

# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

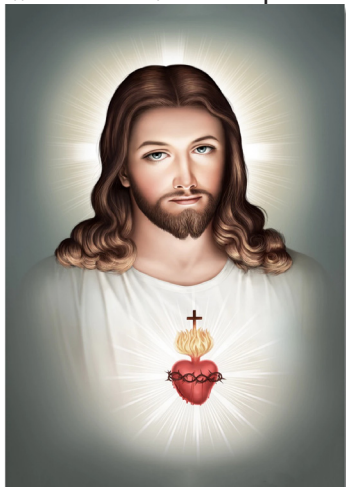
Divine Mercy of Jesus Council 17249  
June 2023 Volume 4 Issue 3



## The Solemnity of The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus June 16 2023

The Sacred Heart of Jesus is a devotional with long and historic provenance within Christianity, and in modern times has been established as a Solemnity for the universal Church.

The beginnings of a devotion of the love of God symbolized by the heart of Jesus are found in the fathers of the Church, including Origen, Saint Ambrose, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine of Hippo, Saint Hippolytus of Rome, Saint Irenaeus, Saint Justin Martyr, and Saint Cyprian. In the 11th century this devotion found a renewal in the writings of Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries. This expression was given form by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux in the 12th century in his famous poem/prayer "O Sacred Head Surrounded."



At the end of the 13th century, St. Gertrude, on the feast of St. John the Evangelist, had a vision in which she was allowed to rest her head near the wound in the Savior's side. She heard the beating of the Divine Heart and asked John if, on the night of the Last Supper, he too had felt this beating heart, why then had he never spoken of the fact. John replied that this revelation had been reserved for subsequent ages when the world, having grown cold, would have need to rekindle its love.

In the late 17th century the devotion was renewed and adopted elsewhere, especially following the revelations to Saint Marguerite Marie Alacoque. The saint, a cloistered nun of the Visitation Order, received several private

revelations of the Sacred Heart, the first on December 27, 1673, and the final one 18 months later. The visions revealed to her the form of the devotion, the chief features being reception of Holy Communion on the first Friday of each month, Eucharistic adoration during a "Holy hour" on Thursdays, and the celebration of the Feast of the Sacred Heart. Christ showed me that it was His great desire of being loved by men and of withdrawing them from the path of ruin that made Him form the design of manifesting His Heart to men, with all the treasures of love, of mercy, of grace, of sanctification and salvation which it contains, in order that those who desire to render Him and procure Him all the honor and love possible, might themselves be abundantly enriched with those divine treasures of which His heart is the source."

"Most sweet Jesus, Redeemer of the human race, look down upon us humbly prostrate before Thine altar. We are Thine, and Thine we wish to be; but to be more surely united with Thee, behold each one of us freely consecrates .



### FROM AROUND THE WORLD OF INTEREST TO CATHOLICS

Mexico ranks first in human trafficking and child abuse

Idaho, Indiana ban 'gender-affirming' drugs, sex-change surgeries for minors

Statue of Mary smashed at California Catholic church

Catholic hospital chaplain reaches £10K settlement in religious freedom lawsuit in UK

'Don't be couch potatoes!' Pope Francis says to Catholic youth

Pope Francis calls abortion 'senseless' and criticizes gender theory

New York Sisters of Charity won't take new members, signaling end of congregation

Film about freedom activist Jimmy Lai surpasses 1 million YouTube views in under 2 weeks

Judge orders PA district to allow after-school Satan Club to meet on school grounds

# FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND KNIGHT



Bill McClelland

Brothers,  
This is a very important month for our council. We have three very important events in the first three weeks of the month, for which we need maximum participation.

First, on Wednesday, June 7, we are celebrating three important events with hamburgers and hot dogs! This cookout will celebrate our Columbiette's installation, four years as a council and celebrate our 100th Knight (Tom Kurt). Please bring your families to this celebration and wear your council shirts.

Second, on Sunday, June 11, we need as many Knights as possible to attend the 9:00, 10:45 and 12:30

masses. I ask that all 4th degree Knights wear the assembly shirts and the 3rd degree wear the council shirts. I will be speaking before all masses regarding the "Patriotism in your Pocket" event. We will pass out stars from retired flags and collect any donations, with 100% of the proceeds going to buy personal care items for VA patients at Bay Pines. You may recall we collected \$581.00 at St. Patrick's and I am sure we can surpass that standard.

Finally, our elections are on June 14. We have come a long way in just four years, and I know this new slate of officers will continue the great tradition we have established together and set new heights for what we can accomplish. Please make every effort to attend this meeting, as only in-person votes will be tabulated.

It has been my great honor to lead this organization over the last two years and I look forward to all we can do in the future.

Vivat Jesus,  
Bill

# LAUGHTER ~ is the best ~ • MEDICINE •

Now that I have lived through a plague, I totally understand why Italian renaissance paintings are full of fat people lying on couches.

Now that we have everyone washing their hands correctly, next week we work on turn signals.

First day of Med school: "A patient cured is a customer lost."

Mom to child: "It's ok to mix peas with corn, but don't call it porn."

I said I was good at making decisions. I didn't say they were good decisions.

Never confuse education with intelligence.

Being older, I am very fortunate to have someone call me every day and check up on me. He is from India and very concerned about my car warranty.

Thank you for teaching me the meaning of *plethora*. It means a lot.

Kid: "Dad, I feel like you're always making up rules and stuff."

Dad: "Like what?"

Kid: "Like if I don't clean my room, a portal will open up and I'll be taken to another dimension."

Dad: "Well, that's what happened to your older brother."

Kid: "What older brother?"

Dad: "Exactly."

I am swift as a gazelle. An old one. With arthritis. Run over by a Land Rover. 8 days ago.

