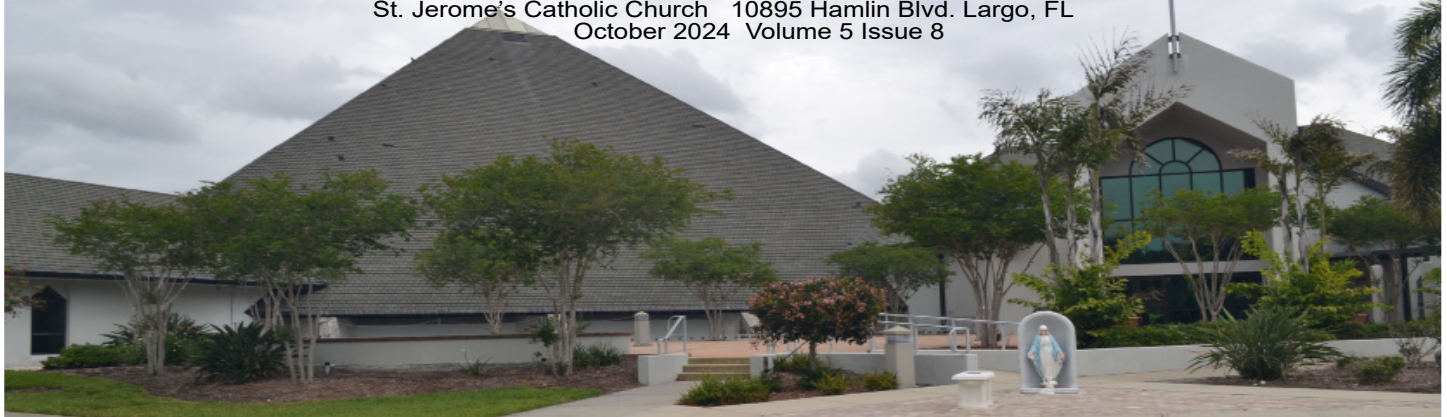


# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

*Divine Mercy of Jesus* Council 17249

St. Jerome's Catholic Church 10895 Hamlin Blvd. Largo, FL  
October 2024 Volume 5 Issue 8



## October is the Month of the Rosary

The rosary has roots in several early Christian prayer traditions. They share similar formats to the rosary with repetitive structures and prayers.

- Third-century Christian hermits and monks in Egypt (known as Desert Fathers) used stones and later prayer ropes to keep track when praying the 150 Psalms.

- Various forms of "the Jesus Prayer" (such as "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.") became popular. The short prayer was said over and over again in a type of mantra while counting beads.

- The Our Father was also prayed 150 times, using a string of beads with five decades referred to as a Paternoster (Latin for "Our Father")

The Hail Mary prayer came together slowly. It took more than a thousand years. The earliest version simply added Mary's name to the message delivered by the angel Gabriel to Mary: "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee."

Around 1050 AD, the words Elizabeth used to greet Mary during the Visitation were added: "Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." In 1261, Pope Urban IV added the name of Jesus to the end of Elizabeth's words.

St. Peter Canisius published the Hail Mary in his 1555 Catechism with almost the entire final petition: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners."

Eleven years later, the Catechism of the Council of Trent added "now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

The version of the Hail Mary we pray today was given official approval in 1568.

"Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women; and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

The use of prayer beads almost universally is to allow the person to keep track of the number of prayers that have been said, while at the same time focusing on the deeper meaning of the prayers themselves.

While praying with beads certainly wasn't an original idea, it's a powerful reminder that everything before the coming of Jesus was preparing for that moment and that God yearns to transform everything into something holy, even something as ordinary as a small rope with some beads on it.



### FROM AROUND THE WORLD OF INTEREST TO CATHOLICS

Harvesting organs: Bioethics is in a disastrous situation

Fed. court allows Alabama ban on puberty blockers

St. Teresa of Ávila's body is still incorrupt

Catholic schools move toward phone-free education

Drought drives new crisis of child hunger in Ethiopia

ACLU asks court for interview of S.C. death row inmate

About 25 abortions were done in 'abortion van' at DNC

Houston workers find newborn baby left to die in ditch

New study confirms Shroud of Turin is 2,000 years old

Canada: Euthanasia goes 'from exceptional to routine'

47% of world's 280 million migrants are Christians

## FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND KNIGHT



Pete McCabe

Brothers,  
September has flown by with a lot of activity by our council.

