

APRIL 2026

From the Countryside

Hi friends,

Welcome back.

There's something about writing this way—slowly, intentionally—that feels different. More like sitting across from a friend than posting into the noise.

Since my last blog, life hasn't become quieter... but it has become deeper. God has been moving in the small, ordinary places. In early mornings. In unexpected conversations. In moments I almost rushed past. And I'm learning—day by day—to notice Him there. This space is becoming just that... a place to notice.

To share the real moments. The ones that don't always make sense yet. The ones that stretch, surprise, and sometimes even undo me a little. So wherever you are reading this—from a busy kitchen, a quiet office, or a moment you carved out just for yourself—I'm really glad you're here.

And I don't want this to feel one-sided. I want to be part of your world too. If you've started a blog, I would genuinely love to subscribe and follow along with your life. If something in your heart is stirring, I want to hear about it. If this blog brings up a thought, a question, or even just a simple "hi"—please reach out.

There's something really beautiful about choosing deeper connection in a world that moves so fast. So let's not just read each other's lives—let's walk together in them.

Let's catch up.



LIVING MY *Lia*

If you read my last blog, then you already met Nora.

Born on February 24... tiny, beautiful, brand new. And just five days later—she was baptized. Five days.

There's something so powerful about that. Before she could walk. Before she could speak. Before she could do anything at all... she was claimed. Marked. Welcomed into the family of God.

Baptism reminds us that grace isn't something we earn. It's something we're given. Freely. Fully. Completely.

And watching Nora receive that gift... it felt like witnessing heaven touch earth in the smallest, most sacred way.

Welcome home, sweet girl.

HE HAS RISEN

Forty days.

That's how long we, as Catholics, willingly step into the desert each year. Not because it's easy... but precisely because it isn't. Lent is an invitation into something deeper—into sacrifice, into discipline, into love. We don't just "give things up" for the sake of it. We choose intentionally. We fast, we add, we subtract... all to make space for God.

Because love that costs nothing, changes nothing.

Jesus didn't take the easy road to the Cross. And so, in our own small way, we walk with Him.

This year, I tried to do both—to add and to subtract. I added 6:00 AM Mass on Fridays. I committed to 20 minutes of reading... (I'll be honest, I didn't always follow through). And I fasted from Facebook and Instagram.

And what I noticed was this: when you remove something, there's a space left behind. And that space matters.

It's meant to be filled.
Filled with the Word.
Filled with His presence.
Filled with prayer.
Filled with actually being present... to the moment you're in.
Not scrolling. Not rushing. Just... being.

And now—He has risen.

Not just as a moment we celebrate, but as a truth we're invited to live. Resurrection doesn't just happen on Easter Sunday. It happens in us... every time we make space for Him to bring something back to life.



DEZIRÉE SLUSHER

Catholic Missionary

LEARNING TO BE STILL

I've had to face something recently: I don't know how to slow down. I'm a workaholic. I love to build, to create, to learn. My brain is constantly moving—reading, studying, planning, producing. And while none of that is bad... it became everything.

So I asked a different question. Not: What should I be doing?
But: What does my heart need? Or better yet...
What does the little girl inside of me want?
And almost instantly—the answer came.

Painting.

I used to paint as a kid. I wasn't too bad either—some of my work even made it into city hall (which, at the time, felt like the Louvre). So I decided to begin again.

I bought a paint-by-numbers kit... and of course, I went big. A massive 10x10 canvas. Something that will take months. And honestly? That's the point. It's slow. It's quiet. It asks nothing of me except to be present. No phone. No multitasking. No pressure to produce or perform.

Just color. Just stillness. Just... being.

And I think—it's healing something.
Maybe even helping my ADHD a little (we'll call that a bonus).

But more than anything, it's teaching me that not everything in life needs to be optimized.

Some things are meant to be savored.





Meet Harper! She needs a forever home.

So we started something small: St. Frances Paws.

The dream? To take at least one dog out each month. To give them a day of freedom, attention, and love. To remind them (and maybe ourselves too) what joy feels like.

If this tugs at your heart even a little—I want to invite you in. Sign up for Come Over Rover. Foster if you can. Or simply follow along on our Facebook page: [St. Frances Paws](#).

Because even a few hours... can change a life.

"ALL CREATURES ARE
BROTHERS AND SISTERS"
SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

ST. FRANCES PAWS 🐾

Okay... I have a confession.

If I ever win the lottery... there will be signs. And one of those signs will absolutely be a dog rescue.

I love dogs. Like, deeply. Unreasonably. The kind of love where you see a dog and immediately start planning your life together.

But... we already have three. Which means—according to my household—we are officially “at capacity.” (I have opinions about this.)

So instead, I asked: How can I still help?

Enter: a random, joy-filled day.

Kyleigh—my spiritual goddaughter—and I decided to go to a local rescue and take a dog out for the day. No big plan. Just a simple “yes.”

And that’s how we met Harper

We only had a few hours with her... but it felt like a whole little lifetime. We walked around downtown Carrollton, let her soak in the sunshine, introduced her to people, and—let’s be honest—showed her off a little. And something about it just stayed with me.

