus and wanted to prevent him from appearing as the Messiah, were the very ones who, by resisting and killing him, led him to his goal. His goal, of course, was the Cross. Those who nailed him to it did not realize that they were serving God’s purposes. In God’s hands, our very enemies are the ones who benefit us the most.”

Oftentimes, we feel like if our enemies disappeared, we would be much better off. But God uses these people to deepen our peace, so that we no longer trust in external circumstances but to turn and surrender to God.

On last thought from Stinissen: “Genuine spirituality begins when we are prepared to die. Could there be a quicker way to die than to let God form our lives from moment to moment and continually consent to his action?”

El sufrimiento y la mano oculta de Dios

El pecado y el mal siempre han impedido el desarrollo de la humanidad, pero parecen estar intensificándose cada vez más en nuestro mundo — e incluso en la Iglesia. Desde el tiroteo en una iglesia Católica en Minneapolis hasta el disparo contra Charlie Kirk en Utah, y de muchas otras maneras, el mal se hace sentir.

¿Dónde está Dios en todo esto?

Uno de mis libros de cabecera es *En tus manos, Padre: Abandonándonos al Dios que nos ama* de Wilfred Stinissen. Tiene mucho que decir sobre el mal y la voluntad de Dios para nosotros.

Stinissen escribe que, con mayor frecuencia, no comprendemos la voluntad de Dios en nuestras vidas cuando nos centramos en los demás y en sus faltas.

“Para cada uno de nosotros hay un cáliz que el Padre nos

ofrece para beber”, dice Stinissen. “Se nos hace difícil reconocer que viene de Él, ya que gran parte de su contenido procede de otras personas. No obstante, es el Padre quien nos pide beber la copa amarga. Lo fue para Jesús, y lo mismo ocurre con nosotros.”

Se nos hace difícil asimilar que Dios permita tanto mal. ¿Por qué no interviene? Dios no impidió que Su amado Hijo muriera en la Cruz. ¿Cómo podemos darle sentido a nuestro propio sufrimiento y dolor?

Stinissen escribe que “el sufrimiento e incluso la ruina total no significan falta de amor por parte del Padre”, y que “el sufrimiento no es en vano; da fruto y tiene poder redentor.”

Stinissen afirma que “Dios hace uso del mal de una manera tan espléndida y con tal destreza que el resultado

es mejor que si nunca hubiera existido el mal.”

Probablemente esto no es lo que queremos oír. Preferiríamos que Dios impidiera el mal en lugar de permitirlo.

San Agustín escribió: “Ciertamente hay mucho que los hombres malos hacen contra la voluntad de Dios, pero Su sabiduría y poder son tan grandes que todo lo que aparenta ir en contra de esto, en realidad, obra para el bien o el fin que Él ha preordenado.”

Stinissen explica que lo que Dios permite también forma parte de Su voluntad universal y abarcadora. Lo ha previsto desde el principio y ha decidido cómo lo empleará. “Todo lo que ocurre tiene un propósito en el plan de Dios.” Cita a un padre espiritual que le escribe a una hermana religiosa: “Estad profundamente persuadida de que nada tiene lugar en este mundo, ni espiritual ni físicamente, que Dios no quiera, o al menos permita; por lo tanto, no debemos

someternos menos a los permisos de Dios en todas las cosas que no dependen de nosotros, que a Su voluntad absoluta.”

En medio del mal, Dios desea que nos rindamos a Su

voluntad para nosotros.

Stinissen escribe: “La vida de Jesús es un excelente ejemplo de cómo aquello que parecía ser un obstáculo fue en realidad un medio eficaz. Los fariseos, que rechazaron a Jesús y quisieron impedir que se presentara como el Mesías, fueron precisamente quienes, al resistirle y matarle, le condujeron a Su meta. Su meta, por supuesto, fue la Cruz. Los que Le clavaron en ella no se dieron cuenta de que estaban sirviendo los propósitos de Dios. En manos de Dios, nuestros enemigos son los que más nos benefician.”

A menudo sentimos que si nuestros enemigos desaparecieran, estaríamos mucho mejor. Pero Dios usa a estas personas para profundizar nuestra paz, de modo que ya no confiemos en las circunstancias externas sino en volvernos y entregarnos a Dios.

Un último pensamiento de Stinissen:

“La verdadera espiritualidad comienza cuando estamos dispuestos a morir. ¿Podría haber una forma más rápida de morir que dejar que Dios forme nuestras vidas momento a momento y consentir continuamente a Su acción?”

BISHOP’S OCTOBER CALENDAR

12	Anniversary Mass, Salina, St. Mary’s, 3 p.m.
14	School Mass, Holy Family School, Hays, 8 a.m.
14	School Mass, Plainville, 11 a.m.
15	Respect Life Retreat for Jrs. and Srs., Salina Fieldhouse and Sacred Heart Cathedral.
18	Mass, Christ the King, WaKeeney, 5:30 pm.
19	Mass, St. Michael, Collyer, 8:15 a.m.
19	Mass, Christ the King, WaKeeney, 10:30 a.m.
19	K of C Clergy Appreciation Dinner, K of C Hall, Salina, 5 p.m.
22	Mass at Norton Correctional Facility, 11 a.m.
24	Manhattan Catholic Schools Auction, S.T.M. Utopia Rm., Manhattan, 6 p.m.
26	Confirmation, St. Aloysius, Osborne, 10 a.m.
26	Anniversary Mass, St. Nicholas of Myra, Hays, 3 p.m.
26	Annual Turkey Supper, St. Patrick’s, Lincoln, 5 p.m.

SEPTEMBER PRAYER INTENTIONS

Pope Leo’s intentions:

Let us pray that believers in different religious traditions might work together to defend and promote peace, justice, and human fraternity.

Diocesan intentions:

For all those who are struggling—that they may experience God’s love in the midst of their trials and place their trust in His faithful care.

Becoming Catholic – at any age

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

The Catholic Church welcomes new members of any age at any time of their lives.

When Terri Keeler told her daughter she wanted to join the Catholic Church, Kathy Schupman was surprised – but very pleased.

Terri, who was baptized Methodist, is a resident at Homestead Assisted Living in Hays.

After moving there last year, she started attending Mass on Wednesday afternoons along with other Homestead residents.

One day, she told Fr. Damian Richards she was interested in learning more about the Catholic faith and even joining the church.

Terri had moved to Hays from Ohio in 2009 to be nearer family and started accompanying her daughter, Kathy Schupman, to Sunday Mass at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church.

Because of some health issues, Terri decided to move into Homestead Assisted Living in 2024.

Not long afterward, she learned there was a Mass being said every Wednesday, so she continued to attend weekly Mass much like she had done with her daughter.

Fr. Damian, pastor at St. Nicholas of Myra in Hays, says Mass on Wednesday afternoons at Homestead, and he noticed a woman who was a regular at Mass



Newly confirmed Catholic Terri Keeler, center, gathers with friends and family afterward to celebrate.

COURTESY PHOTO



(At left) Fr. Damian Richards blesses Terri Keeler as she receives the sacrament of confirmation – with her sponsor, Marietta Schupman, at her side.

COURTESY PHOTO

but never received Holy Communion.

“But she would ask for a blessing,” he said.

Terri credits Fr. Damian for “making me feel so comfortable to talk to him about anything.”

“Fr. Damian is very down to earth,” she added.

Terri’s mother was Catholic but married a man who was Methodist, so Terri was baptized in the Methodist faith.

When Terri expressed interest in learning more about the Catholic faith, Jo Richards – Fr. Damian’s mother – gave her instructions through the Order of Christian

Initiation for Adults program (OCIA) for a couple of months.

Jo had worked with RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults and the predecessor to OCIA) in Texas before moving in with her son about 20 years ago.

“Mom dug out some of her old lesson plans,” Fr. Damian said, “and taught Terri how to pray the rosary and how to read the misalette and follow along at Mass.”

Terri said her ultimate goal is to get to Heaven.

“You get older and certain things become more important to you,” she said. “I know where I want to go, and to get there you have to live a life of faith.”

Terri chose Marietta Schupman, Kathy’s mother-in-law, as her confirmation sponsor. Marietta had also served as Kathy’s confirmation sponsor when Kathy married Marietta’s son, John, in 2010 and joined the Catholic Church.

