

The Interecom

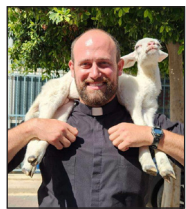
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Pictured above are the 33 pilgrims who traveled with Fr. Anthony to the Holy Land. Behind them is the city of Nazareth.

Inside this issue...

“A Pilgrimage in the Footsteps of Jesus” by Rev. Anthony Coci	2	Parish Statistics	6
New Parishioners	3	Right to Life Fundraiser	6
Recent Sacraments	3	Blanket Ministry	6
Rectory Renovation Progress	3	St. Joseph Spotlight	7
St. Joseph Parish Financial Report	4	Introduction to CCD	7
2023 St. Joseph Festival Report	5	Celebrating John Whitlow	7
School Foundation Report	6	Jewelry Sale Update	8
St. Joseph Cemetery Report	6		



A Pilgrimage in the Footsteps of Jesus

By Reverend Anthony Coci

The old adage rings true: "Words don't even do it justice." This was a trip of a lifetime, and it took five years to plan. We began planning it in 2018 when I was in my first assignment at St. Mary. The goal was to go in 2020, but due to the pandemic, it was postponed. Once the restrictions were lifted, I started planning it again, in conjunction with Catholic Faith Journeys (operated by Maggie McDaniel from Perrysburg). I was at St. Jerome, and as the time was approaching for the departure, I was assigned to St. Joseph. Needless to say, the bulk of our pilgrims were from St. Joseph and St. Mary, along with a handful from St. Jerome. It was a wonderful group, and I would venture to say that everyone left renewed and invigorated in their faith. That is exactly what pilgrimages are about: leaving a bit of oneself behind and returning with something new. Catholics have been making pilgrimages to the Holy Land since the time of Christ. It is a physical endeavor to engage the soul. It is a physical reminder of what our lives are: they are a pilgrimage to the heavenly homeland. I would be remiss not to mention that three people (Merrily Jones, Don Hammer, and Deacon Tom Hojnacki) were originally scheduled to go but passed into eternal life before the pilgrimage took place; that being so, we prayed to God for them in the earthly Jerusalem that He would welcome them into the heavenly Jerusalem.

The Holy Land is about half the size of Ohio and runs about the length from Toledo to Cincinnati. Imagine the Sea of Galilee being in the north where Toledo is, the Dead Sea being in the south where Cincinnati is, and the Jordan River running between the two seas like Interstate I-75. About ninety-five percent of the Bible took place in this small section of the world, yet it has had a profound impact on people's lives for over two millennia. From the airplane, one can see that Israel is an oasis amid desert land—it truly is a promised land.

We flew into Tel Aviv, where we visited Jaffa, the location where St. Peter had his great vision to receive into the Church both the pure (Jews) and impure (Gentiles) in Acts 9. From there we made our way to Caesarea Maritima, where Peter baptized the first Gentile, a Roman centurion named Cornelius, and his household (Acts 10). Then we made our way north to the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus performed most of his miracles. We prayed at Mount Carmel, where Elijah purified Israel (1 Kings 18). Also, in that region is Nazareth. We prayed at the well where Mary used to draw water, and we were privileged to pray the Angelus with the Franciscan friars at noon outside of Mary's bedchamber, where the Archangel Gabriel made his famous announcement and Our Lady gave her Fiat (Luke 1). One of the most moving parts for me was celebrating Mass at the place where "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14). We walked the streets that Mary used to play

as a child. From there we traveled to Cana, the site of Jesus' first miracle (John 2). The married couples on the pilgrimage renewed their wedding vows at that site. Around the Sea of Galilee, we visited the Mount of Beatitudes, Tabgha (the location of the multiplication of the loaves), Capernaum (where Peter's home is located), and then Magdala (the hometown of Mary Magdalene). We journeyed by boat across the Sea and retold the story of Jesus calling Peter to walk out onto the water in trust (Matthew 14). We took in the beautiful view of the Golan Heights (Joshua 13) that surrounds the Sea of Galilee. From there we visited the site where Peter jumped out of the boat and swam to shore to meet Jesus (John 21). Then we made our way to the most northern region, Caesarea Philippi. This is where the Jordan River begins, and there are ancient ruins of pagan temples. It was there that Peter made his great confession, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God," (Matthew 16:16). In the wilderness of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus spent quality time with his Disciples and prepared them for his Crucifixion; afterward, he resolutely set his face toward Jerusalem and never returned to Galilee (cf. Luke 9:51). From there we followed Our Lord's footsteps and headed south.