We started the month with a Grotto clean-up. On future Saturday mornings, we'll be assisting the St Jerome Early Childhood Center (ECC) with some of their maintenance chores such as upkeep of their playground equipment, repainting their sign, and other landscaping issues.

Our Knights' Breakfast continues to be a success as the parish community comes together to enjoy a yummy meal. We also

treated our Bingo players to free hot dogs, chips, and soda along with a free game to say thank you to our regular players and volunteers who show up each week. While Hurricane Helene forced the cancellation of a Bingo session, our council's commitment to Bingo remains strong.

Our council supported the local community with our annual Coats for Kids program. Our community program director, Pete Ganio, and our Deputy Grand Knight, Bill Bannon, delivered the 48 boys' and girls' lightweight jackets to a local charity that provide clothing to low-income families.

Additionally, our council supported Special Olympics - Florida by supporting their local golf event. In addition to the volunteer hours, our council also provided a check for \$500.

Looking ahead to October, our council will support the parish Trunk or Treat event (Oct 25) by providing hot dogs, chips, and water to the families that attend.

Additionally, the council will be conducting a Membership Drive the weekend of October 26/27. Please help out during the Mass you usually attend. Our Membership Director, Jim Cullinan, will be seeking volunteers soon.

Thanks for all you do!

**LAUGHTER**  
~ is the best ~  
**MEDICINE**

"I'm not superstitious...but I am a littlestitious."

"Here's something to think about: How come you never see a headline like 'Psychic Wins Lottery?'"

"I'm sure wherever my dad is, he's looking down on us. He's not dead, just very condescending."

"When my kids become wild and unruly, I use a nice, safe playpen. When they're finished, I climb out."

Due to my time alone, I finished three books yesterday. And believe me, that's a lot of coloring.

What did our parents do to kill boredom before the internet? I asked my 26 brothers and sisters and they didn't know either.

There's nothing scarier than that split second when you lose your balance in the shower and you think, "They are going to find me naked."

Today, I melted an ice cube with my mind just by staring at it. It took a lot longer than I thought it would.

## FROM THE DESK OF OUR CHAPLAIN



Fr. Mike

What does it mean to live a Catholic life? Part III

I was ordained on May 19th, 1979, and I was assigned to Nativity Catholic Church in

Brandon. One of my main responsibilities for my 4 years there, was to work and teach in our Catholic School. It was a blast working with kindergarten through eighth grade. Monthly we would have an ALL SCHOOL Mass when all the grades attended. Dur-

ing the other weeks, we would have grade level Masses. The Pastor always celebrated ALL these Masses. One day, he asked if I would do the All School Mass for the feast of ALL Saints? I jumped at the opportunity.

While I was preparing my homily, I was trying to THINK like someone in grade and middle school about what it means to be a saint. I think MOST students and even most adults, think you have to be DEAD to be a saint and then you must have lived a REALLY, REALLY, REALLY holy life.

Saint Paul calls the members of the Church, Holy Ones (Colossians 1:1-2), or SAINTS, while they are LIVING. I was fascinated by this idea and tried to figure out a way of explaining it to the students. During prayer the

idea that each of us is called by our Baptism, to be a SAINT-in-TRAINING came to me. Sometimes you and I are Saintly and other times we are STILL in TRAINING, put them together and we become Saints-in-Training!

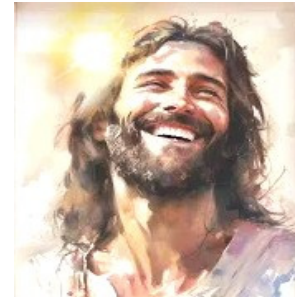
I don't know how it went over with the students but ever since that day, I continually use: Saints-in-Training as a way of describing my discipleship and I continue to use it to call others to live their Baptismal Covenant with the Trinity. On October 31, we will be celebrating All Hallows Eve, or ALL SAINTS EVE (Halloween), may we use this time to REFLECT on our past year as a Saints-in-Training and recommit on ALL SAINTS DAY, November 1, to another year of being a SAINT-in TRAINING!



Norman Cousins



LAUGHTER  
~ is the best ~  
• MEDICINE •



*Editor's Note: Brothers, this article is placed here from the archives of our council's newsletter. I find it inspiring and hope you do too. Jim Hand*

Norman Cousins was born to Jewish immigrant parents. At age 11, he was misdiagnosed with tuberculosis and placed in a sanatorium. Despite this, he was an athletic youth, and he claimed that as a young boy he set out to discover exuberance.