“There was no in doubt my mind who I was going to ask,” Terri said. “She’s been a real blessing, coming to visit me out here. I don’t have any other relatives around other than Kathy and her husband and daughter. And these people have taken me into their home as if I was one of them.”

Terri attended Mass at Immaculate Heart of Mary the Sunday after becoming Catholic and was honored to receive the Eucharist from Bishop Jerry Vincke.

“Now, Mom can participate fully in the Mass,” Kathy said. “What a blessing.”

FIVE GENERATIONS AND A LEGACY OF LOVE

It’s always a joy to welcome a little one into the family. But the birth of Willow Hockersmith was especially meaningful for both sides of her family, parishioners at St. Fidelis, Victoria. At her arrival, five living generations celebrated on both sides. These two photos capture the milestone, featuring Willow with family members from the Schmidtberger and Scheck families.

As a diocese united in faith, may we joyfully celebrate the gift of life across generations and continue praying for the health, happiness, and holiness of all children and families.

After receiving these photos, *The Register* learned that one family member, Arnita Scheck (at right), passed away shortly, on August 11 at age 97. Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord.



COURTESY PHOTO

Pictured are five generations from the Schmidtberger family. Seated is Patricia Schmidtberger holding her great-great-granddaughter, Willow Hockersmith. Standing, from left to right, are Willow’s grandmother Amy Schoenrock, great-grandmother Becky Scheck, and mother Aspen Hockersmith.



COURTESY PHOTO

Pictured are five generations from the Scheck family. Seated is Arnita Scheck holding her great-great-granddaughter, Willow Hockersmith. Standing, from left to right, are Willow’s grandmother Amy Schoenrock, great-grandfather Jim Scheck, and mother Aspen Hockersmith.

ST. PAUL NATIVE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

All of a sudden, he was alone for the first time in more than 50 years.

Rather than test Ray's faith, the rock-solid foundation of his Catholic upbringing is what helped him remain strong.

Keeping busy

Not long after his wife's death, Ray – then chair of the St. Paul parish council – was approached by a fellow parishioner, Ron Lager. He asked Ray if the church grounds could be refreshed for an upcoming celebration.

Maybe even lay some new sod to replace the native buffalo grass, Ron asked?

Ron's son, Brian, was to be ordained a priest on May 19, 2012, and, as is customary, Fr. Brian would say his first Mass at his home parish the day after his ordination.

St. Paul was also gearing up for the 125th anniversary of its parish. So Ray thought some sprucing up around the church sounded like a good idea.

However, Ray told Ron instead of laying sod, he would rather plant the new grass from seed.

"I told him, 'I'll have it green,'" said Ray, who leveled the ground, planted some fescue mix seed and installed a sprinkler system.

The grass was green by Fr. Brian's special day and has remained that way ever since.

After all that work he



Ray Schroeder mows the grass at St. Paul on his riding mower every week.

put in, there was only one way that Ray could be assured it would be maintained as he saw fit – do it himself.

"Well, someone has to do it," he said. "So I thought it might as well be me."

He still serves as caretaker of the church grounds today, helping out with cemetery care, too.

And every Sunday, Ray makes his way up 20 steep steps to the church choir loft to help lead the congregation in song with his baritone voice – a practice he started nearly 70 years ago.

All this, despite turning 90 years old soon, on September 30.

Fr. Brian, who is now pastor of St. Paul along with serving parishes in

Colby and Oakley, isn't all that surprised with Ray's work ethic – something he learned while growing up with seven siblings in a family rich in German Catholic traditions.

"I think all the people of Angelus are very proud of what their ancestors built," Fr. Brian said. "They really want to take care of their church."

Ray said he feels blessed to have been raised Catholic and grateful to still be walking around on this earth. He is the oldest of his siblings still living, along with a younger brother and sister.

But, Ray pointed out, he isn't the oldest member of the St. Paul Parish. That distinction belongs to 95-year-old Dave Ostme-

er, who now lives in Oakley but still attends services in Angelus.

While he gets around better than most men his age, Ray chuckles while reminiscing about a couple of farm accidents that threatened his wellbeing.

He once broke his right hip and leg and tore his rotator cuff when he fell off a ladder while working on the roof of his barn. The ladder started to swing out, and there was a truck right below it, so he let go and landed on the ground on his right side.

"When I landed, I realized it was farther down there than I thought," he said.

Another time, a live electrical wire hit Ray in

the head, and he fell and suffered another broken limb – his right leg again.

He can't remember for sure how old he was when all this happened.

"Old enough to know better," he quipped.

Ray has endured multiple surgeries on his feet and ankles and has even had a brain tumor removed.

Marching on

All the while, he has remained active at St. Paul. He is a Fourth Degree Knight in the local Knights of Columbus council, where he has served as grand knight.

A lifetime farmer, Ray has rented out his land to younger relatives these days, but he still climbs on his four-wheeler every day and heads up the road to take care of the irrigation motors for the wells and sprinklers for their crops. And he plans to keep showing up each Wednesday and Thursday at St. Paul to tend the beautiful grounds around the church and again on Sunday morning to sing in the choir.

He admits he does things a little slower these days, but he doesn't seem to mind taking his time.

"The work still has to be done," he said. "It gives me a reason to get up in the morning."

And Ray Schroeder getting up in the morning is a blessing for the St. Paul parish.

Notable changes in Adoration practices

By THE REGISTER

For generations, Eucharistic Adoration has been one of the most beautiful ways Catholics spend time with Jesus. Whether you're a student, a parent, a grandparent, or someone discovering this devotion for the first time—there's something special about sitting quietly with Jesus.

In many Catholic schools, children are introduced to Adoration at an early age. After school Masses, the Eucharist is placed in a monstrance—a beautiful, golden vessel—and everyone is invited to kneel and pray. Throughout the day, people can stop by and pray. There's a quiet hush in

the hallways near the chapel, because everyone knows: Jesus is here.

And at the end of the day, the Eucharist is gently returned to the tabernacle during a special prayer called Benediction. Even if you don't see it happen, you just know it's a moment full of love and reverence.

In high schools and seminaries, Adoration often becomes part of the weekly rhythm. It might be during a religion class or early in the morning. Whether it includes full Benediction with incense and hymns or just quiet, simple prayer, the focus is always the same: being with Jesus.

Of course, different parishes and communities have their own ways of celebrating Adoration. And for a long time, there's been a little bit of confusion about the "right" way to do it. Even among priests and seminarians, there were lots of questions—Should we sing this hymn? When do we say the Divine Praises? Do we repose the Eucharist right after the blessing or later?

To help everyone get on the same page, the Church released a brand-new English translation of the official ritual book in December 2024. It has a new name, too: Holy Communion and Worship

of the Eucharistic Mystery Outside of Mass. This updated book includes all the prayers and instructions for things like Adoration, Benediction, Communion services outside of Mass, and even bringing the Eucharist to the sick and dying.

One of the biggest updates is the inclusion of official English translations—and musical notation—for traditional Latin hymns like O Salutaris Hostia and Tantum Ergo. For years, publishers had different versions, which meant parishes often used slightly different texts. The new version provides one shared translation, helping

parishes around the world pray and sing with the same words.

The new ritual book also gives clearer instructions about the order of Adoration. For example, it confirms that after the priest gives the Eucharistic blessing (Benediction), the Divine Praises can be prayed before reposing the Blessed Sacrament. That detail might seem small, but it helps ensure consistency and reverence.

Whether it's quiet and simple or full of incense and song, Adoration is always an invitation: to pause, to listen, and to rest in God's presence. Jesus waits for you.

Students find faith and fellowship through T-Bird Newman Club

By LORI LEISZLER
THE REGISTER

When Caylyn Pfizenmaier opened an email from her campus inbox last December, she didn't expect to cry. But as she read about the launch of a new Catholic student group at Cloud County Community College, she broke into tears.

"I just felt this wave of emotions come over me," Pfizenmaier said. "And I started crying tears of joy. And I just said, 'Thank you Jesus. Thank you Jesus. Thank you Jesus.'"

For Pfizenmaier, then a freshman, the launch of the St. Concordia Newman Club — affectionately referred to as T-Bird Catholic — was more than good news. It was an answer to prayer.

"It had been the answer to a prayer that I had had for so long," she said, "and a prayer that I know that so many others had been offering up for me as well."

