

# The Catholic Register



## Diocese Of Altoona-Johnstown

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### Priests Offer Suggestions for a More Meaningful Lenten Journey

By Tony DeGol  
The Catholic Register

Scripture tells us that when we pray or fast, we should do so in private.

On Ash Wednesday, however, we Catholics seek the very visible sign of ashes on our forehead.

“The significance of ashes goes way back to the Old Testament when we see that in Genesis, God told Adam that he is dust and to dust he will return, and so ashes are a sign of our mortality,” explained Father Mark Pattock, OFM Cap., Pastor of Saint John the Baptist Parish and Retreat Center in New Baltimore. “We can also look back to Job where he repents of his sin and puts on ashes and sackcloth.”

The first reading during Lent from Joel, Father Pattock continued, reminds us that receiving ashes is a public symbol of what we will do in the days to come.

“After Ash Wednesday, those practices will be private and done in secret so that only the Father sees and will repay you,” he added.

Father Pattock’s words come as the faithful of Altoona-Johnstown prepare for the penitential season of Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 26.

Although not a Holy Day of Obligation, pews throughout the diocese will likely be filled as individuals take advantage of Masses and other opportunities to receive ashes and begin the solemn 40 days.

Ash Wednesday and Good

Friday are days of fasting and abstaining from meat. The other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence.

According to Church law, those between the ages of 18 and 59 are called to fast. People 14 or older should abstain.

By giving up meat, Father Pattock advised, we show that we are counting on God to provide for our needs.

“We can really fast from anything that takes us away from the Lord,” he noted. “It doesn’t have to be meat, but the Church focuses on meat because that’s what gives us sustenance ultimately, but our trust is in the Lord to help us through this.”

Besides prayer and fasting, almsgiving is another component of Lent. Catholic Relief Services’ Rice Bowl is one of the most familiar Lenten programs.

According to CRS, alms donated to Rice Bowl support the agency’s work in dozens of countries, and a portion remains in the local diocese to help the poor.

Monsignor Michael Becker, Pastor of Saint John the Evangelist Parish in Altoona, is urging Catholics to embrace good works during Lent.

“Look for opportunities to serve within your parish or within your community,” he encouraged. “There are countless people who need your support through food banks and soup kitchens – any way that you can show your love to others, that’s the kind of sacrifice that the Lord wants for this Lenten season.”

Throughout Lent, parishes invite the faithful to pray the Stations of the Cross, which trace Jesus’ steps to His crucifixion.

In the coming weeks, Catholics are also encouraged to seek God’s healing and forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Besides the regular individual Confession opportunities, many parishes offer Communal Penance Services leading up to Easter.

The diocesan Office of Communications invited all parishes in the diocese to share their Ash Wednesday, Stations of the Cross, and Communal Penance Service schedules for Lent 2020. Schedules from the parishes that responded are available on the diocesan website and Facebook page. The schedule of Communal Penance Services can also be found on page 2 of this edition of *The Catholic Register*.



**ASHES:** Bishop Mark distributed ashes during Mass at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament on Ash Wednesday 2019. The Bishop will celebrate the Noon Mass at the Cathedral this Ash Wednesday, February 26.

### Diocese to Present Lenten Video Series

Are you looking to enrich your faith during Lent? The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown Office of Communications is offering a series of daily video reflections throughout the season. Presenters will offer brief thoughts on topics including prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and the Corporal Works of Mercy.

The presenters are:

- Bishop Mark L. Bartchak
  - Father Matthew Reese, Pastor of Our Lady of the Alleghenies Parish in Lilly and Diocesan Director of Vocations
  - Father Neil Dadey, Pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish in State College
  - Father Jude Brady, OSB, Pastor of Saint Benedict Parish in Carrolltown
  - Sister Joachim Anne Ferenchak, O. Carm., Administrator of Garvey Manor Nursing Home
  - Andre McCarville, Director of Missions and Family Life for the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown
  - Jeanne Thompson, coordinator of Christian Initiation for the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown.
- The reflections will be posted daily on Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

The Very Reverend John Byrnes, JCL, JV, Rector of the Basilica of Saint Michael the Archangel and Judicial Vicar for the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, will offer weekly Lenten reflections on *Proclaim!* TV. *Proclaim!* airs every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. on WATM ABC 23.