Cousins attended Theodore Roosevelt High School, graduating on February 3, 1933. He edited the high school paper, "The Square Deal," where his editing abilities were already in evidence. Cousins received a bachelor's degree from Columbia University. He joined the staff of the New York Post in 1934, and in 1935 was hired by Current History as a book critic. He later ascended to the position of managing editor. He also befriended the staff of the Saturday Review, which had its offices in the same building, and by 1940, joined the staff of that publication as well. He was named editor-in-chief in 1942, a position he would hold until 1972. Under his direction, circulation of the publication increased from 20,000 to 650,000.

Cousins joined the University of Cali-

fornia, faculty in 1978 and became an adjunct professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences. He taught ethics and medical literature. His research interest was the connection between attitude and health.

Cousins did research on the biochemistry of human emotions, which he long believed were the key to human beings' success in fighting illness. It was a belief he maintained even as he battled in 1964 a sudden-onset case of a crippling connective tissue disease, which was also referred to as a collagen disease. Experts confirmed this diagnosis and added a diagnosis of ankylosing spondylitis. Told that he had one chance in 500 of recovery, Cousins developed his own recovery program. He took massive intravenous doses of Vitamin C and had self-induced bouts of laughter brought on by films of the television show Candid Camera and by various comic films. His positive attitude was not new to him, however. He had always been an optimist, known for his kindness to others, and his robust

love of life itself. "I made the joyous discovery that ten minutes of genuine belly laughter had an anesthetic effect and would give me at least two hours of pain-free sleep," he reported. "When the pain-killing effect of the laughter wore off, we would switch on the motion picture projector again and not infrequently, it would lead to another pain-free interval." His struggle with that illness and his discovery of laugh therapy[ is detailed in his 1979 book *Anatomy of an Illness as Perceived by the Patient*.

In a commentary questioning whether Cousins cured his disease, Florence Ruderman wrote, "It seems entirely possible that what Cousins had was an acute attack of an arthritic condition which then subsided, slowly, but quite naturally."

Later in life, he and his wife fought his heart disease, again with exercise, a daily regimen of vitamins, and the good nutrition. He wrote a collection of best-selling non-fiction books on illness and healing.

## Six Unusual Protocols from the Vatican

### 1) What Happens When the Pope Dies?

Without modern medicine to confirm, they had to make sure there was no mistake declaring the papacy vacant. "When the pope died, one of the rituals is that the camerlengo would take a silver hammer and tap the pope on the head three times,"

### 2) You Can Eat What! During Lent

Unique dispensations around the world allow for the consumption of aquatic mammals on Fridays during Lent. "There are certain animals that you can eat that you would never guess that you're allowed to eat muskrat or alligator."

### 3) Only Certain Women Can Wear White To Meet the Pope

During papal audiences, there is a particular privilege involving dress

code. "There are only seven [now eight] women in the world who are allowed to wear white when meeting the pope," Scheel explains.

This rare honor, known as the "privilege du blanc," is traditionally reserved for certain Catholic queens and princesses.

4) Here's something out of this world—literally! A Catholic bishop is in charge of the moon. This bizarre rule originates from the time when newly discovered territories would fall under the bishopric from where the expedition departed.

Since the Apollo missions launched from within the Diocese of Orlando, technically, the Bishop of Orlando is the bishop of the moon.

5) Like many religious institutions, the Vatican has a strictly enforced dress code.

Knees and shoulders must be covered at all times. While short-sleeved shirts are permitted, long sleeves are ideal. Hats are also not allowed. Visitors whose clothing doesn't meet modesty standards are refused entry.

6) The Vatican offers a free cloakroom where you can store items that aren't allowed on the grounds.

They'll even store bottles of alcohol and food, a service that you won't find in many American cloakrooms. There are a few things that they won't store, though. Some items are simply too much of a liability; no one at the Vatican wants to be responsible for your cash, jewelry, or electronics. Others are a little more confusing. For example, you can't store your coat or jacket in the cloakroom, but the Vatican's rules don't specify why.

## A Conversation with Kevin Manning about the Controversial Amendment 4



Brothers, The most pressing issue is the Florida Constitutional Amendment 4, which we will be voting on in the

next few weeks. Your council voted to fund \$ 500 to purchase 100-yard signs that say, Vote No on 4.

Let's face it. In a recent poll Floridians approved by 69% some form of abortion. The amendment is intentionally vague and lacks definitions. (See Tampa Bay Times article 9/25/24).

It is my experience that many if not most of the 69% are not in favor of the amendment once they understand what it means. If passed, it will

allow late-term abortions.