Founded on December 10, 2024, the club was created to give Catholic students — and anyone interested in exploring the faith — a place to grow spiritually and find community. Since then, the group has grown to include 10 students and launched its first Bible studies. They're also fundraising for a trip to SEEK, a national Catholic conference in January.

Now a sophomore

studying mass communications, Pfizenmaier said the club has given her both formation and friendship.

"I just wanted to find friends and find a community and just get to be a part of something more," she said. "Just getting to grow my faith with others... and getting to call these people that I'm in the club with my friends."

The club wouldn't be possible without the leadership of biology professor and club faculty sponsor, Megan McNorton. McNorton's guidance has led the club to become a haven for students seeking meaning and connection.

That sense of meaning was especially impactful for Jarell Yardin, a sophomore from the island nation of Mauritius. Yardin couldn't return home over the summer, but the Newman Club gave him a sense of stability, purpose and family.

Now serving as club president, Yardin is passionate about helping students — especially those unsure or hesitant about their faith — feel welcomed.

"I want to help Americans, or any student that comes here, to find a place," Yardin said. "Maybe we can guide them, give them some direction so they don't stray away."

Yardin said he's been told that past efforts were



COURTESY PHOTO

Faculty sponsor Megan McNorton led students from the St. Concordia Newman Club on a Jubilee Year pilgrimage to the Cathedral of the Plains in Victoria. From L-R: Sarah Rieke, Clare Mckain, Caylyn Pfizenmaier, Georgia Rolph and Sophia Rieke.

made to form a Catholic group at Cloud County, but each time they fizzled out. He said this time feels different.

"We're trying to make it something bigger," he said. "I want everyone to feel the joy that it is when you get close to Jesus — and the greater blessings He can offer us."

Adding to the club's energy is Chase Hagemann, director of faith formation at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Concordia. Though not a college employee, Hagemann volunteers with the group, mentoring and guiding students in their faith.

"I want these students to have a Catholic home away from home," he said.

"Eventually, I want it to be student-led — so that they could become their own disciples of Christ and take

this with them wherever they go."

Though rooted in Catholic tradition, the group is open to all. One current member even signed up for OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults).

"He's not even Catholic yet," Hagemann said, "but he jumped out of his comfort zone to join."

This semester marks several exciting firsts for the club. Alongside new bi-weekly Bible studies — modeled after the FOCUS collegiate format — the group is planning social events like movie nights and cookouts.

"We want to evangelize the campus and welcome as many students as possible," Hagemann said. "This year's theme is 'Table of Plenty.'"

The students are also raising money for their SEEK trip. With no dedi-

cated budget, all funds come from donations and student-led efforts.

Despite the challenges that come with being a two-year college — including rapid student turnover — momentum is growing.

Pfizenmaier plans to transfer to Kansas State University next year, but says the Newman Club has left a lasting impression.

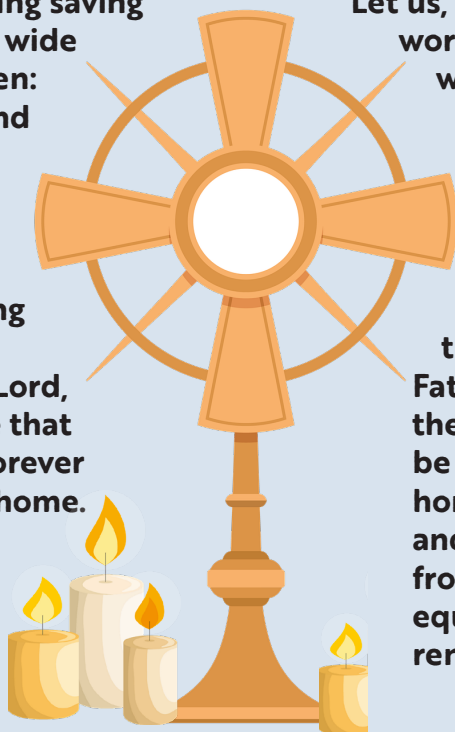
"God had His plan, and I ended up here at Cloud," she said. "Now, I get to go forward in my faith with others."

Her advice to any student considering getting involved in a faith-based group?

"Just do it," Pfizenmaier said. "God put you there for a reason, and He will provide. 'Ask someone who you know is involved. Just ask them: 'How can I become part of that community?'"

O Salutaris (O Victim Bringing Saving Grace)

O Victim bringing saving grace, who open wide the gate of heaven: our foes assail and press us hard; give us your strength, bring us your aid. To you be everlasting praise and glory, One and Triune Lord, who grant us life that knows no end, forever in our heavenly home. Amen



Tantum Ergo (Let us therefore Bow and Worship)

Let us, therefore, bow and worship such a wondrous Sacrament; let the ancient law and custom to a newer rite now yield; let our faith supply conviction where the senses tire and fail. To the Father, unbegotten, and the Sole-begotten Son, be salvation, blessing, honor, jubilation, pow'r, and praise; to the One from both proceeding equal glory and renown. Amen.



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Finding connection with saints of our times

BY CHRISTIANA NIEWALD
JUNIOR, ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC
SCHOOL, BELOIT

The canonization of both Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati brings inspiration and hope, a renewed motivation and a willingness to persevere. While many people may be hearing about these two influential figures for the first time, for my school — St. John the Baptist in Beloit — these two have been a part of the culture for quite some time.

When he was beatified in 1990 by Pope John Paul II, the Turinese Saint Pier Giorgio's name forever etched itself into history. However, compared to other saints like Padre Pio and Mother Teresa, he wasn't as recognizable to the common Catholic. Yet somehow, in some way, his story traveled to our little high school after a poster with his picture on it was donated to the school in 2008. The donor received this poster from Pier Giorgio's niece, Wanda Gawronska, in 2001, and seeing Pier Giorgio as an inspiration for youth, decided to gift it to the



Students at St. John's School in Beloit celebrated at morning prayer the Friday before the canonizations of two saints from whom they find inspiration. At left is a first-class relic of St. Acutis, and at right is a photo of St. Frassati that has hung in the hallway for years.

high school. It has hung on the wall of the hallway ever since.

As the years have gone by, Pier Giorgio has served as the patron saint for many clubs, activities, and other groups. His pictures and quotes — most prominently “Verso l'altro,” or “to the heights” — can be found inside lockers and on waterbottle stickers, posted in the classroom, and on keychains dangling from backpacks. Many students here find him to be an excellent role model — someone they can truly follow as an example. Like many outdoorsmen, he

loved to hike and climb mountains. He loved skiing, sailing, anything that involved being outside. At the same time, he demonstrated the perfect balance of his spiritual life with his life in the streets of Turin. He was known for caring for the poorest of the poor, the outcasts, the sick and homeless, all while seeing Christ in the faces of the people he served. His life is a story we can relate to, a testimony for how to truly live out the Catholic faith. He died of polio at just 24 years of age.

The holiness that Carlo

Acutis lived out in his short life has impacted youth all around the world. He's known for his love for technology and his passion for the Eucharist. He only died in 2006, just two years before I was born! When we see someone our age — he was just 15 when he died — putting their spiritual life into action, the realization that we can do the same motivates so many of us to keep active in our own spiritual lives.

The St. John's Class of 2025 visited his tomb in Assisi last December on a mission pilgrimage to Italy. They were in contact

with Carlo's mother and sent her a video message. And they also received a video message from now 98-year-old Wanda! In addition to the poster of Pier Giorgio, St. John's High School actually now has a first class relic of St. Carlo Acutis — two pieces of his hair arranged in a cross pattern. It's available for veneration in our assistant principal, Joe Holdren's office, along with relics of St. Phillip Neri and Maria Goretti.

These two new saints — Pier Giorgio Frassati and Carlo Acutis — have impacted our school as a whole tremendously. And through their actions, they have significantly impacted my life as well. Since I was in sixth grade, I have grown a deep devotion to Pier Giorgio. So much so that I chose him as my confirmation saint last year. Carlo Acutis has similarly influenced me in developing a greater devotion to the Eucharist. Both saints have instilled in me a deeper love for Jesus and a greater desire for sainthood.

Hays resident witnesses canonizations

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

As assistant director of Camp Wojtyla in Colorado, Kelton Stecklein says he is blessed to “see lives transformed in pretty powerful ways” every summer.