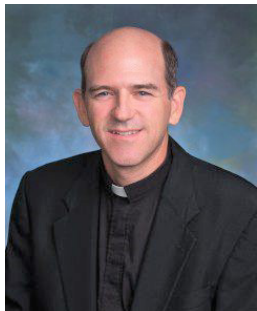
I asked God for a bike, but I know God doesn't work that way. So I stole a bike and asked for forgiveness.

I didn't fall down. I did attack the floor, though.

I don't suffer from insanity; I enjoy every minute of it.

A true optimist is the guy who falls off a skyscraper and after 50 floors thinks to himself, "Well, so far, so good!"

# FROM THE DESK OF OUR PASTOR



Fr. John Blum

This space is reserved for Fr. Blum's article in the July newsletter.



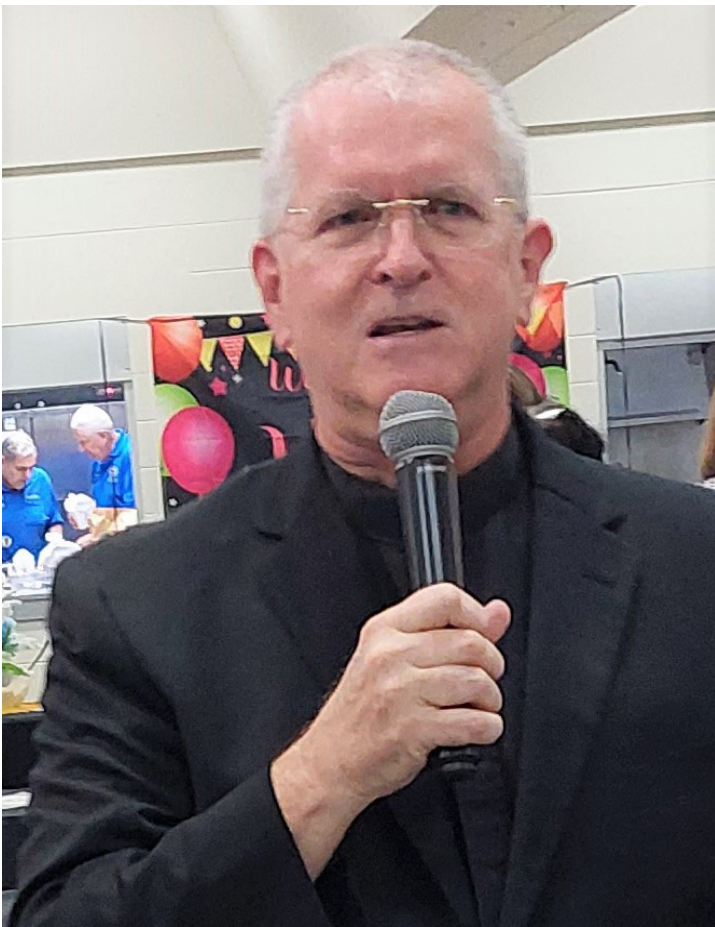
# Fr. Tom's Open House



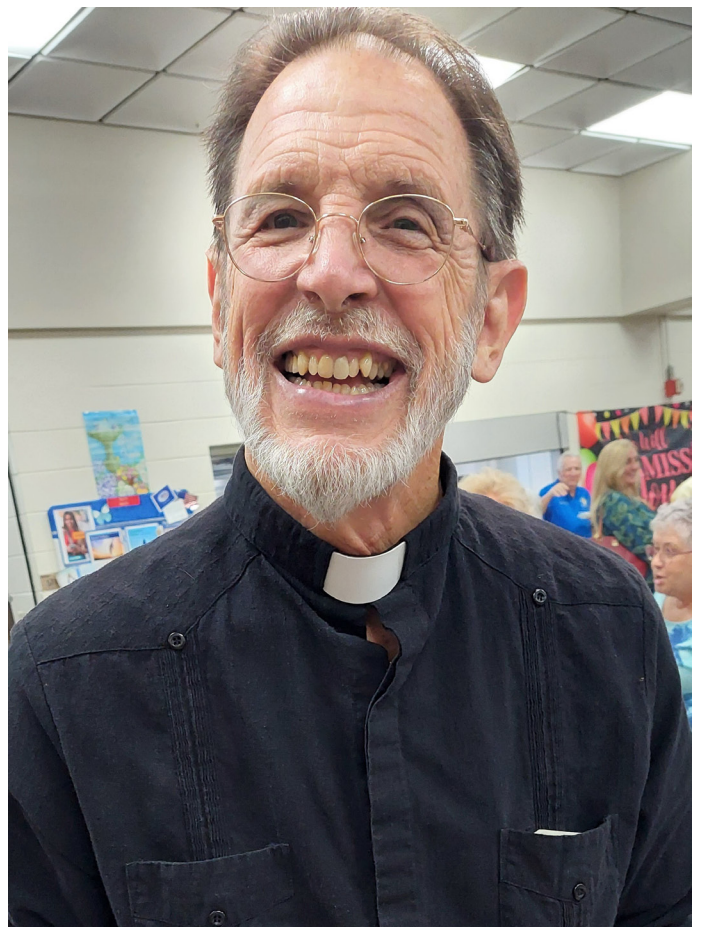
This sign says it all



A delicious-looking chocolate cake



Fr. Tom welcomes everyone before blessing the food



Fr. Mike is grinning at the amount of food he is preparing to eat





A looooooong table of food

Friends gather to enjoy the food and say goodbye to Fr. Tom

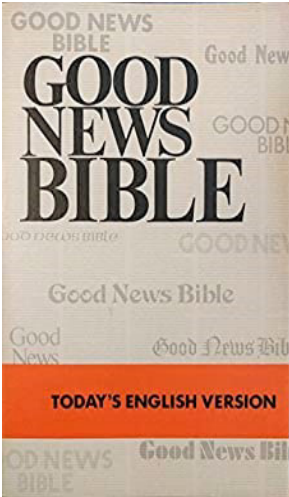


Time for dessert





# Journey of Faith: A Free Bible



Dawn Eden Goldstein grew up Jewish, but her mother dabbled in a wide variety of spiritual practices. The day Dawn's mother took advantage of a free Bible offered by a stranger was a turning point in

I did not recognize as a Bible. It had the words "Good News" on its cover, but instead of a cross or an image of Jesus, it had faces of men and women of different races and ages.