Again, the wording is intentionally vague and replaces doctor with medical provider. As one woman told me, "I am a medical provider. I am a dental hygienist." This attitude is unsafe for women.

Parental consent would be replaced with parental notification. Imagine this conversation from a 14-year-old, "Mom, Dad, you will soon get notified that I had an abortion today."

We have our work cut out for us. I believe most people are not in favor of amendment 4 once they are educated.

Please take it upon yourself to have a conversation with a family member, friend, anyone so they will be informed.

I am here to help. I have brochures, yard signs, and will speak to any group you can get me in front of. In addition, I will be speaking before all the masses the weekend of Oct 4-5. We

should have yard signs to pass out plus flyers.

Call me 813-300-5202 or email me at [kevin.manning@myifpadvisor.com](mailto:kevin.manning@myifpadvisor.com).

### A prayer to end abortion

Lord God, I thank you today for the gift of my life, and for the lives of all my brothers and sisters. I know there is nothing that destroys more life than abortion, yet I rejoice that You have conquered death by the Resurrection of Your Son. I am ready to do my part in ending abortion. Today I commit myself never to be silent, never to be passive, never to be forgetful of the unborn. I commit myself to be active in the pro-life movement, and never to stop defending life until all my brothers and sisters are protected, and our nation once again becomes a nation with liberty and justice not just for some, but for all, through Christ our Lord. Amen!

## Tube-Fed Catholic Consumes Christ in the Eucharist

Every night for 11 months, Paul Gannucci prayed the Rosary with his family and then practiced receiving Holy Communion. He received the Eucharist for the first time a few days before his 21st birthday. Unlike other first Communicants, the Host is the only solid food he has ever consumed. Gannucci was born with Noonan syndrome, a genetic disorder that affects a person's physical development and often includes heart defects. Because he was too weak to eat on his own as a baby, doctors inserted a feeding tube into Paul's stomach when he was 3 months old. He underwent heart surgery at 6 months, and then received a heart transplant shortly after his first birthday.

Gannucci has attended Mass with his family all his life, and over the years, he repeatedly expressed his desire to receive the Body of Christ.

Father Richard Kunst, pastor of Paul's parish has known the young man since he was born. Although aware of the daunting challenge Paul faced, he decided to help him receive the Blessed Sacrament.

"I knew Paul's faith was strong and his desire was strong," Father Kunst said.

"Paul has a very simple faith," Rob Gannucci said. "He has great trust. We have been wanting Paul to receive all the sacraments for years, and we put it in God's hands to determine

when that time would come."

Fearing a negative reaction to the strong anti-rejection medication Paul needs because of the heart transplant, the Gannuccis did not want him to receive the Eucharist under the species of wine. Instead, Father Kunst gave them pieces of unconsecrated hosts so Paul could practice receiving in that form. Night after night, Rob gave his son a little water and a small fragment of a wafer.

"Initially, it was really hard for him," Rob said. "He would gag and retch even over that tiny piece."

"Paul never gave up," Rob Gannucci said. "We did it every single night, and, eventually, over the weeks and months, he got a little better at it." Paul gradually trained himself to swallow bigger and bigger pieces — until he could consume a host roughly the size of a quarter.

Meanwhile, Paul asked to be confirmed too and so Father Kunst sought permission from a Bishop to administer the sacrament.

"He gave me the faculties to confirm Paul, who was already a baptized Catholic," Father Kunst explained. "Paul was the driving force for all these things."

Once everything was in order, Father Kunst scheduled Paul's first Communion and confirmation. Paul's immediate family and many extended family members gathered at the church.



During his homily that morning, Father Kunst explained the unfolding event to approximately 45 weekday Mass attendees. Their response touched the priest. Some parishioners wept when they witnessed Paul receive the sacrament.

"People were blown away," Father Kunst said.

Since his first Communion, Paul has regularly received the Blessed Sacrament on Sundays and at weekday Masses whenever possible. It remains the only solid food he consumes.

Rob Gannucci said he hopes his son's story will impact other Catholics..



## Knight of the Month for August



Mike Keeser

GK Pete McCabe

Brother Mike Keeser is the August Knight of the Month. Mike has been working hard for the council and the parish. Mike was a great help in getting the new air conditioner up the steps of the second-floor cottage. The use of this hand truck made the job much easier. Additionally, Mike has been supporting his son's eagle scout project at the new Fr. Sean Garden project. A group of volunteers planted trees, shrubbery and plants around the area. Furthermore, Brother Keeser is also working hard coordinating the construction of the two water features for the Fr. Sean Garden. I hope you get a chance to view the progression of this project and see the great works being accomplished. Congratulate Mike the next time you see him.