Kelton experienced a “trip of a lifetime” himself earlier this month when he joined four other staff members from Camp Wojtyla (pronounced voy-TEE-wah) on an excursion to Rome.

There, they not only got within 6 to 8 feet of Pope Leo XIV as he rode through the crowd in his popemobile, they also got to witness the canonizations of St. Carlo Acutis and St. Pier Giorgio Frassati.

“An incredible experience, something I'll treasure forever,” said Kelton, who makes his home with his wife and two children in his native Hays, where he is a member of St. Nicholas of Myra parish.

For nine months of the year, Kelton works from home remotely and travels

around the country interviewing potential camp counselors.

During the summer, he and his family live in a camper at Camp Wojtyla in Jamestown, Colo.

The camp, named after St. Pope John Paul II and his surname before becoming a pope, is a Catholic adventure program for middle- and high-school age students in the Colorado Rockies.

Each of the 20 camp teams — 10 each for male and female — bear the name of saints or other holy people.

The campers stay together with that team in teepees throughout camp and learn about the life of the person that bears their team name. Team Carlo and Team Frassati are two of these Camp Wojtyla patron teepee groups.

With young saints-to-be Pier and Carlo so close to their hearts, Kelton and four other camp staff decided to make the trip abroad to witness their canonization.

Knowing there would be

a long line for the occasion, Kelton and his group got to St. Peter's Square at 4:30 a.m. The Mass was set to begin at 10 a.m.

“Five and a half hours early,” he said, chuckling. “But it was worth it.”

Not only were they able to secure seats for themselves, while thousands of others had to stand, Kelton estimated they were within 150 to 200 yards of the altar.

Sts. Carlo and Pier were 15 and 24 years old, respectively, and Kelton can hardly wait to share his experience with campers next summer.

“This is something that I can bring back to my own kids, too, and inspire them,” he said. “Tell them that ‘You can be a saint. You don't have to be wealthy or from royalty. Every day we're all called to be saints.’”

“It all made the universal church really tangible to see people from all corners of the globe,” he added. “There was a Brazilian flag, a Korean flag, so many others, and you



Kelton Stecklein (left) and fellow Camp Wojtyla staff members snagged good seats at the canonization of Sts. Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati in Rome.

could feel the young church is alive and vibrant.”

The trip was special for so many reasons, including the fact it was Pope Leo's first canonization since being elected pope just four months earlier.

“I'm still processing it, the gravity of it all, the strength of Catholicism, especially during this Jubilee Year of Hope,” Kelton said a few days after his return. “There is so much reason for hope.”

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Memorial Mass

For Parents of Deceased Children

Sunday,
October 19, 2025
2:30 PM
Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina



- October 3**

 - Sacred Heart Homecoming, Salina, 6:30 p.m.

October 4-5

 - Men's Journey Retreat, St. Mary's, Salina.

October 4-10

 - Diocesan Rosary Congress.

October 12

 - Anniversary Mass, St. Mary's, Salina, 3 p.m.
 - St. Edward's Fall Festival, Belleville, 4:30-7 p.m.
- October 15**

 - Respect Life Retreat for Jrs. and Srs., Salina.

October 19

 - Memorial Mass for Parents of Deceased Children, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina, 2:30 p.m.

October 24

 - Manhattan Catholic Schools Auction, S.T.M. Utopia Room, Manhattan, 6 p.m.

October 26

 - Anniversary Mass, St. Nicholas, Hays, 3 p.m.

Divine Mercy Radio and founder honored by EWTN

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Donetta Robben, founder of Divine Mercy Radio, won the Faithful Warrior award at last month's EWTN Catholic Radio Conference in Tyson, Va.

In addition, Divine Mercy Radio – with stations in Hays, Salina, Great Bend and Colby – was honored for being on the air 15 years.

Under the direction of Robben, a lifetime member of Immaculate Heart of Mary parish in Hays, Divine Mercy Radio began broadcasting Dec. 20, 2010, on the station KVDM 88.1.

Since then, it has grown into five radio stations as well as a translator station. Robben retired as Divine



Donetta Robben

Mercy's executive director in 2024.

The Faithful Warrior award is named in memory of Doug Pearson, an engineer for Guadalupe Network, who in his spare time helped build many and mentor Catholic radio stations.

He died of esophageal cancer in 2015 at the age

of 52. Pearson was known in the Catholic radio world as a faithful warrior; thus, EWTN established this annual award for those who have made significant contributions to Catholic radio.

"Doug just didn't build stations," Robben said. "He would quiz the founder to make certain they were 100 percent Catholic. Then he would offer advice on how to live out that Catholic faith. He helped me understand the importance of personal sacrifice."

"This award was a surprise to me," she added. "It means so much to have been given the Faithful Warrior award in Doug's memory."

Catholic Elementary School Principal

St. Matthew's School in Topeka, KS, is seeking a dynamic and visionary leader with a passion for Catholic education. The principal will continue the school's tradition of forming disciples, pursuing academic excellence, and spiritual growth. The principal will lead by example and inspire a team of dedicated faculty and staff. Applicants must have or be eligible for Kansas licensure in educational leadership. Apply online at archkckcs.org/apply. For more information, contact Vince Cascone at vcascone@archkckcs.org

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Manhattan K of C receives top award



SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Knights of Columbus Council 8488 in Manhattan was awarded the distinction of Star Council Award for 2024 - 2025. The award is the international organization's top honor for local councils.

The Star Council Award recognizes overall excellence in the areas of growing membership, promoting Knights of Columbus insurance benefits, sponsoring Catholic faith formation

programs and volunteering time through service-oriented activities.

Under the leadership of Grand Knight Sean Sorell, in addition to the monthly breakfasts, donations to a myriad of local charitable organizations, supporting the parish in many ways, it raised funds for the State Knights of Columbus Ultrasound program and collected food donations to the local food pantry.

Membership in the Knights of Columbus is

open to men 18 years of age or older who are practical (that is, practicing) Catholics in union with the Holy See. For information on joining the Knights of Columbus contact KofC Council 8488 Membership Director Paul Oehm at peehm@gmail.com.

For information about the Knights of Columbus contact KofC Council 8488 Grand Knight Sean Sorell at seansorell@gmail.com.

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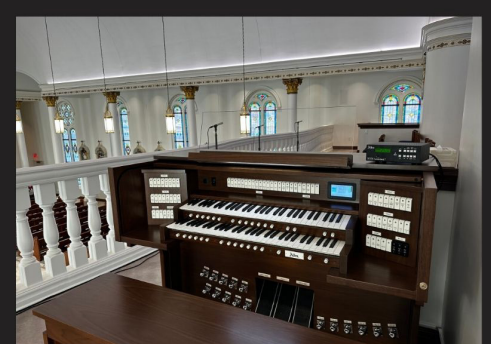
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MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Campers at this year's Junior CYO Camp celebrated a special Mass together at Rock Springs Ranch. Despite the rain, energy ran high throughout the weekend as campers got to experience fellowship, faith and fun together with their peers and diocesan volunteers.

Weather doesn't dampen camper spirits

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

This year's participants at the Junior CYO camp at Rock Springs Ranch didn't let a little rain spoil their fun.

Attending Mass with Bishop Jerry Vincke and Father Kade Megaffin in wet weather gave them an opportunity to experience the Eucharist in a different way than usual.

About 150 campers from across the Salina Diocese in grades six through eight chalked it up to being just part of the whole experience at the annual event held in the wide open spaces of the Flint Hills over Labor Day weekend.

In fact, some were disappointed the three-day camp in the fresh air ended so soon.

"I wish it was a longer camp, and I want to go back next year," said Everett Legleiter, a sixth-grader at St. Mary's Grade School in Salina who listed activities such as horseback riding, archery, dances and swimming as some of his favorites.

This year's participants boosted attendance by 30 percent from a year ago. It

was a full weekend of physical activity and spiritual growth.

"I'm excited for these kids to get to share their faith," said Deacon Bill Meagher, director of youth ministry for the diocese. "Hopefully it will be a good jumpstart to the school year for them so they can continue to grow in their faith as the year goes on and get active in their parishes."

Jackson Hartman from Beloit, serving a fourth year as a camp counselor, said the Rock Springs venue south of Junction City is a perfect site for reflection for the junior high students.

