

# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

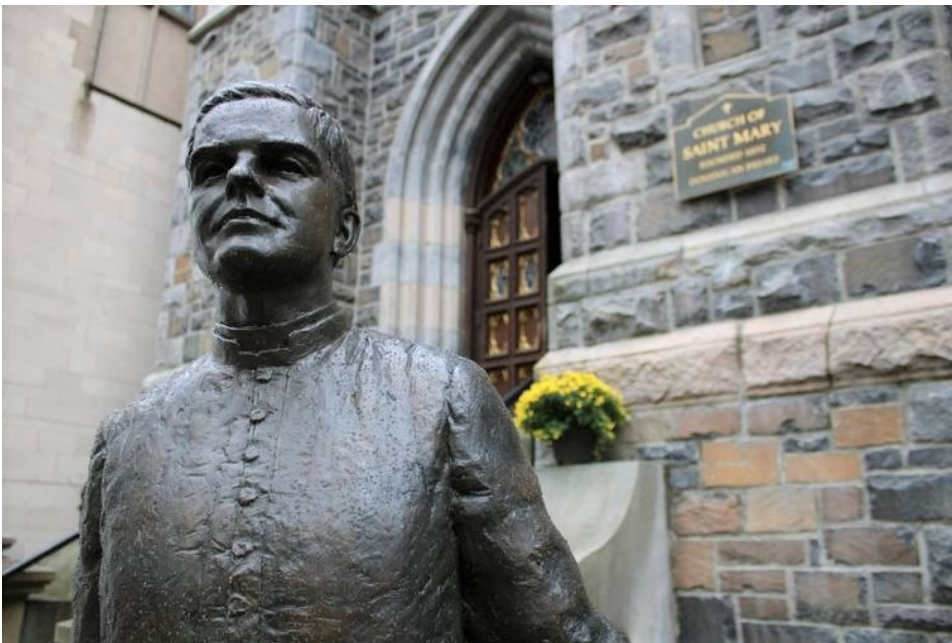
Divine Mercy of Jesus Council 17249 Newsletter Editor: Jim Hand

St. Jerome's Catholic Church 10895 Hamlin Blvd. Largo, FL

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## Parishes Unite in Honor of Blessed Michael McGivney



A decree by Archbishop Leonard P. Blair of the Archdiocese of Hartford has merged New Haven's seven Catholic parishes into the new Blessed Michael McGivney Parish. "In 1882, in the basement of St. Mary's, Blessed Michael McGivney gathered young Catholic men seeking ways to unite in their faith and find a means of supporting their families amid a society that frowned upon Catholic immigrants," Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly said. "The Knights of Columbus is honored that the new city-wide parish has adopted Blessed Michael McGivney's name."

### Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney

God, our Father, protector of the poor and defender of widows and orphans, you called your priest Blessed Michael McGivney to be an apostle of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbor. Through the example of his life and virtue, may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling his commandment of charity and building up his Body which is the Church. Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue his work of caring for the needy and the outcast. We humbly ask that you glorify Blessed Michael McGivney on earth according to the design of your holy will. Through his intercession, grant our prayer.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



FROM AROUND THE WORLD  
OF INTEREST TO CATHOLICS

400-year-old church emerges from the waters in Mexico

French 'backpack hero' will be special guest at reopening of Notre Dame Cathedral

First reported synthetic human embryo sparks ethical concerns

Company announces 'baby bonus' for employees expecting or adopting a child

Close to 100 Spanish youths to walk almost 800 miles to World Youth Day in Lisbon

German exodus: Half a million Catholics abandon Church in historic departure

Pope Francis advances the sainthood cause of Fatima's Sister Lucia

Group of priests start band to raise money to send youth to World Youth Day 2023

# FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND KNIGHT



Pete McCabe

Brothers: it has been a busy month with the July picnic, officers' meeting, installation of officers' ceremony, coffee and donuts, as well as weekly bingo. Thanks to all who participated,

helped, attended, or generally around in making these events a success.

In addition to all of this I attended a ministry meeting chaired by Chris McBride, the parish manager. The DGK and I met with Fr. Blum and Chris for our initial meet and greet. As for the ministry meeting, Chris presented new ways to get events (through the end of 2024) on the parish calendar; make chair announcements; slides for Mass; speaking at Mass; using the gathering space; etc. Chris stated that only ministry leaders can make these changes with the parish office. Hence, for our council, only the Deputy Grand Knight and I will work with the parish office on Knights of Columbus business. Please provide your inputs to us with enough time and information to ensure that it can be completed correctly.

Our meeting with Fr. Blum went

well. He indicated full support for our activities this fraternal year. I previously sent him a copy of our current draft budget and programs. While he would like to be our council chaplain, unfortunately the demands on his time prevent him from doing so at this time. Therefore, we will seek other options. More on that later.

Also, Fr. Blum has agreed to meet with the DGK and me on a regular basis to discuss our fraternal activities and explore ways we can continue to support the parish and community.