## Communal Penance Services Lent 2020

**MARCH 8**  
3:00 p.m. – Holy Spirit Parish in Lock Haven (Saint Agnes Site)

**MARCH 11**  
5:30 p.m. – Saint Mary (Immaculate Conception) Parish in Altoona  
6:30 p.m. – Saint Joseph Parish in Renovo

**MARCH 15**  
4:00 p.m. – Saint John the Evangelist Parish in Altoona  
5:00 p.m. – Saint Joseph Parish in Bellwood

**MARCH 22**  
7:00 p.m. – Basilica of Saint Michael the Archangel in Loretto  
7:00 p.m. – Saint John the Baptist Parish in New Baltimore

**MARCH 23**  
7:00 p.m. – Holy Family Parish in Portage

**MARCH 24**  
7:00 p.m. – Saint Francis Xavier Parish in Cresson

**MARCH 25**  
6:30 p.m. – Holy Name Parish in Ebensburg

**MARCH 26**  
6:00 p.m. – Saint Anthony of Padua Parish in Windber  
7:00 p.m. – Prince of Peace Parish in Northern Cambria

**MARCH 28**  
10:00 a.m. – Saint Therese of the Child Jesus Parish in Altoona

**MARCH 29**  
3:00 p.m. – Saint Mark Parish in Altoona  
4:00 p.m. – Saint Rose of Lima Parish in Altoona

**MARCH 30**  
6:00 p.m. – Saint John Vianney Parish in Mundy's Corner  
7:00 p.m. – Good Shepherd Parish in Port Matilda  
7:00 p.m. – Immaculate Conception Parish in New Germany  
7:00 p.m. – Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Altoona  
7:00 p.m. – Saint Matthew Parish in Tyrone

**MARCH 31**  
5:30 p.m. – Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Johnstown  
6:00 p.m. – Our Mother of Sorrows Parish in Johnstown  
6:30 p.m. – Saint Mary Parish in Nanty Glo

**APRIL 1**  
6:30 p.m. – Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Altoona  
7:00 p.m. – Saint Nicholas Parish in Nicktown

**APRIL 2**  
6:00 p.m. – Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Windber  
6:30 p.m. – Saint John Gualbert Cathedral in Johnstown  
7:00 p.m. – Saint Benedict Parish in Carrolltown  
7:00 p.m. – Saints Peter and Paul Parish in Philipsburg

**APRIL 5**  
2:00 p.m. – Our Lady of Victory Parish in State College  
4:00 p.m. – Saint Mary Parish in Hollidaysburg

**APRIL 6**  
5:00 p.m. – Saint Benedict Parish in Johnstown

**APRIL 8**  
7:00 p.m. – Our Lady of the Alleghenies Parish in Lilly

For updates, please visit the diocesan website or Facebook page

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## Faithful Invited to Basilica's Annual Lenten Mission

The Basilica of Saint Michael the Archangel in Loretto will conduct the Fifth Annual Lenten Mission in honor of Our Lady of Loretto beginning Sunday, March 22, and ending on Friday, March 27. The mission director will be the Reverend Father Joseph Sioli, Pastor of Saint Louise Church in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. The Mission schedule is as follows.