Because sometimes loving something doesn’t mean owning it. Sometimes it just means showing up... even for a moment



SOMETHING IS GROWING

There's something quietly, beautifully unfolding at the Catholic Center at the University of West Georgia.

And I don't think we've even seen the fullness of it yet.

This past January, 40 of our students attended SEEK Conference—a gathering of over 20,000 college students and young adults, all seeking something more. Watching them say “yes” to that experience... it did something.

And this year, we were also blessed with FOCUS Missionaries on campus.

They're leading Bible studies. Discipling students. Walking with them in a way that is personal, intentional, and transformative.

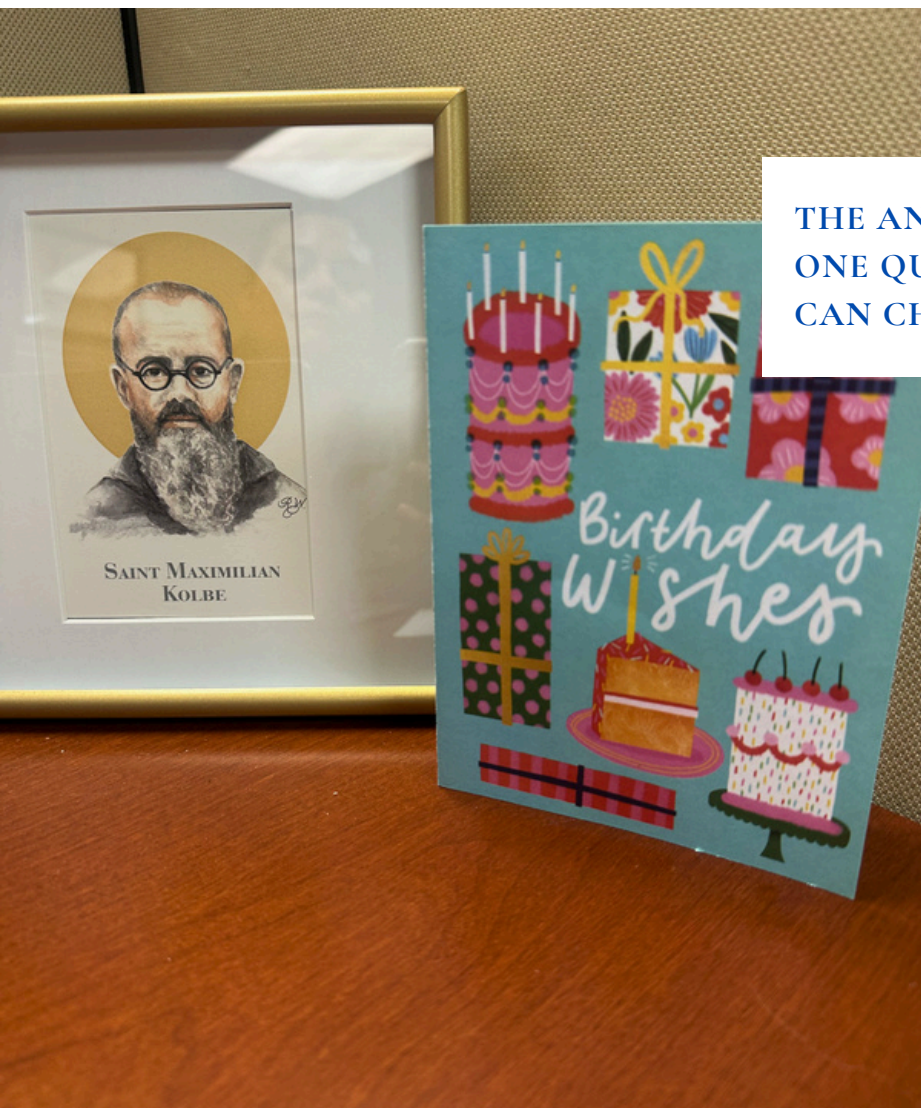
And I get to stand in this unique, sometimes stretching space—serving both Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church and the Catholic Center.

I won't pretend it's been seamless. Navigating two worlds, two rhythms, two sets of needs... there have been bumps. But even in the tension—I can see it.

The Lord is moving.
He's stirring hearts.
He's building community.
He's calling students into something deeper.

And with just four weeks left in the semester... I find myself both exhausted and incredibly expectant.

Because this? This is just the beginning.



THE ANNUNCIATION REMINDS US: ONE QUIET “YES” CAN CHANGE EVERYTHING.

March 25.

A date that now lives in my heart in a completely different way. It's not my birthday... but it feels like one. Because one year ago, I entered the Church. And not just on any day—but on the Feast of the Annunciation.

The day the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and announced that she would conceive and bear the Son of God. And everything changed with one word: Yes.

Mary didn't have all the answers. She didn't see the full picture. But she trusted. She surrendered. She allowed God to do something extraordinary through her ordinary life. And in many ways... that's the invitation given to each of us.

To say yes before we understand. To trust before we see. To allow God to write a story we couldn't have imagined on our own. I can't believe it's been a year. A year of being formed. A year of being stretched. A year of being loved in ways I didn't know I needed. And I'm still just at the beginning.