Mom picked a book off one of the stacks, and held it quizzically as she would if she were trying to assess the ripeness of a tomato. "What do you think," she asked me. "Should I take one? It's free."

Should she? It's not like there were any shortage of spiritual reading material at our apartment. Our living room was lined up with religious and New Age books. When I was bored as a child, I would page through them, trying to keep track of the innumerable gods and goddesses or wondering how the Mormons could bear having a prophet named Moroni.

Did we need a New Testament? No. I knew for a fact that we had a King James Bible somewhere. But maybe it would be worthwhile for Mom to read the Good News Bible, if it would only stop her seeking.

For years, Mom had carted me along with her to sit at the feet of different yogis, self-help gurus, and others claiming higher wisdom. I was willing to go because I liked being included in her life. It helped make up for Dad's distance. So I was all right with Mom taking me to her yoga classes and self-help conferences and Whole Life Expos. But I was starting to suspect that all this New Age stuff was pointless, because each teacher contradicted the last.

So, what should I say to Mom as she stood before me in the student center at Rutgers with a Bible in her hand? What I really wanted to say to

her was, "Please, Mom, find a spirituality that's not flaky. Should she read the Bible? I looked Mom in the eyes and raised my eyebrows the way I do when I was trying to sound authoritative. "Yes, Mom, you should. I read it in eighth grade and it was good."

"Really? In eighth grade?" I thought she knew. Normally I would tell her everything. But I had a lot going on in eighth grade, so maybe I didn't mention it.

"Yes. Mr. Snyder had us read the Gospels because he said they were important for understanding Western civilization."

My endorsement had its desired effect upon Mom. She tucked the Good News Bible under her arm, graciously thanking the young woman behind the table, and we continued on our way.

Mom's light was still on and her bedroom door was open a crack. I knocked so I could go in to say good night. She didn't answer, so I took that to mean she was decent and I could walk in. She knew I didn't like to see her when she wasn't dressed.

Mom was awake in bed wearing her flannel nightgown, her head propped up on pillows. She was wearing her reading glasses and had the Good News Bible propped up on her chest. Her face was streaked with tears.

"Listen to this," she said. "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me." Mom was a good reader. She read the way she felt; the words come out strong and emotional: "When people insult you! When they persecute you!"

Our journey of faith was destined from that point on to continue.

both their lives.

"Now that I've seen Livingston College," I said to Mom, "I don't think I'd want to go there. If I went to any college here, it would be Rutgers."

It was good of Mom to take the day off work so we could tour the various colleges on the New Brunswick campus of Rutgers University. If I wasn't admitted into the music-business program at New York University, the state university of New Jersey was my second choice.

We were walking through the student center that was lined with convention-style tables where student groups promote their activities. A young woman off to our right called out, "Free Bibles!"

Mom and I turned to look at the table where a woman was trying to grab our attention. Hanging along its edge was a banner for Campus Crusade for Christ. Atop the table were several neat small stacks of a paperback that

## Pope Francis Addresses Divorced and Remarried Couples without an Annulment



The Vatican is preparing a document that will address divorced and remarried couples at the request of Pope Francis. The in-progress document was delivered in Italian on April 22 that opened a meeting of the dicastery, which promotes the pasto-

ral care of the family and the mission of the lay faithful. Cardinal Kevin Farrell spoke about the importance of providing help and guidance to "those experiencing marital crises of all kinds."

"On this front, the dicastery is also working on the preparation of a text that will specifically concern men and women who, having a failed marriage behind them, live in new unions," Farrell said in his opening address.

The Church teaches that Catholics who are divorced and remarried without an annulment are not to take holy Communion, a teaching reaffirmed by St. John Paul II in 2005.

Pope Francis has said that there may be case-by-case situations where divorced and remarried Catholics can access the Eucharist, including situations where the spouses practice continence within their marriage. "We cannot reduce a human situation to a prescriptive one," he said. Furthermore, he advised looking to what his predecessor Benedict XVI said on the subject of annulments, affirming that "a large part of church marriages are invalid for lack of faith."

"And think about it," he continued. Sometimes [one] goes to a wedding and it seems more like it's a social reception and not a sacrament," he said. "When young people say 'forever,' who knows what they mean?"





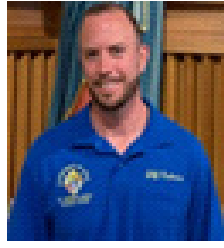
# JUNE BIRTHDAYS



Zeke Ganio



Don Smith



Jeff Puskarik



Vic Carro



Boone Bowen III



Joe Zanga

## Several Knights Gather to Help Fr. Tom Move by DGK Pete McCabe

Eleven Knights showed up to help Fr. Tom move on Monday, May 22. That group included District Deputy Pete Grasso, Grand Knight Bill McClelland, Deputy Grand Knight Peter McCabe, Bill Bannon, Ralph Frizzle, Dave Unkrich, Rick Hendrickson, Pete Nunes, Joe Moore, Edgar Lecuyer, and Charlie Scott. Special thanks to Ralph for the use of his truck which came in handy moving Fr. Tom's 999 bookcases (okay, it just seemed that they were unending). We were able to finish the job in 2 hours with all the help. We enjoyed some pizza afterwards in the air-conditioning.





# Fr. Blum Shares His Life Story

Fr. John Blum, can hardly remember a time when he did not think of becoming a priest. A cradle Catholic, he said, "Even before high school, I felt a call to the priesthood."