**Saturday/Sunday March 21-22** – Opening Homily at all Sunday Masses  
**Sunday March 22** – Mission Prayers, Homily and Benediction at 7 p.m.; Bishop Mark L. Bartchak presiding; Priests available for Confessions following services  
**Monday March 23** – 7 p.m. Mass with Mission Prayers and homily  
**Tuesday March 24** – 7 p.m. Mass with Mission Prayers and homily  
**Wednesday March 25** – 7 p.m. Mass with Mission Prayers and homily  
**Thursday March 26** – 7 p.m. Mass with Mission Prayers and homily  
**Friday March 27** – 7 p.m. Closing Mass with Mission Prayers and homily  
**Eucharistic Adoration** – 6 p.m. Each day of the Mission from Monday to Friday  
**Confessions** – 6 p.m. Each day of the Mission Monday through Friday

Father John Byrnes and the Parish Family of Saint Michael Basilica invite you to this fifth Mission, which has become an annual event each Lenten Season. Those attending the Mission are invited to place their petitions before the Blessed Mother. Those unable to attend are invited to send their petitions to the Basilica of Saint Michael the Archangel, P.O. Box 10, Loretto, PA 15940.

## Beloved Fulton County Mission Director Will Be Memorialized

By Tony DeGol  
The Catholic Register



**SR. MARGIE, Monahan**  
**CCW**

many people.

"She was always there," pointed out Babinsack, a member of Saint Stephen Parish in McConnellsburg. "She was always willing to help."

For all those reasons, the Saint Stephen parish family wants to memorialize Sister Margie in a special way, and they are inviting those from throughout the diocese who knew and loved Sister to join in the effort.

Sister Margie, a member of the Carmelite Community of the Word, a diocesan community of religious sisters, passed in 2018 following a brief illness.

She was the director of the Fulton County Mission for 29 years. That diocesan mission,

Carol Babinsack sums it up well when she says that the late Sister Margie Monahan was a cherished friend to

located at Saint Stephen Parish, serves individuals and families in need throughout Fulton County.

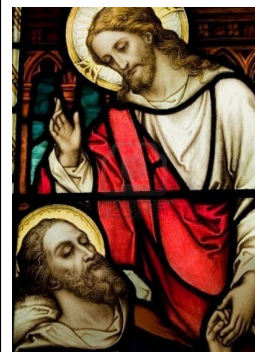
Sister Margie also dedicated her time and talent to ministry at Saint Stephen. "She was the heart of our Church," Babinsack added. "It's taking a lot of people to do what she was doing."

As a way of honoring Sister Margie, the parish launched "A Memory Walk in Honor of Sister Margie Monahan."

Individuals have the opportunity to purchase pavers that will be placed at the grotto and walkway in front of the church. Two paver sizes are available, and each paver can feature an inscribed message.

For more information and an order form, please visit the *Proclaim!* e-news site at [proclaim.dioceseaj.org](http://proclaim.dioceseaj.org) or the diocesan Facebook page.

Babinsack admits that Sister Margie never sought the spotlight. Still, the parish family wants to memorialize her and her enduring legacy of supporting others. "If someone needed something, she always found a way to get that something for that person," she said.



## HEALING MASS

**Monday**  
**March 16, 2020**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Very Rev. Alan Thomas**  
**CELEBRANT**

## CATHEDRAL OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

*For all in need of physical, emotional or spiritual healing and those who support them.*

**"I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly." John 10:10**

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

**MUSIC LED BY CATHEDRAL PRAYER GROUP**  
**MUSIC MINISTRY**

# ARISE Convocation Highlights God's Mercy and Forgiveness

By **Tony DeGol**  
The Catholic Register

participated in gatherings either on January 25 at Our Lady of the Alleghenies Parish in Lilly or January 26 at Saint Matthew Parish in Tyrone. The convocation theme was "Becoming Ambassadors of God's Mercy and Forgiveness."

During his presentation, Ascosi highlighted four words or terms beginning with the letter P. Using examples from his own life, he began with Purpose and how our purpose for knowing God can become obfuscated, which leads to a Problem, or sin, which separates us from God. Provision follows when the Lord can cleanse our heart and spirit, and then comes the individual's Personal Response.

Ascosi's talk set the table for the next chapter of our diocese's ARISE journey, which will unfold during Lent. Season four, titled *New Heart, New Spirit*, will explore the themes of Reconciliation and the transforming power of forgiveness. Participants will also be invited to reach out to those who have moved away from their Catholic faith.