"Out here, they are away from their friends, maybe not knowing anyone in their cabin, in the middle of the woods," he said.

"But they come out of their shells and by the end of the weekend, they are like brothers."

Jackson, a junior education major at Kansas State University in Manhattan,

attended camp several years as a youngster and just keeps coming back year after year as a counselor.

"I remember how much I loved this camp as a kid," he said, "and campers just keep coming up to me, telling me how much they like it."

Dcn. Bill was in his 25th year of attending the camp as either a counselor or administrator.

"I'm blown away at the generosity of college students who give up a weekend to come work with junior high kids and be role models and learn about their faith," he said.

Now, Dcn. Bill hopes some of the young campers will come to Hays on Nov. 1 to participate in Holy Fire, a new program for this age group for our diocese which will be a smaller scale event similar to NCYC (National Catholic Youth Conference) in Indianapolis, Ind.

"We are trying to keep building opportunities for that age group," he said. "We want to give them some time to get

out and reflect on their prayer life. The CYO camp is great, and Holy Fire will be another opportunity to engage them."



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS



MATEA GREGG, COMMUNICATIONS

Special guest Bishop Jerry Vincke made a surprise visit to see the campers at Rock Springs Ranch, taking time to chat and participate in Rock Paper Scissors and a game of football with some campers.

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Oct. 7: The Second Vatican Council – Ecu-
menism and Religious Dialogue with Fr. Frank Coady

Explore how the Church respects other faiths while proclaiming

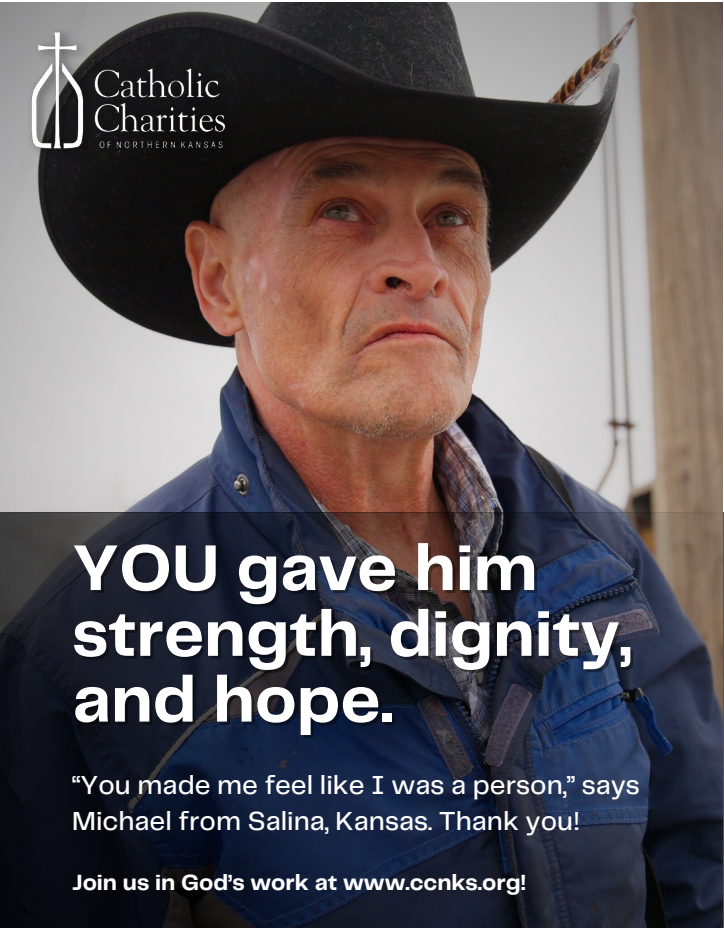
Christ’s salvation.

Oct. 21: Why “Leo”? with Fr. Robert Schremmer and guest panel.

Discover the significance behind Pope Leo’s name, a message for today.

Nov. 4: The Mass: A Guided Tour with Fr. Ben Green and Gentry Heimerman.

A step-by-step explanation of the Mass with practical insights for Catholic daily life.



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Changing lives together

By MEGAN ROBL
CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF NORTHERN KANSAS,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Back in August, I had the chance to speak at the Eucharistic Conference hosted by our diocese. To be honest, I wasn’t sure what I had to offer. I felt small. A little unqualified, especially with world-renowned speakers on the program. But as I prayed and sat with Scripture, I kept coming back to the story of the five loaves and two fish.

A child offered what he had. Jesus did the rest.

That is the miracle we get to witness every day at Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas. None of us can fix everything. Sometimes people’s problems feel overwhelming, and it can seem like anything we do won’t make a difference. But offering what we have—a smile, a kind word, eye contact that affirms dignity—is a beginning. God does the rest. Not always rescuing, but always walking with people in love.

That is what love looks like. It looks like a food box on a hard day. A counseling appointment when someone’s world is falling apart. Diapers for a struggling young mom and her baby. A rent check that keeps a family from sleeping in their car.

Together, we are building a community of support that reminds people they are not alone.

Here’s what was made possible last year:

- 7,910 lives touched across our 31-county diocese
- 3,524 families receiving compassionate care



- 1,530 households reaching out for the first time
- 1,014 individuals served through outreach van visits in rural communities

These numbers tell only part of the story. What they truly represent is people showing up, offering what they had, and God doing the rest.

One of the clearest examples is our monthly outreach. Staff and volunteers travel across northern Kansas with food, hygiene items, and other essentials. These visits are about more than distributing goods. They uphold the dignity of every person served and connect families to additional supports such as pregnancy services, counseling, or emergency financial assistance.

This year outreach grew again. In May, Colby and Solomon were added to the schedule, and in August, Enterprise. Catholic Charities now visits 29 rural communities each month. This growth is possible because parishes open their parking lots, volunteers stock supplies and fuel vans, and donors make it all possible.

If you have ever wondered whether your gift matters, the answer is yes. Every act of generosity, large or small, becomes part of a greater work that brings hope and dignity to our neighbors in need.



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Lives Touched Last Year

 927 families received financial and housing assistance across 31 counties.	 232 moms received free pregnancy support services across 24 counties.	 90 families were blessed with Christmas assistance across 13 counties.	 29 families received affordable mental health counseling across 6 counties.	 11 families received adoption services, with 2 pending placements.
 6,432 food boxes were shared with 1,996 families across 32 counties.	 6,014 hygiene kits were shared with 2,406 families across 33 counties.	 2,834 cases of 100 diapers shared with 496 families across 25 counties.	 664 clothing vouchers shared with 468 families across 20 counties.	 354 transportation vouchers shared with 255 families across 16 counties.

JAN KONRADE PASSES AWAY

Janice Konrade, 79, died on September 15, 2025. Jan dedicated much of her life to serving the Church.

A long-time member of St. Andrew’s Catholic Church in Abilene, she served as an RCIA leader, lector, choir member, and was active in the Ladies of St. Andrew’s.

She and her husband Reginald served as facilitators for Marriage Encounter weekends and later became Family Life Directors at St. Andrew’s and for the Diocese of Salina. Together, they hosted weekly family nights in their home, led marriage seminars, orchestrated a diocesan

bus pilgrimage to Washington, D.C., for the March for Life, and started the diocesan Men’s Conference.

She is survived by her husband of 55 years, Reg; her children Jason (Monica) of Lebo, KS; Jenell (Brad) Hartman of Abilene, KS; Fr. Jarett of Beloit, KS; Jon (Laura) of Beloit, KS; and Jamie (Amy) of Gardner, KS, and daughter-in-law Tamara Lindholm of McPherson, KS. Jan is also survived by four sisters and four brothers. She was preceded in death by her parents, her beloved son Jory of Inman, KS, and her sisters Loretta and Debbie of Nebraska.

Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina Announces New CEO and Board Leadership

The Catholic Foundation for Diocese of Salina (CFDS) is pleased to announce the appointment of Heather Hartman as Chief Executive Officer. Hartman, who has served the Foundation since 2021, brings a wealth of experience in fundraising, donor relations, and community building, along with deep ties to the Diocese of Salina.



“Heather has a heart for the Church, a deep love for the people of our diocese, and a gift for building relationships,” said Bishop Jerry

Vincke. “I’m grateful for her leadership and excited to see how the Catholic Foundation will continue to grow and serve under her guidance.”