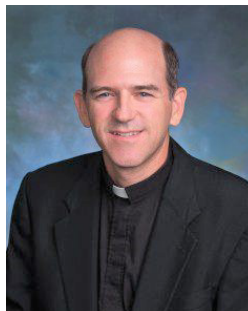
He grew up at St. Patrick's parish in Largo and, since he always felt that God was calling him, he went to seminary after graduating high school. It didn't take him long to think about becoming a diocesan priest. "My parents are very proud of me," he stated with a chuckle.

"A diocesan priest is ordained by a bishop to become a priest at a parish within the diocese. Priests who belong to a religious order have a different scope of responsibilities. They tend to be involved in missionary roles that can take them far afield, rather than a diocesan priest who typically serves within a specific diocese at a local parish. As I was discerning a call to priesthood, I felt God was calling

me to serve as a diocesan priest." Once he was ordained by the bishop, he promised to serve in any capacity he was asked to be a part of. Fr. Blum said on the day of his ordination he knelt before the Bishop and made a promise of obedience to him and to his successors.

"We promise to serve," he said. It is in this spirit that Fr. Blum has approached each one of his diocesan assignments. His first assignment was St. Ignatius in Tarpon Springs. Next was Christ the King in Tampa, followed by St. Frances Cabrini in Spring Hill as Parochial Vicar. The next move was to St. John Vianney at St. Pete Beach as Pastor. Next was St. Timothy, which is located in Lutz. He also was the Director of Vocations in the diocese for a while.

When asked if he was a member of the Knights of Columbus, he stated, "Yes, I received my 1st degree many years ago. I've always respected and

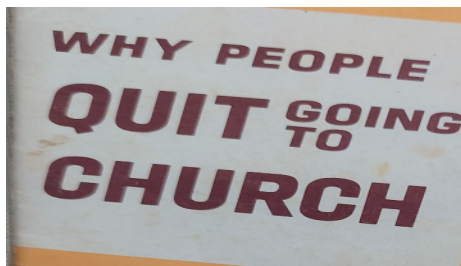


Fr. John Blum

supported the work the Knights do, especially for the pro-life movement. I look forward to working with the Knights of Columbus at St. Jerome's as I have done with other councils in my previous assignments."

"Going to St. Jerome's is a bit of a homecoming for me," he said. "I grew up in Largo and my home parish is St. Patrick's." His mom remembers taking him to St. Jerome's for Mass when he was a baby. He graduated from Largo High School, "so I'm pretty much a local boy", he said. "My brother and his family are parishioners at St. Jerome's," he proudly stated. "I also know Msgr. Muldoon very well," he said. He also knows Tom Kurt really well and looks forward to working with him and with the rest of the clergy, religious, staff and volunteers.

He is excited to get settled in come July 1 and begin to meet our wonderful parish family.



There is nothing more tragic in this world than to see a man who has lost his faith, unless it is to see someone who still has faith but refuses to practice it.

We priests meet them frequently, and they always give us a long explanation why they don't go to church anymore, always ending with a note of self-justification and with the comment that God understands them and will let them into heaven through a side gate. We know that their conscience is bothering them, that they are trying to quiet that little voice that tells them that they are wrong. We listen to their arguments, and we pray for them to receive the grace of humility. Seldom do we try to convince them that their curtain of pride cannot be pierced by words, but we know that the fire of faith is not dead in them. A tiny flame is

burning within the embers of their weakened faith. (Editor's note: I felt exactly like that years ago when I was an agnostic).

### Various types

1. Here is a man who comes from a good family with a background of solid Catholic education. For years he attended to his duties and received the sacraments frequently, but all of a sudden he quit going to Mass. Why? Ask him and he will start putting the blame on the priest who is always asking for money, or he disagrees with the way he scolded him in confession, or he disagreed with the pastor who ran the parish, or perhaps some priest was guilty of a human weakness, and he was so shocked he quit going to Mass.

Such a man fails to realize that the church is divine but is administered by human beings. His heart is full of pride, and he has an exalted opinion of his own excellence and talents. Argue with such a one and you will get nowhere. He will clam up or become abusive and angry. Yet he knows he is wrong, and in his heart he is convinced of the truth of the Church. He won't join another religious sect, but he will become just another lapsed

catholic.

2. Then there is the man who disagrees with the way the Church is run. He doesn't like the Church's attitude on integration or mixed marriages or labor unions. He can't understand why the bishop needs a new cathedral. He feels the need for religion but feels that he experiences more charity and kindness among other separated brethren. He expects his priest to be a stellar example of every virtue and will accept no imperfections. Strangely, he will seldom criticize a nun and has nothing but respect for the Brother who pinned his ears back in high school, but he will strain at every imperfection in his fellow Catholics, forgetting that they are human beings and capable of sinning. He takes out his grudge on the Church by quitting holy Mass and the sacraments, yet he still wants to be known as a Catholic, just in case of a sudden illness or accident.