A cross was formed from steel beams of the fallen World Trade Center after it collapsed from being hit by a hijacked plane.

## Father Explains How His Son, Who Has Down Syndrome, Has Changed His Life

A father and Catholic journalist explained in the keynote address for the annual gala of FIRE Foundation of Denver, an advocacy group for including children with disabilities at Catholic schools, how his son, who has Down syndrome, has changed his family.



Mr. Maier is the author of *True Confessions: Voices of Faith from a Life in the Church*. He is a senior fellow in Catholic studies at the D.C.-based Ethics and Public Policy Center. He is also the former editor-in-chief for the National Catholic Register.

In the address, Maier shared that he and his wife, Suann, have been married for almost 54 years, and their son Dan, who has Down syndrome, is one of the reasons Suann and Fran's marriage has been filled with happiness.

Dan has difficulties with words and expressing himself, Maier said. "But Dan, like a lot of persons with special needs, has a particular capacity for the religious," he continued. "The pipes of his spirit don't have the everyday blockage of worries that we call normal." He explained that Dan prays the rosary multiple times a week and has a devotion to Mother Angelica.

"His imperfection opens a hole in the world that lets God in — not just into Dan's life, but into ours," Maier said.

Further, Dan has given his three adult siblings a gift, Maier said: "They'll never disdain the weak. They'll never ignore the disabled. They'll never have contempt for the imperfect."

"The imperfect among us — people whom the world sees as somehow less than human — are the test of just how 'human' the rest of us really are," he said. "And it's the task of the Church to speak for those people and to care for them."

Maier's appeal to those at the gala was to generously support the FIRE Foundation, an organization that works to promote and expand inclusivity for children with disabilities in Catholic schools.

He described Catholic schools as "vital" in the present age, for all Catholic children, including those with disabilities.

He said, "The body is mortal. The soul is forever. If the life of an unborn child with Down syndrome is worth saving, then that soul is also worth feeding, and guiding, and forming deeply in the love of Jesus Christ."



## Natural Burial Sites Are Beginning to Return to Catholic Cemeteries

Natural burials — sometimes called "green" burials — have been growing in popularity in the U.S. in recent years, including at Catholic cemeteries. The practice seeks to use fewer resources than modern burial practices, including steel-free caskets and burial directly into the earth rather than encased by a concrete vault.

The archdiocese said that natural burials emphasize simplicity and environmental responsibility by allowing the body to return to the earth naturally.

The archdiocese said it had set aside a section of the St. Michael Cemetery in Palatine, Illinois, for the natural burial plots.

The area will offer winding walking trails, native plants, and a mixture of meadow and forest terrain.

Burials in the natural plots will be memorialized with a choice of flush lawn-level memorial, an engraved

boulder, or a boulder with a bronze nameplate," the archdiocese said.

Ted Ratajczyk, the executive director of Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Chicago, said in the release that the archdiocese was honored to offer a new natural burial option that not only respects the environment but also aligns with Catholic teachings for treating the human body with dignity.

The National Funeral Directors Association says on its website that the death-care industry as a whole generated about \$16 billion in the latest annual data.

Just over \$3.3 billion of that amount is linked to cemeteries and crematories. Industry estimates, meanwhile, indicate that cemeteries bury tens



A grave marker in a natural burial section at St. Michael the Archangel Cemetery

of thousands of tons of steel coffins every year, along with several million gallons of "embalming fluids" such as formaldehyde and methanol.

On its website, the archdiocesan cemetery office says that natural burials represent a return to tradition.

## Ronald Reagan's Catholic Son Michael Reveals That His Mother Was a Third Order Dominican

"My mother, Jane Wyman, was buried as a Dominican to the Third Order," he revealed. "Most people don't know that."

"My actress mother was absolutely terrific," he said. "There were a lot of Catholics around my dad and her."

In response to a question about his thoughts on Saint John Paul II's relationship with President Reagan, Michael said, "It was magic."

"I like to tell the story about when my dad and Pope John Paul were shot. But what did the two of them do? The two of them forgave the men who tried to murder them," Michael said.