Our next general meeting will be on August 9<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm in the parish center. You will notice a few changes moving forward. First, the officers will be wearing their officer jewels. Second, the room setup will be different. All the officers will be at three tables in a U-shape. Third, my goal is to complete the meeting in one hour. To achieve this means cutting back on the extraneous conversations during the meeting. All officers and program directors are expected to come to the general meeting prepared to provide a report, as needed (writing down their report ahead of time is preferred). Finally, we will follow the Knights' meeting protocols (standing when talking, addressing officers by their titles, standing for priests and District Deputy, etc.) I hope you will then stay after the meeting to socialize.

Thanks once again for all you do.

# LAUGHTER is the best MEDICINE

Any of us has the capacity of lighting up a room, some when they enter, others when they leave.

As long as cocoa beans grow on trees, chocolate is fruit to me.

Before my first cup of coffee, I hate everybody. That doesn't change after I've had coffee, but I feel much better.

Birthdays are good for you. Statistics show that people who have the most live longer.

Experience is a wonderful thing. It enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again.

Finally, spring is here! I'm so thrilled I wet my plants.

With a face like yours, you have a good chance of a lawsuit against your parents.

God created the world, but everything else is made in China.

Don't tell me the sky is the limit when there are footprints on the moon.

"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest."



# In the Spotlight

Kevin Manning was born in Manhattan, NY, and spent the first 12 years of his life in Paramus, NJ, "Even though a lot of people have not heard of Paramus," he said, "it was one of the first cities in America to have a shopping mall. People from New York City would come over to go to the mall. Everybody knew the mall," he said with a laugh.

Upon graduating from high school, Kevin had no idea what he would do with his life. He didn't have any good reasons to go to college, except he had an aunt who insisted that he go. The first job he had was at a fancy restaurant. "We would serve 300 lunches a day," he said. "I would finish work around 3 pm and go to classes at 4 pm. I peeled many potatoes while working at the restaurant," he said.

As a side job, he started parking cars, which turned into 5 valet sites. He said that often they had several people at the restaurant the FBI was looking for. He said that workers were shown pictures and asked, "Do you recognize this guy?" It was a mob hangout, he said. "I got a street education in a hurry. I was making more money than a twenty-one-year-old kid should ever make, and I spent it just as fast. One restaurant I worked for had a two-hour wait just



Kevin Manning

to get in the door." He woke up one morning with bronchitis and told his partner that that was enough for him and that he was going to go to college after all. "I was 22 years old at the time." He remembered watching a TV program called The Wall Street Journal in Review. It was then that he realized that he could make money with his mind and not have to worry about manual work. "There was a lot of math involved, politics, and talking to people about what was important to them, their money. He's also a realtor and works with one of his daughters.

When he turned 30, he celebrated his 3rd wedding anniversary and soon had his first-born child. "I knew I wasn't a kid anymore."

He and his wife moved to Tampa in 1981 and then to Belleair about 3 years ago.

Kevin said he was a cradle catholic but broke the mold. "I was always suspicious," he said. "I asked many questions." His Cuban wife helped him overcome many of his problems. "My early school days were based on fear," he said. "There was a rumor that in the principal's office in a closet there was an automatic spanking machine. And if you were really bad, the principal would send you across the parking lot to knock on the rectory door and speak to the Monsignor. He remembers sitting in church,

listening to the priest's homily, and thinking, "They're making this stuff up." One priest who once asked him, "Kevin, what are you afraid of?" Kevin said, "I'm afraid I might become a priest."

"We're all called to be priests," he was told, "after the order of Melchizedek."

Soon after that, he asked God to send him a mate, and he met Maria, now his wife. He proposed to her 3 weeks after meeting her. Four months later, they married. She soon asked him to go to church with her, and he agreed to. "That put me back on my faith journey," he said. He got together with other men for a weekend retreat which lasted about 6 months. Originally he had associated faith with weakness, he said, but soon realized that it was all right for a man to have faith.

Fred Belzel and the late Bob Anderson, plus Gregg Appel, talked him into becoming a Knight. He really loves our council, he said, especially for its interest in pregnancy centers. He is a reader and sometimes a Eucharist Minister He is overwhelmed at the thought of giving his fellow parishioners the Body of Christ, he said. He also sings with the Silly Sinatras to bring smiles to others and food to the needy.

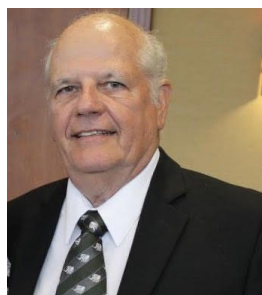
He ended our conversation with sharing a couple of his favorite bible verses: "If today you hear His voice, harden not your heart," and "Be still and know that I am God."



## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS



Billy Baldwin



Fred Belzel



Fr. Joseph Waters



Marc Montaito



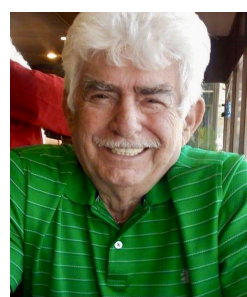
David Wilson



Peter Valasquez



Ricard Tomiano



Ron Bezzuto



Steven Aranyos

## Council Inducts New Officers for the 2023-2024 Fraternal Year

On Wednesday, July 12, the Installation of Officers was held at the Parish Center. The ceremony was presided over by our District Deputy, Pete Grasso and Fr. Mike O'Brien who was filling in for Fr. John Blum. The ceremony was well attended by our council Knights and their wives. This solemn ceremony is an annual

reminder to council officers of their duty to shape and build the character of their members in the love of neighbor and the love of God by offering and conducting charitable programs, which strengthens our parishes and builds up the Domestic Church. The Grand Knight, Pete McCabe, made a point of thanking those

council brothers in attendance who give so much of their time and talent to our parish and community. The evening concluded with some social time with light refreshments before the Knights once again stepped up and re-configured the room for bingo. Well done all.



L-R: Worthy Outside Guard Joe Moore; Worthy Advocate and Membership Director Sir Knight Gregg Appel Pkg; Worthy Inside Guard 1 Sir Knight Ed Wirth; Worthy Financial Secretary Sir Knight Fred Belzel; Worthy Inside Guard 2 Knight Dave Unkrich; 2-Year Trustee Jim Patton; Worthy Warden Gene Sanders; 1-year Trustee Sir Knight Rick Hendrickson; Worthy Recorder Sir Knight Rocco Totino; Worthy Chancellor Sir Knight Greg Musick; Worthy Deputy Grand Knight Sir Knight Bill Bannon; Worthy Grand Knight Sir Knight Pete McCabe  
Missing from picture: 3-Year Trustee Sir Knight Bill McClelland Pkg; Worthy District Deputy Sir Knight Pete Grasso Pkg; Field Agent Tony Crevello; Worthy Treasurer Sir Knight Paul Lee.



On Sunday, July 16, the Knights, hopefully, worked their last Coffee and Donuts for the Parish. We served all 8 dozen donuts and most of the coffee. The Grand Knight ran out to get extra orange juice but other than that, it was a smooth-running operation. Thanks to those Knights who showed up to help: Bill Bannon, Jim Patton, Pete Grasso, Art Corby, and Greg Musick. Also, thanks to all the Knights who

showed up to socialize with us. We even have a signed Form 100 Please keep asking men to join our ranks! Don't have a Form 100 handy? Our Council Website has an electronic Form 100 that can be filled out online. With the opening of the church next month (fingers crossed), we will bring back the Knights' breakfast at the Parish Center on the 3rd Sunday of the month, Aug 20.

## Pope Francis Addresses Approximately 200 Prominent Artists

Pope Francis addressed approximately 200 prominent artists and other creative people from more than 30 countries in the Sistine Chapel. Among the participants was the U.S. photographer Andres Serrano, creator of the controversial 1987 Christ image, a photograph of a plastic crucifix submerged in urine. Other guests included contemporary painters, sculptors, architects, photographers, writers, poets, playwrights, musicians, actors, and directors.

The pope said the Church has a great friendship with the arts, which can

bring much-needed hope to the world through beauty, harmony, and truth. "Often, as artists, you attempt to plumb the depths of the human condition, its dark abysses. We are not all light, and you remind us of this," the pope said. "At the same time," he continued, "there is a need to let the light of hope shine in that darkness, in the midst of our selfishness and indifference. Help us to glimpse the light, the beauty that saves."



## Pope Francis Advances Sr. Lucia's Cause for Sainthood

Sister Lucia dos Santos, one of the Fatima visionaries, recently had her cause for sainthood advanced by Pope Francis.

Jacinta and Francisco Marto, the two other Fatima visionaries, were already canonized by Pope Francis in 2017. The two shepherd children, who died at ages 10 and 11 respectively, are the youngest non-martyr saints in the Church's history.

Lucia was born on March 22, 1907, in Portugal. She was the youngest of seven children. At 10 years old, she was the oldest of the shepherd children who witnessed apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary from May to October 1917. Her cousins, Jacinta and Francisco Marto, were 7 and 9, respectively.

Shortly after the early deaths of her cousins, Lucia was sent to attend school with the Sisters of Villar at age 14, and in 1928 she became a sister of St. Dorothy. In 1946, she transferred to the convent of the Carmelite Sisters of Coimbra, Portugal, and took the name Sister Maria Lucia of the Immaculate Heart. Throughout the rest of her life, Lu-



cia is believed to have received several visions and messages from both Mary and Jesus. A vision she received in 1925 led to the First Saturday devotions, which include praying the rosary, receiving Communion and confession, and meditating on the first Saturday of the month for five consecutive months. In 1943, Our Lord appeared to Sister Lucia and told her that what He desired was for people to fulfill their daily duties and to make sacrifices in

accordance with his law.