"Maybe this is the season

that might be calling somebody's heart to say 'I'm sorry' to someone against whom they've been holding a grudge for several years or to let go of some burden that we've been carrying around in the backpack of our lives for quite some time," suggested Sister Linda LaMagna, CCW, diocesan ARISE coordinator.

ARISE consists of small faith-sharing groups at most parishes in the diocese that meet weekly during each six-week season. Catholic schools, religious education programs, Catholic campus ministry programs, prison ministry, and nursing facilities are also engaged in the renewal.

Those who did not participate in seasons one, two, or three, are welcome to participate in season four.

*Editor's Note: Watch video of Peter Ascosi inspiring presentation on the diocese's Proclaim! e-news site proclaim.dioceseaj.org.*



**PETER ASCOSI**

## ARISE Q & A: How is ARISE Strengthening Your Faith?



**DONNA STOY**

*Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish in Ashville*

*"It has deepened my faith personally with God and with my community in sharing life experiences."*



**JANE BECKER**

*Saint John the Evangelist Parish in Altoona*

*"ARISE has strengthened my faith through community, learning from others through our large groups."*



**MARY CASTO**

*Saint Clement Parish in Johnstown*

*"ARISE has led us to more prayerful small groups that have bonded in our working together within our parish."*



**MARY LESSARD**

*Basilica Parish in Loretto*

*"Our ARISE program has been a formation of a widows' group in our parish, and my experience has been great healing for myself."*



**RITA REDDEN**

*Saint Patrick Parish in Johnstown*

*"It has been like a window has opened. The people in my groups seem so other-centered."*

# SFU's March on the Mountain Personal for One Student

By Tony DeGol  
The Catholic Register

Jorden McClure happily braved the cold weather at the annual March on the Mountain.

He sported a hat and heavy coat, and he also had a Pittsburgh Steelers blanket keeping him snug in his wheel chair.

Like everyone else who turned out for the march, Jorden showed great enthusiasm for the sanctity of human life. But for him, the gathering was especially personal.

While Jorden's mother was pregnant with him, her doctor detected health concerns with the unborn child and advised against giving birth to the baby.

Obviously, Jorden's parents chose life.

"I'm very grateful," he said. "It's awesome that they said 'no.'"

Now a senior at Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School in Altoona, Jorden was among the many Catholic school students and adults who turned out for the annual pro-life event at Saint Francis University on January 22.

"We're trying to raise awareness that life is worth the struggle," said Patrick McCauley, a Saint Francis student and one of the organizers of the seventh annual event.

"It's just a celebration of life," added fellow student and organizer Spencer McElheny. "All life is precious and the fact that we see it being taken is something we want to see changed. For the past three years that I've been here on campus, the turnout just gets better and better."

Before marching around the mall on the sunny but very chilly morning, participants gathered inside Immaculate Conception Chapel on campus to pray the Rosary.

Father James Puglis, TOR, Director of Campus Ministry, reminded the crowd that their presence was by no means a waste of time.

"Being in the local commu-

nity and showing people that it's good to exist, that life is worth living, that life is worth defending is something that we ought to hold strong to," he stressed. "This is why we're here. We're not here to berate people, we're not here to tell them that they're wrong, we're not here to give despair to those who are in so much struggle and anxiety."

Father Puglis continued: "On this beautiful day, we remind people that days like today are worth existing for, and we should not cut off anything that will keep them from the goodness of being alive. This is difficult in our society, and yet it's what we are called to do."

That message was not lost on marcher Mia Wyland.

"I think every life should be cherished and loved," insisted the Bishop Carroll Catholic High School senior.

Following the march, Mass was celebrated in the chapel followed by a period of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.



**CELEBRATING LIFE:** Supporters of life gathered for the annual March on the Mountain on January 22 6at Saint Francis University in Loretto. Before the march, students from Saint Michael School in Loretto and others gathered inside the Immaculate Conception Chapel to pray the Rosary.