Jane Wyman



President Reagan



Michael Reagan

"They honored The Lord's Prayer." "I feel that because they honored God through the Lord's Prayer--or they forgave--God worked with them, and ended up bringing peace to Poland, wrapping it around, and bringing down the Berlin wall." Michael concluded by explaining that

his dad did not attend Sunday church services until after he left office. He said President Reagan did not want to put anyone in harm's way after the assassination attempt on his life.

However, he said that after my dad left office, "He never missed any Sunday

from that point on, and when he had Alzheimer's and couldn't go, the pastor would go to the house and minister to my dad."

"Every time that happened" the pastor said, "I went to minister to the president, and he ministered to me."



High sodium, high cholesterol, lots of toxins. Your blood test is remarkably similar to a potato chip.

## Three Legends Share Their Near-Abortion Stories



Sylvester Stallone, the star and writer of Rocky, shocked his daughters during an interview when he mentioned that

his mother tried to abort him. His daughters, Sophia and Sistine, interviewed him on their podcast, which tells Stallone's life story. He started talking about his childhood in a home where "everybody was extremely unhappy with who they were." He said his mother and father "were not parents" and not interested in raising children. Sistine said that she noticed in the documentary that he mentioned that his mother was nervous to have him, and she asked if he ever felt unwanted as a child. He said that he felt hesitant sharing the story, but that his mother would regularly tell him "The only reason you're here is because the hanger

didn't work." She also told him, "If there was really something wrong with your brain," she would have left him near an open window to freeze to death, "because I'd be doing you a favor."

"I almost thought she was joking." His daughter Sophia responded, "Of course, I mean, what type of mother says that to her child?"

Stallone is not the first star to open up about narrowly escaping abortion. Jack Nicholson, famous for his lead in *The Shining*, was conceived when his

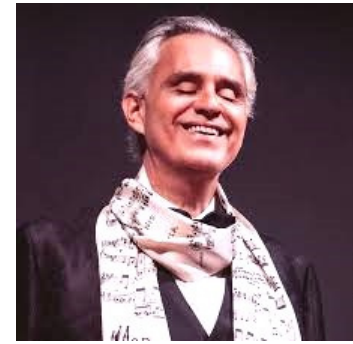


mother was only 17, and his grandparents raised him, acting as if his mother was his older sister. A pro-life ministry, Birth

Mother Ministries, shares that Ni-

cholson said he is "positively against" abortion, adding, "I don't have the right to any other view. My only emotion is gratitude, literally, for my life."

Opera singer Andrea Bocelli told his audiences a similar story, Catholic News Agency reports, where a mother was pressured to abort because



her unborn child had a disability, but she decided not to.

"That woman was my mother, and I was the

child. Maybe I'm partisan, but I can say that it was the right choice," Bocelli said.

He said he hoped his testimony would help other mothers in similar situations.

## Parishioner Joins Knights of Columbus



Harry Kyne and GK Pete McCabe

Meet Harold "Harry" Kyne. He has been a parishioner at St Jerome's for 40 years. He has served in the donut ministry and most recently was on the Parish finance committee for 6 years. Before he retired he served as City of Seminole Finance Director and Administrator for 21 years.

Harry likes to golf and fish but finds the time scarce as he and his wife

watch their twin 21 month old grandkids 3 days a week.

Harry wanted to be a Knight because he saw how active our council is and was impressed at all we accomplish. His father was a 4th degree knight in Sun City.

Make sure when you see Harry to welcome him to our brotherhood.

## My Body, My Choice

You have full control of your body; you always have, and you always will. The problem is that you want full control over another life that you created because you lost control of your body.

That new life is not responsible for your poor decision.

There are multiple ways to control your body and prevent the forming of a new life.

Failure to do so should not be blamed on that innocent life. That new life is not your body. It's a new body growing inside you.





## Actor Jon Voight Discusses His Catholic Faith

Actor Jon Voight is an outspoken Christian known for his roles in many films, including the "National Treasure" series, "Mission Impossible," and "Holes," to name a few.

This August 30, the Academy Award-winning actor was back on the big screen in the new biopic, "Reagan," portraying a former KGB agent, Viktor Petrovich.

Petrovich tells the story of President Ronald Reagan, especially regarding the former president's role in the Cold War against the Soviet Union.

Voight sat down for a brief discussion about his Catholic faith, his role in the film, why he chose to take part in it, and what he believes Christians can do about defending religious lib-

erty.

"I'm always very attentive to every behavior I have and I'm always scared that I might offend God," he said about living his faith. "You know they say, 'Fear of the Lord?' That's what I got. So you look at me and say, 'He's a guy who's afraid of the Lord,' I'll tell you that."