Later in life, Sister Lucia became a friend of Pope John Paul II, who credited her visions with saving his life.

It was Pope John Paul II who revealed the third secret of Fatima, which spoke of a "bishop in white" being shot by soldiers. Many linked this to the assassination attempt of Pope John Paul II on May 13, 1981. Lucia died on Feb. 13, 2005, at the age of 97.

## The History Behind Domino's Pizza

Thomas Monaghan, the founder of Domino's Pizza, shares how he went from living in an orphanage to becoming one of the wealthiest men in the world. He now devotes his time and money to helping young people receive a well-formed Catholic education.

Monaghan was 4 years old when his father passed away on Christmas Eve. Unable to cope with the death of her husband, his mother placed her two sons into St. Joseph's Home for Boys, an orphanage in Jackson, Michigan. "The orphanage was basically like a prison," Monaghan said. "It was 50 boys and Polish nuns who were very strict, very holy."

One of Monaghan's daily tasks during his time in the orphanage was to clean the small chapel. This mundane task ended up bringing him closer to the Blessed Sacrament. "I felt I was in a special place and I knew that Jesus was in the tabernacle," he said.

After leaving the orphanage, Monaghan joined the United States Marine Corps. Once he finished his time with the Marines, he was looking for a job and a purpose in life. His brother gave him the idea to borrow a couple of hundred dollars to buy a pizzeria that was for sale in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The pizzeria was called Domi-Nick's. "It was a hole in the wall," he said, "but it was just 500 dollars down, and it went on to become the largest pizza chain in the world."

Monaghan went on to change the name from 'Domi-Nick's' to 'Domino's' and opened two other locations in

Michigan. Over the next two decades, he redesigned the pizza box so that it would keep the pizza hotter for longer. He then decided to focus on takeaway and delivery, instead of dining in, and he designed a conveyor belt pizza oven to cook the pizzas faster. His guarantee to customers was that they would receive a hot pizza in 30 minutes or get their money back. "This was 1980 and we took off like a rocket. We were the fastest-growing restaurant chain in the history of the world."

As the business grew exponentially, Monaghan shared that he began to lose sight of what was truly important and was distracted by material possessions. "I wasn't as ready for it as I thought I was," he admitted. "I was going to Mass every day, practicing my faith, reading a lot of spiritual books, and I thought 'I can handle it, I can handle it,' but I got into the toys; I justified the yachts, the airplanes. My life had become a high-speed train going down the tracks but was about to become a train wreck." It wasn't until he read a book by C.S.



Mother Angelica talking to Thomas Monaghan

Lewis that Monaghan realized he was only chasing material goods in order to prove to others that he was successful in life. "C.S. Lewis said that the reason that many people aim high and want so much and have more money than anyone else is that they see that as being successful, and I thought, 'That's not the kind of person I wanted to be,'" he shared.

In 1988, Monaghan sold Domino's Pizza for a reported one billion dollars. With that money, he built a church and Ave Maria University. In addition to the church and university, he built an entire town called Ave Maria, where young Catholics could study, live their faith with their families, and grow in community. "I wanted to be a beacon for Catholic higher education. "When I get to the pearly gates — and God's been very good to me — I want to be able to say, 'I used what You gave me well.'"

## Pro-life Atheist to Convert to Catholicism: 'There Is a God-Shaped Hole in My Heart'



Kristin Turner was an outspoken supporter of abortion who didn't believe in God. She even used to speak at events on the topic "Why abortion is good for society." But now the

21-year-old activist is an ardent pro-life advocate who recently announced her intention to join the Catholic Church. "There is a God-shaped hole in my heart," she said. "I have tried to fill it with everything under the sun. But that's not possible. I need Him as much as He wants me."

After suffering abuse by a high school teacher and thinking she had become pregnant by that abuse, she researched abortion further. "I realized this act of violence against me is parallel to the act of violence committed against an unborn child who is not seen as fully human, and whose body is not respected, and therefore can be violently violated," Turner said in a recent interview on EWTN. "And when that happened, I knew I had to do something."

She decided to speak up for life, first starting a pro-life group on her college campus, then founding her own nonprofit organization: Take Feminism Back. The group exists to assist pregnant and parenting people in need. "We also work to promote progressive social change that includes all people from the womb to the tomb," she said.

It was through her pro-life work that Turner felt drawn to the Catholic Church. "It was really through that work and seeing how fruitful an act of sacrifice could be and how transformational an act of sacrifice could be that drew me into the Church," she said, "and just seeing the sacrifice of Jesus and what He was willing to do to humanize, to help save our lives."

Turner also cited the number of Catholics involved in the pro-life movement who talked with her about the Church. "There are many things that have brought me here, but the main one has been seeing how necessary it is to sacrifice for these unborn children," she said.