## Art Show Features Works by Catholic School Students



A celebration of the arts in our great Catholic schools is underway. The second annual Divinely Inspired Art Show kicked off on February 14 and will continue through March 2. More than 400 original works of art including drawings, paintings, and sculptures are being exhibited at the Bottleworks in the Cambria City neighborhood of Johnstown. An awards ceremony will be held on February 16 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. Student musicians from Bishop McCort Catholic High School will be featured during that ceremony, specifically those who play string and woodwind instruments. The public is invited to view the exhibit during the Bottleworks' regular hours.



### The Cathedral Charismatic Prayer Group 2020 Winter/Spring Schedule

**Location: Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament**

- Monday, February 17th - 7PM**
- Monday, March 16th - 7PM-Healing Mass**  
Fr. Alan Thomas – Celebrant
- Monday, April 13th - 7PM**
- Monday, May 18th - 7PM**

### The Cathedral Charismatic Prayer Group and The Bishop Guilfoyle Alive in the Spirit Student Group

- Location: Bishop Guilfoyle**
- Sunday, February 9th - 6PM**
- Sunday, March 29th - 6PM**
- Sunday, April 5th - 6PM**

*Praise and Worship, prayer ministry and witness talks*

# March for Life in Washington, D.C.

Bishop Mark L. Bartchak and various groups from throughout the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown traveled to the March for Life on January 24.



Father Matthew Reese, Pastor of Our Lady of the Alleghenies Parish in Lilly and Diocesan Director of Vocations, with a group from the New Germany and Windber areas.



Bishop Mark L. Bartchak and a group from Blair County.



A group from the Northern Deanery and Penn State Catholic Ministry.



Father Matt Baum, Administrator of Prince of Peace Parish in Northern Cambria and a group from Northern Cambria Catholic School.

## Retired Diocesan Priest Passes After Extended Illness

The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown is mourning the passing of one of its priests.

Reverend Leo A. Lynch, a retired priest of the diocese, passed on January 16, 2020, following an extended illness. He was 67 years old.

He was born on November 5, 1952, in Altoona, the son of the late Leo C. and Matilda (Fiore) Lynch. He attended Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School in Altoona, Saint Francis University in Loretto, and the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio.

Father Lynch was ordained a priest in 1993 at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Altoona and served as Parochial Vicar at the Cathedral from 1993-1995. He served in Hospital Ministry from 1995-1997. From 1997-1999, Father Lynch was Chaplain at Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School. He served as Principal of Bishop Guilfoyle from 1999-2004, residing at Sacred Heart Parish in Altoona from 1996-2003.

Father Lynch was Administrator of Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Altoona from 2003-2004. From 2004-2010, he was Administrator of Saint Joseph Parish in Williamsburg and Chaplain at SCI Smithfield. He served as Pastor of Saint Thomas More Parish in Roaring Spring from 2011 until his retirement in November, 2019.

ma Parish in Altoona from 2003-2004. From 2004-2010, he was Administrator of Saint Joseph Parish in Williamsburg and Chaplain at SCI Smithfield. He served as Pastor of Saint Thomas More Parish in Roaring Spring from 2011 until his retirement in November, 2019.



REV. LYNCH

## Carmelite Sisters Announce Novena

The second Novena of 2020 to Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Saint Therese offered by the Discalced Carmelite Nuns of Loretto will open on Saturday, February 22 and end on Sunday, March 1.

All intentions submitted to the Nuns will be remembered with the special Novena prayers following the daily Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the Nuns' beautiful Chapel.

Please send prayer requests to Mother Prioress, Discalced Carmelite Monastery, Post Office Box 57, Loretto, PA 15940.

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## Bishop McCort Catholic High School Announces Innovative Education Plan

Bishop McCort Catholic High School in Johnstown has announced the launch of the McCort Blended Academy (MBA), an innovative hybrid of in-classroom and online learning that now makes a McCort education accessible to any high school student in the region.