"But it's not unpleasant--that fear is just respect, you know. I feel so bad if I'm not being properly respectful to the truth and to good and all of that," Voight continued.

"But I know that I would be forgiven because I'm making a tremendous effort," he reiterated. "God looks down on me and says, 'That's a guy who's trying.'"



Jon Voight

## The Heart-Warming Adoption Story of Jessica Long, a Paralympic Swimmer Who Advocates for Adoption

Paralympic swimmer Jessica Long, one of the most decorated female athletes in American history, competed for a fifth time this fall. Adopted from Russia, Long is a pro-adoption advocate who has spoken movingly against abortion.

In her athletic career, Long has earned 29 medals, including 16 gold, in swimming. Despite congenital defects that required her to have a double amputation when she was just 18 months old, her adopted family would not let her physical differences limit her potential.

Now, the athlete uses her platform to promote adoption.

Jessica's birth mother, Natalia Valtysheva, was 17 years old when she was pregnant with Jessica. At the time, Valtysheva was living far from her parents, and doctors said she would not be able to take care of the

baby. So the teen mother took Jessica to a nearby orphanage.

"In my heart, I did want to take her home," she said. She and Jessica's father, Oleg Valtyshev, married soon after, hoping they could bring Jessica back home in a few years.

Jessica's adoptive parents, Steve and Beth Long, had two children and wanted to have more, but were struggling with fertility.

After praying and discerning, they adopted Jessica when she was 13 months old, along with Joshua, a 3-year-old boy with a cleft palate, who was also from Russia.

Steve said that he and Beth had been concerned about Jessica's medical needs, thinking it would be difficult for her to be mobile.

"Very quickly—it didn't take but a year or two—we were wondering why we were so concerned, because she



can do everything everybody else did and, to some extent, a lot better," Steve said.

Long also expressed gratitude for adoption. "If my mom had not given me up," she said, "I wouldn't be where I am now. I wouldn't be here. And so, I really hope that people see my story and realize that adoption can be a wonderful thing."

My former wife said that she missed me. Normally that would be a good thing, but then I heard her reloading.

My wife just stopped and said, "You weren't even listening, were you?"  
I thought to myself...  
"That's a pretty strange way to start off a conversation."

I made a huge to-do list today. I just need to figure out who's going to do it.



# Woman Sees Signs of Opening for Catholic Women Priests

Anne Tropeano decided she could no longer wait.

Three years ago, inspired by her deep prayer and spiritual formation in the Ignatian tradition, she answered the call she'd been hearing for years to be ordained as a Roman Catholic priest — even though that meant breaking the church's ban on ordination of women and facing excommunication.

Today she goes by "Father Anne," after her ordination through the Association of Catholic Women Priests. Her vocation has led her not only to pursue priestly ministry, but to advocate for Catholic women who hear the same call. "I have a vocation to priesthood, but since the church is blocking my way to live out priesthood, I have a call within a call — to bring the church into alignment with God's desire for women's full participation," she said.

Father Anne's call may sometimes have seemed idealistic and unachievable. But she sees a special moment for the church, an opening for real progress.

"Calls for women to be ordained came from around the world," said Father Anne. "The call was for ordination of women at every level: deacons,

priests and bishops. People are not free to speak openly about this, but the call is real."

For Father Anne, the reality is clear: Women throughout the world are being called to priesthood. She answered that call even at the cost of excommunication, but she insists that she is still a part of the church, loves it deeply and believes that it can change.

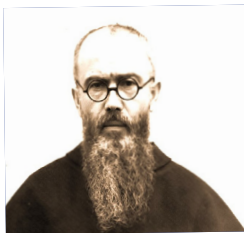
"Excommunication is the harshest punishment by canon law to be given to a member of the church," she said. She still attends Mass in the institutional church, wears her collar and receives a blessing rather than communion. "One can't receive sacraments, work for the church or volunteer for the church," she said. "But they can't remove me from the church; I will not be moved."

She said that the God Says Now movement is working with great respect for the institutional church and the synodal process: "We are appealing to everyone's humanity in this historic movement ... God Says Now is working in the church to advance women's participation at every level — deacon, priest and bishop." Father Anne believes that one of the most problematic aspects of the dis-



cernment question is the way it has been framed. "To the question 'Can the Church ordain women?' many popes have given a clear answer: 'no.' The question has to be rephrased: 'Is God calling women to ordained ministries?' Asking the question in this way makes the Holy Spirit the protagonist. It also allows a more honest look at how women have been fighting for full participation for a long time."