Is it any wonder the priests, Sisters, and Brothers volunteer for foreign mission work where they know that there are a million souls who are hungering for the faith which so many cradle Catholics are abandoning?

~~~by Harry S. Smith

# Young Catholic Triathlete With Down Syndrome, Inspired By Faith, Tells UN He Has 'No Limitations'



Gabriel, with his mom and dad

It was his first speaking engagement at the United Nations' headquarters in New York, and Gabriel Cobb, who has Down syndrome, was admittedly "a little nervous." But it was obviously nothing the 22-year-old Catholic from St. Louis couldn't handle. "I am Gabriel, God's messenger," he said, moments before he was set to address a U.N. gathering of advocates for those with Down syndrome and autism. "It was never my intention to come to New York, but I prayed on it," Lori Cobb, chimed in. Gabriel's mother, Lori Cobb, explained that the U.N. had invited Gabriel to speak at a similar event three years ago, but it had been canceled due to COVID. "Here we are

three years later, and he has had a year of practicing. And now he is comfortable and confident, way more than we were then," she said. "It has been something that has been even hard to believe," Thomas Cobb, Gabriel's father, said, visibly moved by it all. He paused for a moment and said that earlier that morning he received a text from another family who has a child with Down syndrome. They told him Gabriel's story and the U.N. invitation "had given them hope."

Then a U.N. security guard came and told Gabriel, Lori and Thomas Cobb it was time to begin. "My faith is the most important part of my life. I like to attend Mass daily and proclaim loudly," said Gabriel, as he got up from the interview and walked toward the U.N. conference hall. His mother and father followed. "Here we are at the U.N. Gabriel is not a professional speaker, but somehow God thinks he has a message to share," Lori said. Inside the huge hall, experts on Down syndrome and autism made some of the first speeches. Lisa Correnti, executive vice president of the Center for Family and Human Rights, spoke about "inter-

national agreements" which "reaffirmed that persons with disabilities are equal in dignity and rights. "Governments should strive to provide social protection measures to families which are primarily responsible for the development, educational and well-being of children with autism and Down syndrome, and very often remain their main sources of social protection," said Correnti, whose organization monitors social policy debates at the U.N. and other international institutions. Gabriel's speech similarly highlighted the role his family played in his life. "I have two loving parents who have always kept the bar high," Gabriel told the conference hall. As Gabriel spoke, a screen of photos played over his right shoulder. He explained each photo: Gabriel doing chores with his father and, with his mother, playing piano and reading books, including the works of William Shakespeare and Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein." Then photos of Gabriel swimming, biking and running appeared on the screen. Gabriel told the U.N. hall that he was a triathlon athlete, which meant he swam, ran and biked all in one race — and not just once, but 10 times. "I have done it, I am a triathlete," he exclaimed, to loud applause. Gabriel vowed "to continue to compete" and he thanked the coaches, family and friends, who have encouraged him to press boundaries. "I pray that I have given them joy and inspiration," he said, "because, with their help, even though I have Down syndrome, I have no limitations."

## Don't Forget That the Election of New Officers Will Take Place June 14

Grand Knight: Pete McCabe  
 Deputy Grand Knight: Bill Bannon  
 Recorder: Rocco Totino  
 Chancellor: Greg Musick  
 Treasurer: Paul Lee  
 1 Year Trustee: Need nomination  
 2 Year Trustee: Jim Patton  
 3 Year Trustee: GK Bill McClelland  
 Financial Secretary and Lecture are appointed.

Warden: Gene Sanders  
 Inside Guard 1: David Unkrich  
 Inside Guard 2: Ed Wirth  
 Outside Guard: Joe Moore  
 Advocate: Gregg Appel  
 Advocate: Pete Grasso



# Harvard Explains Its Stand on a Black Mass



A Harvard student group's plans to re-enact a satanic black mass on campus has prompted outrage from Catholics who say that the event is not educational, but sacrilegious, offensive and disrespectful. "We call upon all believers and people of good will to join us in prayer for those who are involved in this event, that they may come to appreciate the gravity of their actions, and in asking Harvard to disassociate itself from this activity," the Archdiocese of Boston said.

In a recent statement, Pope Francis warned of the danger of being naive about or underestimating the power of Satan, whose evil is too often tragically present in our midst, the archdiocese noted. "For the good of the Catholic faithful and all people, the Church provides clear teaching concerning Satanic worship. This activity separates people from God and the human community, it is contrary to charity and goodness, and it places participants dangerously close to destructive works of evil." Connected to witchcraft and demonic worship, a black mass is a sacrilegious ceremony that invokes the Catholic Mass. It involves the desecration of the Eucharist, generally by stealing a consecrated host from a Catholic Church and using it in a profane sexual Satan and mock ritual. Several media reports confirmed that a consecrated host would be used. The Harvard Extension Cultural Studies Club denied this, saying, "While a piece of bread is used in the reenactment, the performance unequivocally does not include a consecrated host. Our purpose is not to denigrate any religion or faith, which would be re-

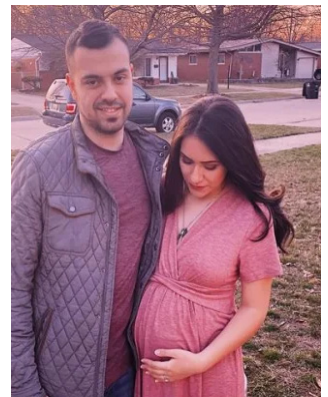
pugnant to our educational purposes, but instead to learn and experience the history of different cultural practices," the group said. "This performance is part of a larger effort to explore religious facets that continue to influence our culture." Father Roger Landry, a Harvard alum who serves as national chaplain for Catholic Voices USA, issued strong words against the event, calling it "terribly ill-advised and totally insensitive. Harvard simply would never allow itself or its properties to be associated with events that mock the religious beliefs, desecrate the sacred texts, or insult the spiritual sensitivities of Jews or Muslims." The priest then likened the planned event to a séance aimed at communicating with the soul of Adolf Hitler or a re-enactment of a Koran burning. Both, he said, would be terribly injurious to each community and is something Harvard would never associate itself with. "There is still time, he wrote, "to remedy this situation and clearly communicate that mockery and desecration of the religious rites, objects, and sensitivities of others have no place at Harvard."