Through the McCort Blended Academy, students will complete virtual coursework that is fully aligned with the school's college preparatory curriculum and have daily access to on-campus McCort resources. These include a variety of classes, labs, extracurricular activities, guidance and career services, athletic programs and more.

"McCort Blended Academy offers students the flexibility of high-quality online coursework with access to all of our activities," said Tom Smith, principal and chief administrative officer. "For many students in our region, it's the opportunity to have the best of both worlds."

Bishop McCort is the first high school in the area to combine comprehensive online learning with on-campus resources. The MBA is housed on the campus of Bishop McCort. Jack Bassett, a long-time area educator, has been named MBA's Classroom Innovation Coordinator and will provide on-site supervision, support and instruction to MBA students.

The program includes virtual classroom instruction in English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Religious Studies, and Foreign Languages with on-site classroom learning opportunities in health and wellness, arts, performing arts, and in Bishop McCort's fully-equipped STREAM lab. Upon enrollment, students will have access to a Chromebook onsite and the ability to log into personal computers off campus. Transportation to and from MBA will be available to students depending upon their location.



**INSPIRING MUSICIAN:** Holy Name Parish in Ebensburg hosted musician Tony Melendez on January 21. Melendez was born without arms, but learned to play the guitar with his feet. He and his brother, Jose, travel the world encouraging people to use their talents no matter the challenges they face. Melendez performed privately for Catholic school students throughout the diocese. He also performed a concert for the public that evening.

### 5th Annual Lenten Mission In Honor Of Our Lady Of Loretto

**MARCH 22 - 27, 2020**

**Rev. Father Joseph Sioli Diocese of Pittsburgh - Homilist**

**March 22 - 7:00 PM (Sunday) Mission Prayers with**

**Homily/Benediction**

**Most Reverend Mark L. Bartchak, JCD  
Bishop of Altoona-Johnstown  
presiding**

**Confessions at 8:00 PM**

**7:00 PM Mass with**

**Mission Prayers each night (Mon - Fri)**

**Eucharistic Adoration at 6:00 PM  
each night (Mon-Fri)**

**Reconciliation/Confessions at  
6:00 PM each night (Mon-Fri)**



**Prayer intentions may be sent to:**

*Very Reverend John D. Byrnes, JCL, JV, Rector*

**BASILICA OF ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL  
PO BOX 10, LORETTO, PA 15940**



**CHECK PRESENTATIONS:** Representatives of the Knights of Columbus visited the Diocesan Pastoral Center on January 23 to present Bishop Mark with donations to be used for seminarian formation. Presenting checks (left to right) are: Anthony Ream, Bishop Mark, Rev. Col. Gregory D'Emma, state chaplain, Mark Jago, state deputy, and John George.

### ANNUAL MEN'S TURKEY DINNER SUNDAY, MARCH 15<sup>th</sup> 11AM-3PM



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# Beacon of Hope: Journey of Grace

*Editor's Note: The following is the latest in a series of inspirational stories of conversion to the Catholic faith. This month, Director of RCIA and Religious Education Patricia Troutwein shares a very personal story.*

In 2018, Patty and her husband Will were blessed to help in the process of bringing three of their grandchildren – Shane, Abigail, and Dylan Conrad – into the Roman Catholic Church at Saint Patrick in Newry at the Easter Vigil.

“For years they had been asking to join and this was their year!” They entered RCIA and formed special bonds with another student and his mother, while attending classes, retreats and special services. Grandmother Patty asked them to tell us about their faith journey.

Shane, 12 years old and a seventh grade student at Saint Patrick School said, “Joining the Church was an amazing decision.



When I was baptized, my connection with God got stronger and stronger. It brought me closer to my family and my friends, but most importantly closer to God.”

Abigail, 14, in ninth grade at Hollidaysburg High School writes: “Being baptized and becoming Catholic really changed my life. I felt I knew God but the connection wasn't



as strong as I wanted it to be. I wanted to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. I am continuing to grow in my faith

and I know the relationship I have with God is deeper and that God is more present in my life since I was baptized.”