## Seven Statements from St. Maximilian Kolbe



1. "Never be afraid of loving the Blessed Mother. You can't love her more than Jesus did."

2. "Let us remember that love lives through sacrifice and is nourished by giving. Without sacrifice, there is no love."

3. "The most deadly poison of our time is indifference. This happens, although the praise of God should know no limits. Let us strive, therefore, to praise Him to the greatest extent of our powers."

4. "He remains among us until the end of the world. He dwells on so many altars, though often of-fended and profaned."

5. "The Cross is the school of love."

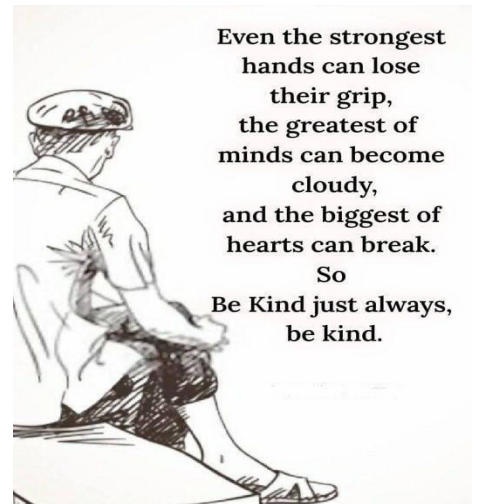
6. "When you kneel before and altar, do so in such a way that others may be able to recognize before Whom you kneel."

7. "If angels could be jealous of us, they would do so for one reason: Holy Communion."

**I am not a  
“potential human.”**



**I am a human with potential!  
I was created by God,  
fearfully and wonderfully  
made in his image, known  
by my Creator, loved and  
destined for greatness!**



Even the strongest  
hands can lose  
their grip,  
the greatest of  
minds can become  
cloudy,  
and the biggest of  
hearts can break.  
So  
Be Kind just always,  
be kind.

**Never Forget**

nothing is  
more powerful than  
prayer, nothing  
is stronger  
than faith, and  
nothing is greater  
than God.

**Amen!**



## AP Reports Nationwide Expansion of Pro-Life Maternity Homes

According to a report by the Associated Press, pro-life maternity homes have been growing and thriving since the Supreme Court struck down *Roe v. Wade* in June 2022.

“There has been a nationwide expansion of maternity homes in the two years since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* and the federal right to abortion,” wrote AP religion reporter Tiffany Stanley.

Stanley quoted Maternity Housing Coalition Director Valerie Harkins, who called the growth of maternity homes across the country “a significant increase.”

MHC is part of Heartbeat International, the largest network of pregnancy resource centers (PRCs) in the world.

“There are now more than 450 maternity homes in the U.S, many of them are faith-based,” wrote Stanley. In her initial report, Stanley recounted the case of Meryem Bakache who,

with her newborn son, moved into Mary’s Center, a Fredericksburg, Virginia, maternity home that is part of Harkins’ MHC network. Bakache had previously considered abortion.

“Newly arrived in the United States from Morocco,” Stanley wrote, Bakache spoke little English and lived in a crowded apartment with family in northern Virginia while her husband attended college in West Virginia.

“Where can I live with this baby?” she recalled thinking. “What can I give him? I don’t have nothing.”

While pregnant, Bakache came across a pro-life office that gave her a free ultrasound.

This experience helped convince the mother to choose life.

Bakache remarked on seeing the first



ultrasound image of her son, “When I see my baby, just like everything changed.”





# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

## Council 17249 Divine Mercy of Jesus Officers for 2024-2025

Chaplain  
Grand Knight  
Deputy Grand Knight  
Chancellor  
Recorder  
Treasurer  
Advocate  
Warden  
Inside Guard  
Outside Guard  
1 Year Trustee  
2 Year Trustee  
3 Year Trustee  
Program Director  
Membership Director  
Faith Director  
Family Director  
Community Director  
Life Director  
District Deputy  
Field Agent  
Newsletter Editor

Fr. Mike O'Brien  
Pete McCabe  
Bill Bannon  
Greg Musick  
Rocco Totino  
Rich Pettit  
Peter Nunes  
Joe Ghezzi  
Wayne Nuñez  
Joe Moore  
Rick Hendrickson  
Bill McClelland pgk  
Jim Patton  
Bill Bannon  
Jim Cullinan  
Peter Nunes  
Mike Keeser  
Pete Ganio  
Kevin Manning  
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Tony Crevello  
Jim Hand