# Catholic Mother Expecting Conjoined Twins Chooses Life

A Catholic wife and mother in Michigan recently took to social media to share her pregnancy announcement, but the news she shared was not something you hear every day. The 24-year-old mother, Nicole LeBlanc, is expecting conjoined, twin girls who share one heart and other organs. Nicole and her husband, Austin, spoke about their journey so far and their decision to choose life despite being advised to have an abortion. Nicole explained that they were given the news when she was 10 weeks pregnant. "Nothing ever would've prepared me for the ultrasound technician saying, 'Your twins are very special because they are conjoined and they share a heart,'" said Nicole, who is now 29 weeks pregnant. Doctors immediately deemed the pregnancy high-risk and suggested termination. "They definitely pushed an abortion agenda on us and on our babies," she said. "That is something that we were not okay with and something we are totally, completely against because even though I couldn't feel them moving

at 10 weeks, I could see them clearly jumping together off the side of my womb, jumping together" Austin, who became a Catholic in 2020, shared that this experience has been a test of faith, but through it all the couple has relied on praying the rosary together daily. "We get together every night and we pray the rosary. That's one of the biggest things, and just knowing that God has a plan for everything and there's always a purpose for everything." Several saints and biblical figures have also impacted the couples' faith and inspired the names they chose for their twin girls — Maria Therese and Rachel Claire. "We definitely want to have our babies be gifts to our Blessed Mother so, Maria, the Latin name for Mary," Nicole explained. "And I've always had a special connection with the Old Testament story of Rachel so, Maria Therese and Rachel Claire." The young mother has been sharing her journey on social media and has received an outpouring of prayers

and support from the pro-life community. "The pro-life community is absolutely amazing," she said. "They encouraged me to make a baby shower registry on Amazon and all of the things that I had were quickly purchased, even if they were to live for a day." She added: "I really think that the pro-life community is growing, and I know that our testimony will be part of that, and I hope to do more work in the future as well." Nicole will undergo a Cesarean section in early June and said she will let "God be in control of the situation."



Austin and Nicole LeBlanc

*Editor's Note: The LeBlancs met their babies on May 16 at 32 weeks' gestation. Rachel Clare and Maria Therese were born alive and immediately baptized and confirmed before they died. "God designed them so beautifully in my womb and it was an absolute honor and privilege to carry them for as long as I could. Their lives have touched so many and the support my family has received has been nothing short of incredible," Nicole said.*



## When Is It Time to Go Back to Both Species in the Eucharist?

As many restrictions put in place at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic have been lifted, some Catholic dioceses around the country are returning to offering consecrated wine in the chalice for Communion. Most recently, the archbishop of New Orleans announced that parishes could once again offer the Communion cup. Father Nile Gross, director of the New Orleans Archdiocese's Office of Worship, announced the decision by saying: "The long hiatus is finally over!" He said Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond "formally removed any restrictions on the offering of Communion under both species.

The priest said the decision was made "with due diligence and with the support of local and state health officials. He also pointed out: "Not every parish may be ready to resume this practice, which is understandable. Some pastors and pastoral councils may feel it is better to wait until after the flu season or some later time when fear and anxiety of the past few years has waned. The decision is a pastoral decision to be weighed by each individual parish. The oppor-

tunity to receive the Blood of Christ at Mass connects us directly to the apostles, who received the chalice directly.

In the nearly three-year absence of the use of the Communion chalice, he reminded local Catholics that the consecrated wine "may not be offered in separate cups (plastic, paper, etc.) to individual communicants. If fear of illness exists, that person should refrain from the chalice."

He also said intinction, dipping of the Communion host into the chalice, is only allowed for the clergy. "The lay faithful," he said, "may not dip their hosts into the chalice themselves, as this is considered 'self-communication,'" which the church prohibits.

"COVID happened and continues to pose serious health threats," the priest said. "However, guided by prayer and the guidance of health officials, Archbishop Aymond has decided it is time to strengthen our liturgical life in this gesture."

The Catholic Church has emphasized that while the distribution of both host and wine "more fully expresses Christ's gift of himself at the Last



Supper," the fullness of sacramental grace is present in each form.

"When it comes to the sign, the sign is less full, the expression is less full," without both forms of Communion, he said. "But when it comes to grace, there's no deprivation of grace without the Communion cup."

The bishop said receiving Communion from the cup was still voluntary and that each parish could join in when they were ready.

## Sanctuary Candle Under Attack in Tulsa, Oklahoma

The Department of Health and Human Services (HSS) may have reached an all-time low in its disregard for religious freedom.

HSS has ordered officials at the highly rated Saint Francis Hospital South in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to extinguish the sanctuary lamp, living flame, or eternal candle honoring Christ in its chapel, claiming it is a safety hazard. This situation is noteworthy because of its implications for other Catholic hospitals which could face similar unjust sanctions. The HHS, of course, is under the direction of Secretary of HSS, Xavier Beccera, a self-described Catholic despite his support for abortion and other policies inconsistent with Church teachings.

If officials refuse to remove the sanctuary candle, HSS could deny St. Francis the ability to serve Medicare, Medicaid, and High Risk Percutaneous Coronary Intervention individuals, otherwise referred to as CHIP patients who might otherwise not receive medical services.

What the surveyor and HSS con-

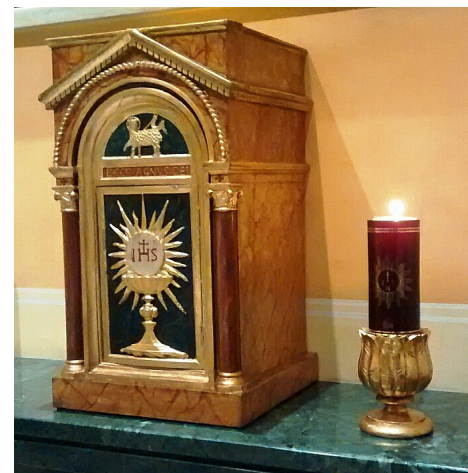
veniently ignored is that the candle was present pursuant to the Roman Missal, the repository of prayers, chants, and instructions for the celebration of Mass in the Roman Catholic Church which states that "In accordance with traditional custom, near the tabernacle a special lamp, fueled by oil or wax, should shine permanently to indicate the presence of Christ and honor it." It is thus part and parcel of sincerely held Catholic beliefs.

The lamp, which witnesses to Christ's real presence in the Eucharist, is enclosed behind two glass candleholders, covered with brass, and attached to a wall, in a corner behind the altar, posted over six feet high. As an extra precaution, the lamp is near sprinklers, far from medical equipment or individuals who might be at risk if they are carrying oxygen tanks or nasal cannula.