Do you remember these lyrics from Peggy Lee's song *Is That All There Is?* "I remember when I was a little girl, our house caught on fire. I'll never forget the look on my father's face as he gathered me up in his arms and raced through the burning building out on the pavement and I stood there shivering in my pajamas and watched the whole world go up in flames. And when it was all over I said to myself 'Is that all there is to a fire? Is that all there is, is that all there is?'"

And there's also the song by Jackie DeShannon: *What the World Needs Now Is Love, Sweet Love* in 1965.

Peggy Lee's song is based on Thomas Mann's short fiction story *Disillusionment*. A quick read will reveal that many of the lyrics come straight from the story, right down to a child watching a fire and the question "Is that all there is to a fire?"

This is Donald Trump's favorite song of all time. On tapes released by the New York Times, which contain interviews by journalist Michael D'Antonio for his 2014 biography *The Truth About Trump*, the billionaire explained: "It's a great song. Because I've had these tremendous successes and then I'm off to the next one, because, it's like, 'Oh, is that all there is?' That's a great song actually. It's a very interesting song, especially be-

# JOURNEY OF Faith

by Jim Hand, Newsletter Editor

cause she had such a troubled life." The purpose of this article is to give the question about life some consideration just as Thomas Monaghan did in the article about Domino's Pizza. If you didn't read that article on the opposite page, please do so now.

A few weeks ago as my wife and I were entering the parish center for the 4 pm mass, I saw Fr. Cadrecha and, on an impulse, I said, "Hi, Robbie." He responded with his usual big smile. Soon after, Jean, my wife, said, "You should apologize to him; I think what you said to him was not appropriate." After mass I did apologize. He said, "Are you kidding me? That was just your way of saying that you love me." What a wonderful response.

Many times before Mass begins, I look around to see who's there, and I always think, "These are people whom I love, whom I would do anything for, and they love me too." If given the opportunity, I would say to Peggy Lee, "Love is what life is all about."

Where did the capacity to love come from? Of course that's a rhetorical question, because all of you reading this know the answer. I used to tease Fr. Tom because his favorite biblical verse is 1 John 4:16 - *God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.* He referred to it many times. I'm sure that he looked at me a few times as he quoted those verses, because he knew that I knew what he was going to say.

And then there's this song: *They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* by Jars of Clay.

Many years ago I thought I knew what love was. I am a retired high school English teacher of 36 years. I remember thinking, "I can't believe I'm being paid to do this." And yet, I once tried to find another job that was based on my Associate Degree in Civil Engineering. At the last minute, I changed my mind and turned down a job that was offered to me.

I'm going to conclude this article with a comment you might not like. I would be a Christian even if there were no heaven. As Paul said to the Corinthians, "But now abides faith, hope, and love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

And that's enough for me!

## Maine Set to Pass New Abortion Law



Governor Janet Mills

Maine is about to enact a bill that will legalize abortions for any reason and throughout all nine months of pregnancy. Maine currently allows abortions up to a 24-week viability threshold. After this, the state allows for exceptions for the life of the mother or if the infant has received a fatal diagnosis. The bill is entitled "An Act to Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws."

When the bill is signed into law, almost all existing abortion restrictions will be lifted.

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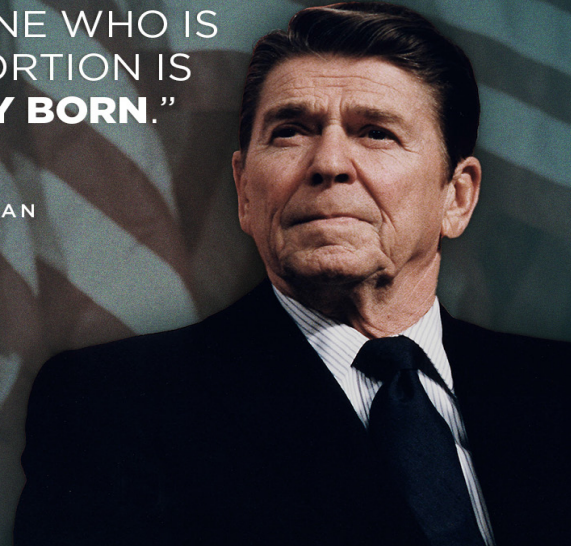
Planned Parenthood had a large role in the bill's passage. The nation's largest abortion provider spent over \$800,000 during the 2022 election

cycle backing Governor Janet Mills in the legislature.

In addition to legalizing the murder of healthy babies up until the day of their birth, the state senate blocked an amendment that would have put a four-year moratorium on the sale of the murdered babies' body parts.

"I'VE NOTICED THAT EVERYONE WHO IS FOR ABORTION IS ALREADY BORN."

RONALD REAGAN



# Parish Has July 4th Celebration

Thanks to all who helped or attended the St Jerome 4th of July picnic sponsored by the Fellowship Committee. There were lots of knights in blue shirts and some in red, white, and blue ones too. Thanks to Bill Bannon, Ed Paulus, Pete Grasso and Pete McCabe for cooking the hamburgers and hot dogs. Also, thanks to Rick Hendrickson and Greg Musick for assisting with the beer sales. Gregg Appel sang some songs and Ralph Frizzle made sure there was plenty of patriotic music. This is just one example of how the Knights can work with other ministries for the benefit of the St Jerome parish.