Hartman is a longtime Kansan with over a decade of experience in philanthropy, community foundations, and rural leadership. A former small business owner, she understands the importance of long-term investment and community connection — values that now shape her work in stewarding donor gifts and strengthening the mission of the Church across the Diocese. As CEO, she will continue to lead efforts to grow the Foundation’s endowment funds, support parishes and schools, and steward the generosity of donors who believe in the mission of the Catholic Church in north-central and northwest Kansas.

The Foundation is also proud to welcome three new members to its Board:



Jerry Kuckleman of Manhattan, a longtime leader in western Kansas with extensive experience in the beef industry, including his time as President of Innovative Livestock Services.

Katie Platten of Salina, the Foundation’s founding leader and first CEO, who brings valuable experience in organizational leadership and development.



Mitzi Richards of Manhattan, who brings a wealth of expertise in nonprofit administration through her work with the KSU Foundation and the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation.

Francine Hestermann of Hays has been elected as the new President of the CFDS Board, leading the Foundation’s efforts to further its mission. Francine joined the Board in 2021.



The Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Salina exists to provide long-term financial support for the ministries of the Diocese, its parishes, and Catholic schools. The Foundation partners with generous donors to sustain the mission of the Church and ensure its presence for future generations.

The CFDS Board includes Francine Hestermann, Hays (President); Ron Gfeller, Russell (Vice President); Jeff Thompson, Salina (Treasurer); Katie Platten, Salina (Secretary); Doug Hinkin, Manhattan; Don Boos, Salina; Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt, Manhattan; Cheri Mense, Hoxie; Betty Johnson, Lawrence; Jerry Kuckelman, Manhattan; Mitzi Richards, Manhattan; and Bishop Jerry Vincke, Salina.



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If you’re at least 59½ years old, you can take a distribution and then make a gift from your IRA without penalty. If you itemize your deductions, you can take a charitable deduction for the amount of your gift.

At Any Age:

No matter your age, you can designate your parish, Catholic School, diocesan ministry or the Diocese of Salina as the beneficiary of all or a percentage of your IRA and it will pass to us tax-free after your lifetime. It’s simple, just requiring that you contact your IRA administrator for a change-of-beneficiary form or download a form from your provider’s website.

Helpful Tip:

It’s critical to let us know of your gift because many popular retirement plan administrators assume no obligation to notify a charity of your designation. The administrator also will not oversee whether your gift designations are followed. We’d love to talk with you about your intentions to ensure your wishes are honored—and to thank you for your generosity!

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All moments in God's time

I've recently been praying for God to give me a superpower. And yes, I realize how silly it seems for me to pray for something that we normally associate with comic books and fictional

LORI Leiszler
EDITOR, THE REGISTER



characters. I'm not asking God for laser vision or superhuman strength, although that would be cool. Instead I'm asking Him for something that seems equally as unlikely in my current state of life.

I'm asking for the superpower to always be on time.

My close friends and family are probably reading that and laughing. Honestly, they'd probably bet on me gaining the super strength before punctuality. (And considering I can barely manage a few modified pushups, that really would take divine intervention.)

Either I'm twenty minutes late or ten minutes early to everything — there's no in-between.

And lately, life has felt especially chaotic. I've started helping out part-time at a school in the mornings before working on editing and designing *The Register*. Add in wedding planning, and I find myself constantly running

behind or asking, "Why is this taking so long?"

So maybe this prayer for a "superpower" is really just me asking for grace — grace to recognize that if I'm doing my best and trusting God, then He

has placed me in these moments for a reason. Whether I feel behind or ahead, my job is to be present and to trust Him with the timing.

I don't know if this prayer has helped me become more prompt. But it has helped me become more aware — more aware of God's presence in my life, and how the Holy Spirit longs to work through me (and through all Christians). It's reminded me that I'm not just randomly stumbling through my days. I'm here, now, in this exact time in history, for a purpose. Not by accident.

Still, it can be hard to trust that — especially when there's so much pain and brokenness in the world.

The weight of that has been on my mind recently, especially as I walk a group of 8th grade students over to daily Mass three days of the week.

It hasn't even been a month yet since two

children were killed during a school Mass in Minnesota. That fact is hard to even write. And while *The Register* usually focuses on feel-good news, it feels wrong to try and lighten something so heavy.

It's hard for me to mention events of murder and unspeakable horror without almost feeling like I have to lighten it, but I can't do that. Words can't express my heartbreak for those kids and their communities, or for our country and the terrible things that have been happening. And to say nothing about it feels wrong.

As I pray for superhuman timing, I pray that God may grant each of us the strength to do His will, both in times of crisis and in the everyday.

I've held a quote close to my heart recently, from a book called "Subverted" by Sue Ellin Browder. She writes, "In the past, people have had to die for their faith. But what the modern church desperately needs are men and women willing to live for it."

Maybe some of us will be called to be martyrs. But regardless of what we face — even in times of deep injustice or heartbreaking evil — we are still called to live faithfully and to believe that He placed us in this time for a reason.

Because as unlikely as it may feel some days, we are here to reveal Christ to the

world — and this very moment is a perfect time to start.



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Enjoying a real-life history lesson

By DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN

THE REGISTER

After taking a couple of months off from their monthly meetings, members of a Catholic women's group in Salina begin a new year each fall by touring some historical venue in the area.

One year, members of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) visited St. Mary's Grade School to learn about the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a program taught to students in diocesan Catholic elementary schools.

Another time, they toured the former Marymount College, which closed in 1989 and has been transformed into a training and dispatch center for the Kansas Highway Patrol as well as luxury condominiums.

Yet another tour saw them admiring stained glass windows in Sacred Heart Cathedral, then scrunching down while walking through a tunnel underneath the church.

CDA members say they thoroughly enjoy those outings, and this year was no exception.

On August 19, they experienced a walk-through of the diocesan chancery at Ninth and Iron Streets, across the street from the Sacred Heart Cathedral.

The building, completed in 1918, had served as a convent for many years for the Sisters of St. Joseph who taught at schools attached to

the chancery, Sacred Heart Grade School and High School.

During the tour, participants learned interesting facts about the building – and a little about the nuns who lived there for several decades.

Kim Hoelting, director of human resources for the diocese, helped conduct the tour along with local architect Don Marrs.

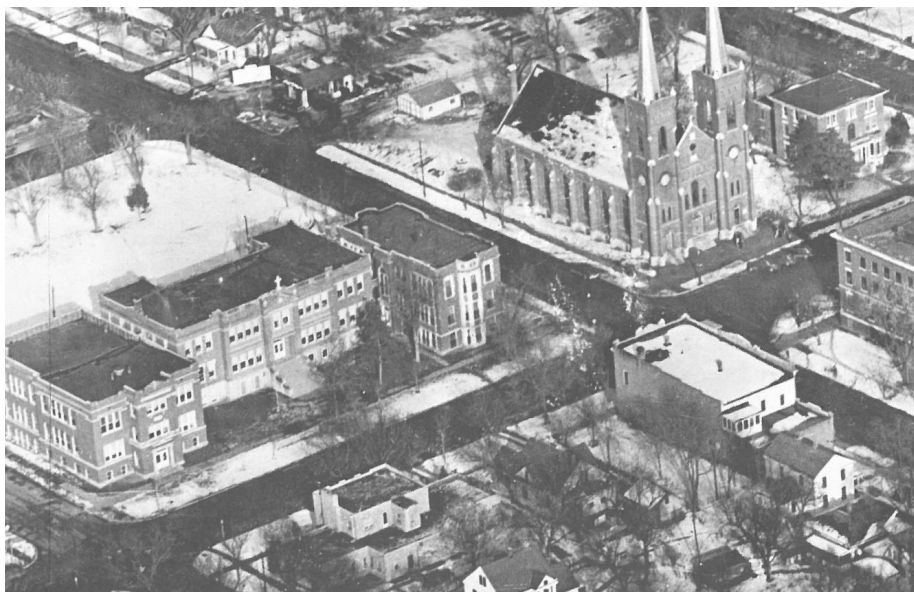
The visitors got a real treat, hearing from Marrs, who designed the renovation effort of turning the convent into the chancery in 1989 – a project he said took almost eight months to complete.