Dylan Conrad, an 11th grader at Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School and a member of the varsity football team witnesses, “The reason I joined the Church



DYLAN

is because I was looking for a place to say what I believe without the fear of judgment. Sharing God with the people I love deeply is what I was looking for and it happens not only when I am in Church but especially when I am on the field with my talented brothers in faith. God is guiding us through mind and Spirit.”

By Canon Law, the Conrad children after being baptized, were confirmed, and they received First Holy Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. Living up to the commitment they made to Father Allen Zeth (Parish Administrator) to continue in faith formation, Abigail attends Religious Education, and both Dylan and Abigail are attending sessions and retreats for the Confirmation process with their classmates. Shane is an altar server at the parish and school and will follow his siblings in 9th grade at the parish.

*For more information about Christian Initiation in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, please contact RCIA coordinator Jeannne Thompson at [jthompson@dioceseaj.org](mailto:jthompson@dioceseaj.org).*

*Editor's Note: The Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill are celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the founding of their community in Altoona. The original six sisters came from the Sisters of Charity in Cincinnati. They were invited by Rev. John Tuigg at Saint John Parish in Altoona to work in the school that had started earlier.*

*Over the years, more than 100 Sisters entered from the now Altoona Johnstown Diocese. There are presently 17 sisters living from the Altoona-Johnstown Area. Throughout this anniversary year, we would like to recognize some of these sisters here in The Catholic Register.*

**Submitted by Sister Donna Marie Leiden, SC**

Sister Clementine O’Friel, the oldest living Sister of Charity to enter the community from Altoona, Pennsylvania, looks forward to an exciting year 2020. On March 23, 2020, she will celebrate her one hundredth birthday and on August 23, 2020, she will join her sisters in celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Founding of the Community in Altoona.

Joan O’Friel, the third of nine children of Lillian and George O’Friel, was born in Altoona and baptized at Saint Leo Parish on March 28, 1920. She lived on 20th Street and attended Saint Leo’s Grade School and Altoona Catholic High School (now Bishop Guilfoyle).

On September 8, 1938, Joan entered the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill. She received the habit and the name Sister Clementine

on January 1, 1939, and pronounced her first vows on January 1, 1941. As the years passed, Sister Clementine earned a Bachelor of Arts degree at Seton Hill College (now University) specializing in history and psychology and a master of Arts at The Catholic University of America with emphasis on Religion and Philosophy. During her active professional life, Sister served in education in many of the grade schools and high schools staffed by the Sisters of Charity in the Dioceses of Altoona-Johnstown, Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles.

Sister Clementine returned to minister in the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese on many occasions. From 1969 until 1971, she was Principal of Visitation School in Johnstown. From there she moved to McNelis Catholic School in Altoona from 1971 until 1975. She also taught at Bishop Guilfoyle High School from 1979 to 1984 and in 1984, she moved again to McNelis Catholic School as Principal from 1984 to 1988.

In later years, Sister Clementine was responsible for the lunch program and served as Tuition Accountant for Sacred



SISTER CLEMENTINE O’FRIEL, S.C.

Heart School in Altoona. Her final ministry in Altoona was at Kelly’s Discovery Daycare from 1992 until 1995. In 1995, Sister Clementine fully retired and moved to Assumption Hall, the retirement home of the Sisters of Charity.

Today Sister Clementine resides in Caritas Christi, the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity. Although needing a motorized wheelchair to get around, she manages to spend time in the chapel where she is a daily participant at the morning liturgy.

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*“What a Pharmacy Was Meant To Be”*

# College Student Credits Youth Ministry Experiences for the Strength of her Catholic Faith

By **Tony DeGol**

*The Catholic Register*

This is a big year for Morgan Casto.

She will graduate from Saint Vincent College in Latrobe this spring with a well-earned degree in Biology.