## Catholic Priest Shares Inside Look of Accompanying Man on Death Row

Darryl Barwick was 19 years old when he killed 24-year-old Rebecca Wendt on March 31, 1986, at her Panama City, Florida, apartment. After watching her sunbathe by the pool, he followed her back to her room where he stabbed her 37 times. He was convicted of first-degree murder, armed burglary, and attempted sexual battery in November 1986. A jury unanimously recommended death. Thirty-seven years later, Barwick was killed by lethal injection at the Florida State Prison at the age of 57.

Father Dustin Feddon, a priest from the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee and the founder of Joseph House, a nonprofit ministry designed to support the reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into the community, accompanied Barwick on death row. Fr. Feddon has worked in prison ministry since 2013 and has accompanied roughly 20 to 25 men on death row; however, Barwick was the first person Fr. Feddon accompanied up until the moment of execution.

Fr. Feddon shared that Barwick grew up in "an extremely abusive home." His mother tried to abort him by throwing herself down the stairs repeatedly and his father physically abused him, causing cognitive issues. "It was a horrific childhood," Fr. Feddon recalled. "I met with him multiple times and some of these memories would come up in our conversations." As Barwick reached his execution date, he was given the opportunity to have a spiritual adviser to accompany him during those last weeks. Separated by a plexiglass window, Fr. Feddon met with Barwick twice a week for one hour to offer him spiritual counsel. Once the date of the execution arrived, he gave Barwick his last rites and took his place among reporters and others in the viewing room where he watched Barwick be put to death. "I was not prepared for how macabre and how sinister it is. I was not prepared for the kind of theatrics of the execution itself."

Roughly 20 people filled the viewing room to watch Barwick's execution. Barwick's body lay flat on the gurney with only his head and right arm visible under the white sheets placed over him. Then Barwick was given the chance to say his last words.

"It's time to apologize to the victim's family, to my family," Barwick said. "I can't explain why I did what I did." He continued: "And another thing I would like to say is that the State

of Florida needs to show some kind of compassion and kindness for each other, especially with so many kids in prison: 14- and 15-year-olds serving life sentences."

Barwick did not have any family members present at his execution. Nor were any members of his victim's family present. However, Fr. Feddon had told him that he would be there in case he needed someone to look at that he knew saw him as a child of God and as someone beloved and cared for.

The injection process began at 6:02 pm, and Barwick was pronounced dead at 6:14 pm.

"It was like watching a horror film: you want to look away, you don't want to see and I'm already thinking, 'What I'm seeing, I will never unsee again,'" he recalled. "And yet, I wanted to make sure that I was able to make eye contact with him if he happened to look my way," Fr. Feddon said. He had gotten to know Barwick not as a murderer but as a "child of God." "I felt sense of innocence in this man on death row."

"I told him, 'Darryl, there's going to be a legacy of Darryl Barwick. There's going to be a legacy of people you have touched,'" Fr. Feddon recalled.

"These people are going to have your letters, and I have no doubt they're going to share some of your stories and some of your insights with their friends, and that's going to build up the world." Fr. Feddon continued: "He told me that it meant a lot to know that there is something that he's given to the world, even though he'd been thrown away."

"I was already opposed to the death penalty prior to Darryl's execution," he said. "However, being present with



Darryl Barwick

him in those last moments only deepened my conviction that the death penalty is a grave moral evil and an affront to the reality of redemption God offers everyone in this life."

In February 2018, a revision was made to the Catechism of the Catholic Church regarding the death penalty. No. 2267 now states that although the death penalty was long considered an appropriate response to grave crimes and a means of safeguarding the common good, an increased awareness of the dignity of the human person and effective systems of detention, among other factors, have led the Church to teach that "the death penalty is inadmissible, because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person, and the church works with determination for its abolition worldwide."



# Prisoner Makes Confessionals for World Youth Day

Some things take time. Pedro Silva needed to reach the age of 50, celebrated in a high-security prison cell, to look back and understand the "signs" he received along the way. "I realized that God was always with me, He doesn't give up on us, so we can't lose hope," he said, with the smile of someone who believes he is about to start a new life.

A few days before being released, after six years in jail for drug trafficking, Silva put the finishing touches on the 50 confessionals that, together with four other prisoners, he built for World Youth Day (WYD) 2023, which will take place in Lisbon, Portugal, August 1-6, and will be attended by Pope Francis.

While still in prison, Silva said that one of the first missions he will undertake post-incarceration is participating in World Youth Day as a volunteer and helping to set up the confessionals.

In all, 150 confessionals were built in three Portuguese prisons, following an agreement between the World Youth Day Lisbon 2023 Foundation and the Directorate-General for Reinsertion and Prison Services, with the aim of valuing the professional skills of prisoners and contributing to their reintegration into society.