Marrs handed out plans of the three levels of the building to the women, showing what the building



DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN, THE REGISTER

At top left, architect Don Marrs points out the tedious task that workers faced while laying 1-inch mosaic tiles one-by-one on the convent floors. Below, participants admire a large stained-glass window in a chancery staircase.



COURTESY PHOTO, CHANCERY ARCHIVES

An aerial view of Salina's Sacred Heart parish complex in the late 1940s shows from left: The high school, the grade school and the convent on the west side of Ninth Street and the church and rectory on the east side.

looked like when it was a convent and what he and his team eventually turned it into.

As one group gathered in the chapel on the lower level, Marrs told how the original doors and woodwork in the building were made of yellow pine.

"Any doors you see that look like that," he said, pointing to the door, "are yellow pine and are original. Anything other than that are not original and were added later."

He even got down on the floor to point out the meticulous efforts taken by workers while laying the 1-inch mosaic tiles more than 100 years ago.

Hoelting opened a door on the lower level and showed off the convent's original large pantry with a pie cupboard still intact.

Along the way, the women learned that the convent had been the third building completed in that complex. The grade school (the middle building) was completed in 1908, followed by the high school in 1916 and the convent two years later.

They learned that the high

school was first called the James Mason High School, named in honor of a local philanthropist who contributed to many Catholic causes.

Exclamations of "wow" could be heard when Marrs explained the large wood paneling lining the top-floor office of Ben Suing, chief financial officer for the diocese, were walls for individual living quarters called cells. With this method, the convent could accommodate about 25 nuns, mostly on the top floor.

The Salina Court of the CDA is a collaborative group of the three Salina parishes – Sacred Heart Cathedral, St. Mary Queen of the Universe and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton – that meets monthly with a motto of "unity and charity."

"We are just a group of like-minded women who want to serve others, and to spread the word of God," said Mary Harmon, regent of the Salina CDA Court. "We really enjoy these tours, and from what I have heard, everyone who attended this one was amazed."

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BAPTISMS

Ayodele Charles Akinbo, son of Oluwaseun and Tamara (Huff) Akinbo, was baptized August 23, 2025, by Fr. Nick Parker at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays.

Anneliese Becker, daughter of Joshua and Brooke (Leiker) Becker, was baptized August 24, 2025, by Fr. Andy Hammeke at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays.

Banks Edward Berry, child of Brett Berry and Kara

Gabel, was baptized August 17, 2025, by Fr. Daryl Olmstead at St. Mary Queen of Angels Church in Russell.

Verena Mae Nordhus Britton, daughter of Logan Levi Britton and Brady Marguerite Drouhard Nordhus-Britton, was baptized August 17, 2025, by Fr. Leo Blasi at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

Leo Simon Eugene Dunstan, son of Tyler and Terri Dunstan, was baptized

August 16, 2025, by Fr. Jarett Konrade at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit.

Theodore Hugh Eck, son of Zachary and Payton (Girard) Eck, was baptized August 10, 2025, by Fr. Dana Clark at St. Mary's Church in Ellis.

Kenneth Otto Fyler, son of Steven and Kendra Fyler, was baptized August 31, 2025, by Fr. Jarett Konrade at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit.

Victor Manuel Garcia, son of Victor and Yadira (Sanchez), was baptized August 17, 2025, by Fr. Nick Parker at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays.

Kinzo Matua Herron-Mesa, son of Jacob Frontada Mesa and Seana Eileen Herron, was baptized August 30, 2025, by Fr. Leo Blasi at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

Clara Kaye Irvine, daughter of Paul and Breigh Irvine, was baptized August 31, 2025, by Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan.

Finley Grey Kujath, son of Jacob and Abby Kujath, was baptized August 3, 2025, by Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan.

Edith Marie Lager, daughter of Kevin and Melanie Lager, was baptized August 17, 2025, by Fr. Vincent Thu Laing at St. Martin of Tours Church in Seguin.

Becket Matthew Lueger, son of Rusty and Gina Lueger, was baptized September 7, 2025, by Fr. Kyle Berens at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit.

Mary Jolene Massoth, daughter of Luke and Elizabeth Massoth, was baptized August 17, 2025,

by Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan.

Jose Antonio Barron Mireles, son of Manuel Antonio Barron Hernandez and Tatiana Patricia Mireles Solis, was baptized July 20, 2025, by Fr. Rafael Campos at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

Alan Saldaña Muñoz, son of Pedro Saldaña Muñoz and Maura Jaramillo Manriquez, was baptized July 19, 2025, by Fr. Rafael Campos at Seven Dolores Church in Manhattan.

Alessandra Noel Nava-Martinez, daughter of Hector Nava and Beatriz Martinez-Morales, was baptized August 17, 2025, by Fr. Kevin Weber at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina. Godparents are Chloe Wilson and Edgar Garcia.

Baker Warren Nemecek, son of Zachary and Nicole Nemecek, was baptized August 10, 2025, by Fr. Trevor Buster at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan.

Emma Sue Nichols, daughter of Lane and Hannah Nichols, was baptized August 17, 2025, by Fr. Kevin Weber at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Church in Salina. Godparents are Dalton Hodgkinson and Allison Ricke.

Eleanor Elizabeth Ochs, daughter of Travis and Emily Ochs, was baptized August 24, 2025, by Fr. Kade Megaffin at St. Andrew's Church in Abilene.

Matthew Thomas Palen, son of Blake and Brittney Palen, was baptized August 17, 2025, by Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan.

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~ Directors Steven Surber, John Surber and Don Waddington ~

WEDDINGS

Benjamin Taylor Bohon and Briley Rae Klover were married August 2, 2025, at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan. Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Lance and Jackie Bohon. Parents of the bride are Korey and Sheila Klover. Witnesses were Lantz Bohon and Jenna Wren.

Aiden Philippe Bourman and Rita Eileen Marshall were married August 2, 2025, at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan. Fr. Gale Hammerschmidt witnessed their vows. Parent of the groom is Courtney Bourman. Parents of the bride are Timothy Marshall and Amanda Marshall. Witnesses were Mason Adkins and Aubrey Strother.

Jimmy Broeckelman and Bren Peters were married September 6, 2025, at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit. Fr. Jarett Konrade witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Michael and Sharla Broeckelman. Parents of the bride are Rick and Kelly Peters. Witnesses were Wyatt Broeckelman and Leah Brummer.

William Alexander Delzeit and Katherine Grace Stevens were married August 23, 2025, at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan. Fr. Trevor Buster witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Keith and Wendy Delzeit. Parents of the bride are Christopher and Shannon Stevens. Witnesses were Nathaniel Hollman and Mary Arthur Stevens.

Joshua Schwartz and Ashley Augustine were married August 30, 2025, at St. Mary's Church in Ellis. Fr. Dana Clark witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Stacy and the late Daniel Schwartz. Parents of the bride are Lori and the late Tim Augustine. Witnesses were Beth Schartz and Devin Schwartz.

Gregory Timmons and Zoie Barriger were married August 16, 2025, at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays. Fr. Nick Parker witnessed their vows. Parents of the groom are Bruce Timmons and the late Mary Klaus Grizzle. Parents of the bride are Jason and Joani Barriger. Witnesses were Hayden Rohr and Brooklyn Burk.

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FUNERALS

Roseann M. Billinger, 77, died June 20, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated June 27 at St. Mary's Church in Ellis. Fr. Dana Clark presided.

Wade P. Bowman, 55, of Bushness, Illinois, died November 28, 2024. Funeral Mass was celebrated June 21, 2025, at St. Joseph Church in New Almelo. Fr. Joshua Werth presided. Inurnment in St. Joseph Cemetery.

Paul John Cersovsky, 71, died July 20, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated July 26 at St. Mary's Church in Ellis. Fr. Dana Clark presided. Burial in Sacred Heart Cemetery, Colby.

Ian Michael Drake, 65, died July 28, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 4 at St. John the Baptist Church, Beloit. Fr. Jarett Konrade presided. Burial in the Family Farm plot.

Larry Lee Gaskill, 86, died August 18, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 29 at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit. Fr. Jarett Konrade presided. Burial in St. John's Cemetery, Beloit.

Phillip Hernandez, 84, died August 12, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 16 at St. Mary's Church in Ellis. Fr. Dana Clark presided. Burial in Mount Hope Cemetery, Ellis.