The safety of all in hospitals must be a paramount concern. But it is unclear how a self-contained flame in the chapel is so problematic, especially because it has been present for

fifteen years without incident.

Hopefully HSS officials will "see the light" and recognize the error of their way, rescinding the order to extinguish the living flame. To do so is in the best interest of safeguarding religious liberty and the needs of the people in Oklahoma, and if this matter is litigated, they are likely to lose.



*(Editor's note: The Biden administration's Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) withdrew a demand for a Catholic hospital system in Oklahoma to remove its sanctuary candle. The HHS had threatened to end the hospital's accreditation but has now reversed course, allowing the institution to keep the candle without repercussions. "The government has seen the light," said religious freedom attorney Lori Windham.)*



## The first hyper-realistic body of Christ based on the Holy Shroud is on exhibit in Spain



Spain is hosting the exhibition of the first hyper-realistic recreation of the body of Christ based on data obtained from the Shroud of Turin.

The exhibit first opened at Salamanca Cathedral in central Spain and will remain in Granada until June 30, after which it will tour Europe for the remainder of 2023.

The sculpture, made of latex and silicone, weighs about 165 pounds. The posture is of the deceased Christ in rigor mortis. The legs are somewhat bent, hands crossed at the level of the

pubis. There is no false modesty in the figure. The entire body of the man on the Shroud is visible, nothing omitted, including circumcision.

When one approaches the figure — with hands behind one's back in accordance with exhibit rules for visitors — one can observe every pore of the skin, freckles, eyelashes, and eyebrows.

The back is slightly raised, making apparent the lacerations on the head caused by the crown of thorns, and there is a kind of small braid that ties

the hair on the back of the head. Also seen are the bruises on the shoulders due to carrying the weight of the cross. On the skin you can see each of the tearing wounds produced by the scourging and the traces of the nails in the hands and feet, as well as the one between the fifth and sixth ribs on the right side. The nose is broken and the right eye bruised.

The hyper-realistic sculpture tries to present before the viewer a "body of human quality without artistic movement," without interpretation, made from multidisciplinary scientific data based on studies on the Holy Shroud.

The curator of the exhibition, Alvaro Blanco, who dedicated more than 15 years of research into its realization, gives a lengthy prior explanation of the historical and scientific data that culminates in the hyper-realistic body.

Blanco confessed during the presentation of the exhibition in the sacristy of the Cathedral of Salamanca that at the moment of seeing the finished body he was convinced that "he was before Jesus, he was before the image of the body of Jesus of Nazareth."

## Premature Twins Survive After Parents Put Their Faith in God; Set World Record



Canadian twins Adiah and Adrial Nadarajah celebrated their first birthday recently and, with it, the record of being the youngest and smallest premature twins to ever survive.

The Ontario twins almost were denied life-saving medical care because they were so premature.

If they had been born an hour earlier, doctors wouldn't have tried to save them.

Now, they are thriving at home with their parents, Shakina Rajendram and Kevin Nadarajah.

"They were born smaller than the palm of our hands. People still don't believe us when we tell them," their mother, said.

Last year, Shakina said she began to bleed 21 weeks into her pregnancy, and doctors said she likely would go into premature labor and lose her twins because they

weren't viable.

"Even in that moment, as I was hearing those words come out of the doctor's mouth, I could still feel the babies alive within me. I just wasn't able to comprehend how babies who felt very much alive within me could not be viable," she said.

The couple went home and began to research options online. They found a specialty hospital, Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, that would try to save the twins as long as they were born at 22 weeks.

Devout Christians, Shakina said she and her husband, Kevin, prayed hard and put their faith in God as they waited for the twins to arrive.

They did soon after 1 a.m. March 4, when she was exactly 22 weeks into her pregnancy.

The twins spent months in the hospital and nearly died a few times, but their parents continued to hope and pray. They had conflicting feelings, seeing how tiny they were on one hand, feeling the joy of seeing two babies on the second hand.

Dr. Prakesh Shah, the pediatrician-in-chief at Mount Sinai Hospital, said he was straightforward with the couple about the challenges ahead for their twins.

"These babies were in significant pain, distress, and their skin was peeling off. Even removing surgical tape would mean that their skin would peel off," Shah said. But what their parents saw gave them hope. "We could see through their skin. We could see their hearts beating." Shah said medical technology had advanced so much that, just five years ago, the twins probably would not have survived.

The twins left the hospital with no breathing or feeding tubes. Adrial was hospitalized twice with infections since then, but today both twins are meeting the normal milestones for babies their age.

Kevin described his children as "miracles," and the family hopes they will not be the record-holders for long. They want even more premature babies to be given a chance at life.



## What Did the First Christians Have to Say about the Real Presence?



Ignatius of Antioch, who had been a disciple of the apostle John and who wrote a letter to the Smyrnaeans about A.D. 110 said, referring to "those who hold unorthodox opinions," that "they abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, flesh that suffered for our sins and that the Father, in his goodness, raised up again."

Forty years later, Justin Martyr wrote, "Not as common bread or common drink do we receive these; but since Jesus Christ our Savior

was made incarnate by the word of God and had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so too, as we have been taught, the food which has been made into the Eucharist by the Eucharistic prayer set down by him, and by the change of which our blood and flesh is nourished, . . . is both the flesh and the blood of that incarnated Jesus." Origen, in a homily written about A.D. 244, attested to belief in the Real Presence. "I wish to admonish you with examples from your religion. You are accustomed to take part in the divine mysteries, so you know how, when you have received the body of the Lord, you exercise every care lest a particle of it fall and lest anything of the consecrated gift perish. You account yourselves guilty if any of it be lost through negligence."