In the midst of a complicated childhood, with his parents absent and in the care of a grandmother, Silva remembers the day his religion teacher asked the classroom: "Who is still not baptized?" Silva was the only one to put his hand in the air and that day he came home asking for the sacrament.

Silva's grandmother had no idea who to invite to be his godparents. "I was

a problematic child and she thought nobody would want it, but I suggested it could be my primary teacher and off we went to talk to her, who gladly accepted... I ended up keeping in touch with her throughout my life, until I came to prison," he recalled.

Despite having been baptized, Silva did not remain connected to the Church. As an adult, he lived in Argentina for a few years and experienced another moment he will never forget.

"I went to the cathedral with my sister, who lived in Buenos Aires, and with her husband's family, and we attended Mass." The celebrant was none other than the then-Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio. "In other words, I had the privilege of being with the pope! And from then on, I really liked him," he said.

Years later, living with another sister in Alicante, Spain, Silva was going through "a particularly difficult phase" and, desperate, he decided to pray. "I was walking down the street and asked God to help me, to give me a sign. The next moment, I look down at the floor and see a folded magazine. I opened it and it was an issue of Awake! by Jehovah's Witnesses. So I looked up at the sky and said to God, 'What? That fast?'"

Pedro laughed as he shared his story, fondly recalling how he went out to the street where some members of Jehovah's Witnesses used to be and spoke to them. "From then on, every week they came to the house to teach me about the Bible. It was there that I deepened my relationship with God."

But when he moved to Vigo, another Spanish city, to work in a restaurant,

he "didn't have time for anything," and his connection to religion was lost.

A new complicated phase in life marked by some mistakes, eventually brought him back to Portugal, condemned to a six-year sentence at the Coimbra Prison. It was there that he learned that World Youth Day would take place in Lisbon, though he was still far from imagining he would ever see the pope he loved again. But when the challenge of the confessionals came and he was one of the five chosen to join the team that would build them, Silva felt that it was another sign from God, and a new opportunity that appeared when he needed it most. "I was very happy and grateful, and it makes me proud to know that in those confessionals there is a part of me and of my companions," he said.



Pedro Silva



After Devastating Arson, Los Angeles' Famed Mission San Gabriel Reopens for Worship

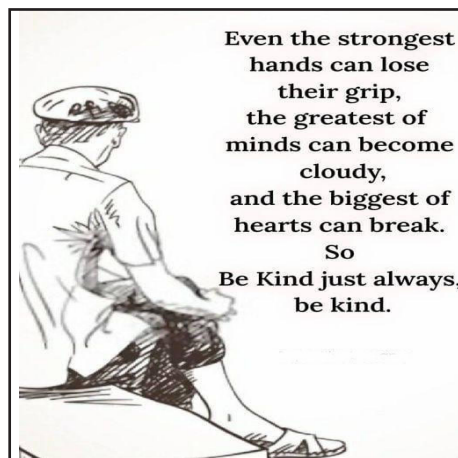
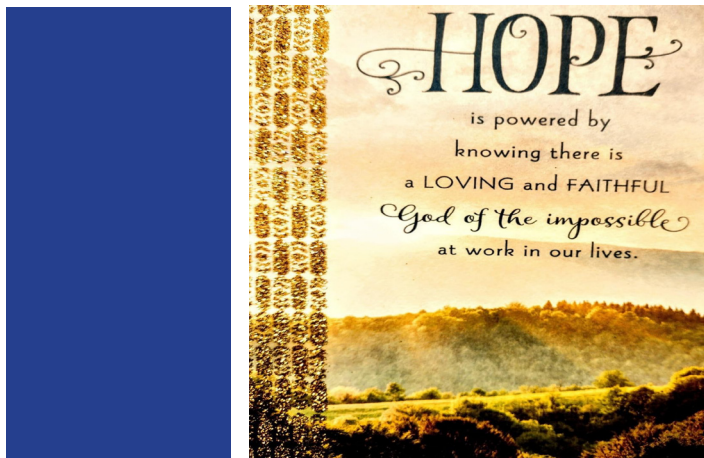


Archbishop Jose Gomez of Los Angeles blesses the newly renovated Mission San Gabriel at a June 27, 2023, ceremony. | Photo courtesy of Mission San Gabriel

Mission San Gabriel has reopened to the public for the first time since a devastating arson fire in 2020. Archbishop Jose Gomez of Los Angeles blessed the renovated mission more than 250 years after its founding by the Spanish priest St. Junipero Serra. "Mission San Gabriel will always be the true spiritual heart of Los Angeles," Gomez said. "The mis-

sion is a sign of the Christian beginnings, not only of our city, but of our nation," he said. The mission was the fourth founded by St. Junipero Serra, a Franciscan priest who founded a series of missions across California. Serra helped to convert thousands of native Californians to Christianity and taught them new agricultural technologies.