Rosemary Ann Joslyn, 99, died August 2, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 8 at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit. Fr. Jarett Konrade presided. Burial in St. John's Cemetery, Beloit.

Xavier James Juenemann, 22, died August 16, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 21 at St. Nicholas

of Myra Church in Hays. Fr. Damian Richards presided. Burial in St. Michael the Archangel Cemetery, Hays.

Jordan Alexander Keil, 40, died July 21, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 14 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays. Fr. Nick Parker presided. Inurnment in Our Lady Help of Christians Cemetery, Antonino.

Larry Keith Keil, 74, died August 24, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated September 3 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays. Fr. Nick Parker presided. Inurnment in Our Lady Help of Christians Cemetery, Antonino.

Ralph Leo Kimminau, 86, died August 13, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 22 at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit. Fr. Jarett Konrade presided. Burial in St. John's Cemetery, Beloit.

Irene (Newell) LaBarge, 88, died July 7, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated July 11 at St. Mary's Church in Ellis. Fr. Dana Clark presided. Burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Ellis.

James (Jim) Lane, 80, died August 31, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated September 4 at St. John the Baptist Church in Beloit. Fr. Jarett Konrade presided. Burial in St. John's Cemetery, Beloit.

Richard "Dick" Leiker, 83, died June 25, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 2 at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hays. Fr. Damian Richards presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery, Hays.

Alma Lubbers-Richardson, 95, formerly of Grinnell, died August 2, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrat-

ed at Immaculate Conception Church in Grinnell. Fr. James M. Thomas presided. Burial in Immaculate Conception Cemetery, Grinnell.

Leo (Lee) Allen Mick, 68, died August 25, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 30 at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Cawker City. Fr. Jarett Konrade presided. Burial in Sts. Peter and Paul Cemetery, Cawker City.

Cash James Moor-man-Meador, 10 days, died August 28, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated September 4 at St. Joseph Church in Hays. Fr. Mike Leiker presided. Burial in Valley View Cemetery, Manhattan.

Judy A. Rohr-Flaherty, 86, died August 27, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated September 5 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Hays. Fr. Charles Polifka, OFM Cap., presided. Burial in St. Joseph Cemetery, Hays.

Jean Schneider, 79, died June 19, 2025. Funeral Mass

was celebrated July 2 at St. John's Church in Herington. Fr. Peter O'Donnell presided. Burial in St. John's Cemetery, Herington.

Berniece (Thessing) Shank, 91, died July 25, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 9 at St. Mary's Church in Ellis. Fr.

Dana Clark presided. Burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Ellis.

Donald E. Taylor, Jr., 71, died August 12, 2025. Funeral Mass was celebrated August 16 at St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center in Manhattan. Fr. Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S. presided.

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A special Mass and picnic in the valley

BY DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN
THE REGISTER

Folks come from near and far each year for an annual Mass in Pfeifer's historical Holy Cross Church, whose steeple seems to stretch endlessly out of a valley in the Smoky Hill River basin.

There are direct descendants of those who established the parish in southern Ellis County in 1887, current residents, others still connected to Pfeifer in some way and interested parishioners from around the area.

At this year's celebration on Sept. 14, someone traveled all the way from Germany to attend.

Max Eisenreich, a childhood friend of former Pfeifer resident Ilona Patterson, was one of more than 200 people who attended the Mass concelebrated by Bishop Jerry Vincke and Fathers Curtis Carlson and Reggie Urban.

Ilona, who now lives in nearby Victoria, is a native of Germany and often asks Max to make a visit to America in September so he can partake in the festivities in Pfeifer.

"I speak a little bit English and can understand it if people talk slowly," Max said while enjoying a picnic lunch provided by board

members and family and friends after Mass.

The Holy Cross parish was dissolved in 1993 because of declining population and a shortage of priests in the diocese. Ever since, former parishioners of this elegant Gothic-style church in the valley have made ardent efforts to preserve the church building.

After the closing of the parish, Holy Cross Charities was formed, and board members hold fundraisers to help with the upkeep of the church. They also are undergoing the arduous application task of getting the church included on the National Register of Historic Places.

Former parishioners are passionate about keeping their church alive.

"Oh my, yes," said Jerry Dreiling, who still lives in the home where he and his 16 siblings grew up near the church. "We sure plan to keep it going in our lifetime."

In addition to the church's annual Mass, several weddings, funerals and anniversary Masses are also celebrated there each year. The church building,



DIANE GASPER-O'BRIEN, THE REGISTER

(Top) Those attending this year's annual Mass got to view a 3.5- by 7- foot model of the church that was brought out of storage for the occasion. (Bottom) Holy Cross Church is a bright light to former parishioners, no matter what time of the day or night.

known as the tallest Gothic structure in the state (165 feet high) is open daily from sunrise to sunset.

The annual Mass is held closest to the feast day of the Holy Exaltation of the Cross, and this year that date happened to fall on Sunday for the first time in more than 10 years.

"I didn't realize that – that makes it even more special," said Deb Hoffman of Hays, a Holy Cross Charities board member who grew up 2 miles west of the church. "It was so nice to see a lot of different faces this year, really pleased with the turnout."

Board members are already making plans for next year's feast day Mass.

As part of the 150th anniversary celebration of Volga Germans settling in western Kansas, Pfeifer was the site of one of the ancestors' Masses on Sept. 12.

Holy Cross is one of eight parishes established in Ellis and Rush counties by Bishop Valentine Sommerville in 19 months time in the late 1860s.

The other sites were in Catharine, Hays, Victoria, Munjor, Rush Center, Liebenenthal and Schoenchen.

Lift high the Cross

Every September, the Church gives us one of the most unexpected and powerful feasts of the year: the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

Let that sink in for a moment.

We celebrate a cross—an ancient execution device. The Romans didn't just use crucifixion to kill people—they used it to terrify entire populations. The message was clear:

"Step out of line, and this is what happens to you."

And yet here we are, nearly 2,000 years later, wearing crosses around our necks, hanging them on our walls, tracing them on our foreheads, lifting them high in our churches.

Why? Because the Cross doesn't mean what it used to.

Jesus changed everything. The Cross is no longer a symbol of fear—it's a sign of freedom. It's no longer about shame—it's about salvation. It no longer ends in death—it leads to life.

That's the heart of this feast. It reminds us that God took the most brutal, humiliating thing the world could throw—and turned it into the greatest sign of hope the

world has ever known. Only God can do that.

The roots of the feast go back to the 4th century. Tradition tells us that St. Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, traveled to the Holy Land and discovered the True Cross of Christ. A church was built on the site—what we now know as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher—and

Christians began honoring the Cross not just as a memory, but as a victory.

Here's the thing: this isn't just history. The Cross still speaks—loud and clear.

Whatever you're carrying—grief, stress, pain, disappointment—bring it to the Cross. Look at Jesus. Not the cleaned-up version. Look at the crucifix. Look at what love looks like when it costs everything. That's our God. He doesn't avoid suffering—He enters into it. And because of that, we're never alone in ours.

As September comes to a close, take a moment to pause and let this feast stop you in your tracks. Allow this feast to stop you in your tracks. Let it remind you that

there's no Easter without Good Friday—no resurrection without the Cross. And thanks to Jesus, you never carry your cross alone.

Lift high the Cross, my friends, for it's no longer a sign of fear for us—it's our sign of hope and victory!

BILL Meagher
DEACON, SALINA DIOCESE



Queen of the Holy Rosary-Family Prayer



O Queen of the Holy Rosary, our most loving Mother, look upon our family with mercy and love.

You gave us the Rosary as a powerful weapon against evil, a source of peace, and a path that leads us closer to your Son, Jesus.

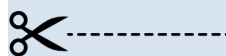
We place our family under your protection, asking that you guide us in faith, hope, and charity.

Teach us to pray together with trust, to listen to the Word of God with open hearts, and to follow Jesus with courage and joy.

Help us to reflect on the mysteries of His life, and to find strength in the quiet rhythm of prayer.

Be our refuge in trouble, our comfort in sorrow, and our joy in times of blessing.

Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us. Help our family grow in holiness and love. Lead us always to Jesus. Amen.



Cut this out and pray with your family!



THE REGISTER

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