She is not sure where her career path will take her after she snags that diploma, but she is certain that her cherished Catholic faith will always be with her.

Besides her rigorous studies, Casto, 21, devotes a lot of time to campus ministry at Saint Vincent.

As a liturgical ministry team leader, she is responsible for coordinating servers, readers, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion for Masses in the chapel. She also works many retreats on campus that welcome Confirmation candidates and other youth.

"I find it very fulfilling because it's an opportunity to put my own faith into action," Casto remarked. "Often I find these retreats I do help me grow in my own faith."

Pardon the cliché, but Casto is a Catholic young adult who really is on fire with her faith.

At a time when so many college students and other 20-somethings are allowing their relationship with the Lord to take a back seat, why is Casto continuing to blossom in her spirituality?

A member of Saint Clement Parish in Johnstown, she was blessed to receive a great Catholic school education at Cathedral Catholic Academy and Bishop McCort Catholic High School.

She also had the good fortune of engaging in just about every youth ministry opportunity the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown has offered over the past decade.

She attended Junior High Youth Day three times. The annual gathering welcomes sixth, seventh, and eighth grad-

ers for a day of faith enrichment and fun. As a high school student, she served on the planning team for JHYD and the annual Senior High Youth Conference (SHYCON). Both events feature dynamic, nationally-recognized speakers, service opportunities, and Mass with Bishop Mark.

Some of Casto's fondest memories include Camp Zacchaeus, the diocesan summer camp for students in grades four through nine. The experience offers a week-long mix of spirituality and fun.

Casto was a camper for four years, then became a counselor-in-training, then a counselor.

"Camp was something I had never done before," she recalled. "Just being in nature and exploring it and seeing the beauty of God's creation was really cool."

Another formative experience was Casto's trip to the National Catholic Youth Conference in 2015. The diocese takes a delegation of youth to the conference when it is offered in Indianapolis every two years. Bishop Mark joins the group as they encounter Catholic peers from around the country seeking to elevate their faith.

"I think that's why I'm a good Catholic young adult," Casto theorized of her NCYC experience. "It's a beautiful opportunity to focus on your faith and not have the distractions of the outside world. It kindled the fire in me to keep pursuing my faith throughout college."

All of the youth ministry opportunities from which Casto benefited are made possible through the generous support of the Catholic Ministries Drive.

The 2020 campaign, titled "Ignite Your Faith for Christ's Mission," launches this month.

As usual, the CMD focuses on three key areas: Forming Clergy and Laity, Nurturing Youth, and Caring for the Poor/Strengthening Families.

Besides Youth Ministry, the Catholic Ministries Drive supports 13 other vital diocesan-wide ministries including Catholic Charities and seminarian for-



## 2020 CATHOLIC MINISTRIES DRIVE

### DIOCESE OF ALTOONA-JOHNSTOWN

mation.

This year's goal is \$2,294,584. Every dollar donated helps keep the designated ministries going strong for the benefit of others.

To all who generously give to the Catholic Ministries Drive, Casto offers hearty gratitude.

"Through their support, they're enabling young Catholics to really grow in their faith and in their love for our Lord," she stressed. "It will impact them throughout their lives."

*Place your gift to the 2020 Catholic Ministries Drive in your parish offertory; mail it directly to the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, P.O. Box 409, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648; or donate online at [www.dioceseaj.org/giving](http://www.dioceseaj.org/giving).*



**COOL AT CAMP:** Morgan Casto (right) shares a moment with Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown Youth Ministry coordinator Francine Swope at Camp Zacchaeus 2018.



**All donations to the Catholic Ministries Drive directly support the following ministries in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown:**

- Adult Enrichment and Lay Ecclesial Ministry
- Campus Ministry
- Catholic Charities
- Christian Initiation
- Educating Youth
- Evangelization
- Family Life
- Fulton County Mission
- Diocese of Mandeville, Jamaica
- Ongoing Formation of Priests and Deacons
- Priests' Vocations
- Sacramental Preparation
- Youth Ministry