San Gabriel would go on to be one of the most successful and productive of all the 21 California missions. The alleged arsonist, John David Corey, was charged with the crime in May 2021. He was known at the mission and had a history of conflicts with mission staff. Corey, 59 years old, pled not guilty to the charges and is awaiting trial.



# Chicago's Our Lady of the Underpass Still Inspires

Earlier this month, I traveled to Chicago for the first time in years, and I made sure to carve out time for the Virgin Mary. Other times, I had tried and failed to get to an underpass of the Kennedy Expressway about a mile and a half west of DePaul University. In 2005, local and national media reported that Catholics had gathered there to venerate what they claimed was an image of Mary on a concrete wall.

The Illinois Department of Transportation said at the time that it was nothing more than a stain created by salt runoff. Some called the image Salt Stain Mary, others the Viaduct Virgin or Our Lady of the Underpass, the name that stuck in Chicagoland. Despite its name, nothing stopped the faithful from leaving flowers and votive candles on the sidewalk below and holding vigils on the site for weeks. Some even wrote testimonials on the wall.

Then-Cardinal Francis George held a news conference to deny that an apparition had in fact happened but nevertheless championed Our Lady of the Underpass. "God has many ways to stir up devotion in people's hearts," he said. "If it's helpful in reminding people of the Virgin Mary's care for us and love for us, that's wonderful."

If you look at photos from the time, you have to use your imagination to see even a hint of Mary's face or any part of her body. I saw mostly a worn wall in those old shots. Cracks. Gradations of gray. Bumps. What's unmistakable is the oval shape that starts at face level and goes all the way down to the ground. It'll remind any Catholic of the rays of light that surround the Virgin of Guadalupe.

Our Lady of the Concrete earned detractors as well. Someone wrote "Big Lie" in shoe polish over it. Street art-

ists drew mocking eyes and a mouth. Later, someone painted a devil face along with "666." But faith always won out. Locals cleaned up the defacements. Someone laid a concrete slab to serve as a makeshift altar.

Near the Kennedy Expressway on-ramp, a mother and her daughter were sitting on the sidewalk, while a man unsuccessfully asked for donations.

I made the sign of the cross when I finally saw Our Lady of the Underpass. She stands on the northeastern corner, separated from busy Fullerton Avenue by concrete pillars and a small alley where motorists can pull over in case of an accident.

She's in worse shape than ever.

The original white salt stains that the faithful said formed Mary's robe were gone. Where people once saw her face were now scrawls of black spray paint. Someone had tried to outline the image with what looked like rubber. Around her were layers upon layers of paint, hints of how many times city workers had covered up vandalism.

And where the small altar once stood were now some candles, a lantern cage, a discarded paper plate and an empty Taco Bell cup.



A man walks up and touches an image some people think looks like the Virgin Mary seen underneath the Kennedy Expressway in Chicago

She might no longer get national attention, or the same local devotion — but the candles holding various levels of wax that my friend and I saw attested to the fact that people still come, still believe. So did two rosaries that hung from a hook, above where the slightest outline of a head was visible.

To the right someone had tagged a message in gray marker on the wall. "Dear God and Blessed Mother please look over my Grandma and Mom and keep them healthy thank you."

I humbly ask Chicago to do the same with Our Lady Of The Underpass.

~~by Gustavo Arellano



Pictured to the right are some Brother Knights who helped re-organize the parish center for bingo.

L-R Rick Hendrickson, Edgar Lecuyer, Wayne Nuñez, Dan Timmons, Greg Musick, Jim Patton, Tom Giotta, Bill Bannon (the bannizer), Fred Melechiorri, Fred Belzel.





# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

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## Council 17249 Divine Mercy of Jesus Officers for 2023-2024

Worthy Chaplain  
 Worthy Grand Knight  
 Worthy Deputy Grand Knight  
 and Program Director  
 Worthy Chancellor  
 Worthy Recorder  
 Worthy Financial Secretary  
 Worthy Treasurer  
 Worthy Advocate  
 and Membership Director  
 Worthy Warden  
 Worthy Inside Guard 1  
 Worthy Inside Guard 2  
 Worthy Outside Guard  
 1-year Trustee  
 2-year Trustee  
 3-year Trustee  
 Worthy District Deputy  
 Field Agent  
 Newsletter Editor

TBD  
 Sir Knight Pete McCabe  
 Sir Knight Bill Bannon  
  
 Sir Knight Greg Musick  
 Sir Knight Rocco Totino  
 Sir Knight Fred Belzel  
 Sir Knight Paul Lee  
 Sir Knight Gregg Appel Pgc  
  
 Knight Gene Sanders  
 Knight Dave Unkrich  
 Sir Knight Ed Wirth  
 Sir Knight Joe Moore  
 Sir Knight Rick Hendrickson  
 Sir Knight Jim Patton  
 Sir Knight Bill McClelland Pgc  
 Sir Knight Pete Grasso Pgc  
 Knight Tony Crevello  
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