One suspects that, had they been asked by the Creator their opinion of how to bring about mankind's salvation, Fundamentalists would have advised him to adopt a different approach. How much cleaner things would be if spirit never dirtied itself with matter! But God approves of matter—he approves of it because he created it—and he approves of it

so much that he comes to us under the appearances of bread and wine, just as he does in the physical form of the incarnate Christ.

The doctrine of the Real Presence asserts that in the Holy Eucharist, Jesus is present—body and blood, soul and divinity—under the appearances of bread and wine. This teaching is based on a variety of scriptural passages (see 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:23-29; and, especially, John 6:32-71).

### ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

I have no taste for corruptible food nor for the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, who was of the seed of David; and for drink I desire his blood, which is love incorruptible [Letter to the Romans 7:3 (c. A.D. 110)].

### ST. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

"Eat my flesh," [Jesus] says, "and drink my blood." The Lord supplies us with these intimate nutrients, he delivers over his flesh and pours out his blood, and nothing is lacking for the growth of his children." (c. A.D. 197).

## Five Foundational Principles for Talking to Atheists

"You probably think Santa Claus is real. Or that the Earth is flat. Maybe your ancestors thought Thor caused lightning and thunderstorms. Or that praying to a statue would bring healing. We have moved past that. Now, we live in an age of science. If you still believe in God, you must be a superstitious ignoramus."

This common attitude among atheists has led many to stay away from faith. Believers must share the blame. A lot of Catholic Christians cannot give reasons for the hope that is within them. They have not learned to support their worldview with reasons and evidence. Rather, they've been told to "just have faith" and not to ask too many questions.

Because of this, atheism has been successful in winning converts. Many skeptical slogans have led others to doubt their religious beliefs. But although the slogans have surface-level plausibility, they do not stand up to scrutiny—all of them can be answered using the intellectual resources from the Christian tradition.

### Five Foundational Principles

#### First Principle

Pray every day. Develop a daily prayer

routine. Decide on a specific segment of time as your personal prayer baseline. It could be ten or fifteen minutes. This principle drives us to develop a deeper relationship with the Lord.

#### Second Principle

Whenever possible, start by asking questions rather than making statements. Asking questions places you in the driver's seat of the conversation. You can steer it where you want it to go.

#### Third Principle

Don't let people get away with vague, wishy-washy criticisms. Sometimes people make vague objections they think are enough to win the day. Consider the following:

"You know the problem of evil, right? That's why I don't believe in God. You Catholics have that abuse scandal. Who would want to join a corrupt Church like that?"

Too often when we hear questions like these, we immediately launch into a defense. Before the skeptic elicits a response from us, we must require that he make his criticism clearer, provide more detail, and, whenever possible, give us the fullness of the

argument he has in mind.

#### Fourth Principle

This principle encourages realistic expectations. The most hardened, angry skeptics need our prayers. Perhaps they've been abused by a priest in the past or dealt with some other terrible circumstance in life. The Holy Spirit can work on the heart and soften them for future conversations. On the other hand, those with a sincere desire to understand can be led closer to Christ with answers from the Christian intellectual tradition.

#### Fifth Principle

Don't neglect the soft skills of evangelism. By "soft skills" I mean the ways of conducting ourselves outside of apologetic encounters. How should we interact with others?

So don't be a jerk. Give more compliments. Be openly Catholic by saying grace before meals, keeping prayers or pictures of saints on your desk, and include Mass in your discussion of the weekends and holidays. These soft skills do not require a Bible scholar, and they can go a long way toward building trust and plausibility in religion.



**JOURNEY OF Faith**  
by Jim Hand, Editor

until about 20 years ago when I met the woman who became my wife. Both she and her family members had millions of hugs to freely give out and I became a convert.

As I sit at my laptop and write this article, I am wondering why I was that way. For one thing, my mom and dad were also not huggers. I never saw them hug, even once, although they might have. Nor did I ever hear them tell one another, "I love you," and I don't remember them telling

I have never been a touchy-feely guy, both growing up and me that they loved me, although I never doubted that love was a major part of my family. The same thing was true of my first marriage. My wife, now deceased, also came from a family not used to giving hugs or telling one another, "I love you." I regret that, because those words are very powerful. My life would have been very different had those words and hugs had been a part of me. I thank God that I now know more about love than I ever have. A demonstration of love touches me in many ways and makes my life so much better. I must ignore those regrets and make the most out of what I now know. I love you.

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Love one  
♥ ANOTHER ♥  
as I have  
LOVED  
you  
-JOHN 15:12



**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**  
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.



**Council 17249 Divine Mercy of Jesus Officers for 2022-2023**

- |                                                    |                             |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
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| Worthy Grand Knight<br>and Community Director      | Sir Knight Bill McClelland  |
| Worthy Deputy Grand Knight<br>and Program Director | Sir Knight Pete McCabe      |
| Worthy Chancellor                                  |                             |
| Worthy Recorder                                    | Sir Knight Rocco Totino     |
| Worthy Financial Secretary                         | Sir Knight Fred Belzel      |
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| Worthy Advocate<br>and Membership Director         | Sir Knight Gregg Appel Pkg  |
| Worthy Warden                                      | Knight Gene Sanders         |
| Worthy Inside Guard 1                              | Sir Knight Pete Ganio       |
| Worthy Inside Guard 2                              | Sir Knight Ed Wirth         |
| Worthy Outside Guard                               | Sir Knight Joe Moore        |
| 1-year Trustee                                     | Knight Jim Blackwell        |
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