Our journey south took us through the Samaritan region to Judea. We celebrated Sunday Mass at Mount Tabor, the site of Our Lord's Transfiguration (Matthew 17). Then we journeyed to the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world, Jericho. In the Old Testament, the LORD destroyed the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6). Once Jesus was baptized, he was tempted in the desert outside Jericho (Matthew 4), and Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus in Jericho (Luke 19). Then we made our way up to Jerusalem. We prayed the Psalms of Ascent (Psalms 120-134), which were the prayers that pilgrims prayed to prepare themselves to enter the City of David. Outside of Jerusalem is Bethlehem. We celebrated Christmas Mass in a cave in the Shepherd's Field where the angels announced the birth of the Christ Child with the "Gloria" to the shepherds (Luke 2). Why Christmas



Mass? It is because the Holy Land has a special indulgence that at these exact locations it is perpetually the solemnity/feast of the event that took place. In Bethlehem, we visited the Church of the Nativity and touched the Star of Bethlehem, the place where Jesus was born, and prayed next to the location of his crib. We made our way to the Jordan River. There we renewed our baptismal promises

near the spot where John the Baptist baptized Jesus (Matthew 3). Then we made our way to Qumran, which is the ancient town of the Essene community. The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered there in 1946. It is also believed to be the location where John the Baptist lived (Luke 1:80). In Jerusalem, we made a holy hour at the Mount of Olives (Garden of Gethsemane) from 8 pm to 9 pm. We had the entire place to ourselves, and it felt as if we were truly keeping vigil with Our Lord (Matthew 26). We went to the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu, which is built over the home of the high priest Caiaphas, where Jesus was imprisoned, and Peter denied him three times (Matthew 26). We visited the location of the Cenacle (Upper Room) where the Last Supper took place (Mark 14), the Disciples chose Matthias (Acts 1), and the Holy Spirit came down at Pentecost (Acts 2).



We visited the Wailing Wall, which is the retaining wall of the Temple. Early in the morning, we walked the Via Dolorosa (The Way of Sorrow) and prayed the Stations of the Cross. The last Stations ended in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher, which is the site of Jesus' crucifixion and burial. It was there that I was privileged to concelebrate Mass in the Aedicule over Jesus' burial tomb, along with all the pilgrims. The next morning, we celebrated the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was a gift to have her guiding hand throughout our pilgrimage. Then we departed for the United States.

It truly was a trip of a lifetime because it involved walking in the footsteps of Him who gave us eternal life. What I appreciated most was the physical and historical evidence that brought the Bible to life, the deeper realization of the truth of Our Savior, Jesus, and the depth of our Faith. Pope Clement XII wanted all Catholics to be able to go to the Holy Land, but he realized that not everyone would be able to do so. As a result, he permitted Catholic churches to erect the Stations of the Cross so that all the faithful could at least make a spiritual journey with Our Lord to Calvary. The Holy Land is great, but Our Lord built a new temple in the hearts of those who are baptized. Every time we celebrate the Mass, we participate in Calvary and the Last Supper, and we receive Our Lord Jesus Christ entirely Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. May we never forget the great gift that the Church provides for us in the Most Holy Eucharist, which is food for the journey—the pilgrimage—to Heaven.

In Christ,

Fr. Anthony

Welcome New Parishioners!

- Danjee & Mary Arcega and family
- Steven & Kimberly Dandurand
- Emily Hammer
- Scott & Katherine Maiberger and family
- Justin & Judith Merrick and family
- Alan & Deborah Riddlebaugh
- Virginia Smith

Recent Sacraments at St. Joseph Church

Baptism

Josephine Elizabeth Felton. Baptized May 14, 2023. Daughter of Andrew and Jodie (Magers) Felton.

Levi Alan Hoepf. Baptized June 4, 2023. Son of Taylor and Alicia (Colage) Hoepf.

Violet Jayne Sanders. Baptized June 18, 2023. Daughter of Caleb Sanders and Shyann Allen.

Frances Elizabeth Sanders. Baptized June 18, 2023. Daughter of Caleb Sanders and Sarah Wright.

Adella Ruth Lommerse. Baptized July 2, 2023. Daughter of Andrew and Sydney (Schmucker) Lommerse.

Boone Ryan Lynch. Baptized July 16, 2023. Son of Ryan and Emily (Banks) Lynch.

Eleanor Lynn Wickham. Baptized on July 23, 2023. Daughter of Logan and Kelsey (Hendrix) Wickham.

Emma Sueann Depinet. Baptized on July 30, 2023. Daughter of Justin and Miriah (White) Depinet.

William James Braunscheidel. Baptized on September 2, 2023. Son of Adam and Tarra (Kraft) Braunscheidel.

Weddings

June 17, 2023. Brady Thomas Ferres & Rachel Rose Bores

August 26, 2023. Phillip Gregory Kimmet & Hope Marie Brickner

Deaths

Bernice M. Sperow, 99. *Died June 13, 2023.*

Gerald Coleman, 81. *Died June 23, 2023.*

Joyce M. Harshman, 97. *Died June 24, 2023.*

Marlene F. Seifert, 80. *Died June 30, 2023.*

Michael A. Elchert, 78. *Died July 6, 2023.*

Betty Lou Feasel, 94. *Died August 6, 2022.*

Urban E. Feasel, 93. *Died December 6, 2022.*

Sharon K. Bentz, 74. *Died July 22, 2023.*

Shirley A. Mattson, 84. *Died August 6, 2023.*

Kari A. Mezingier, 50. *Died August 9, 2023.*

Rectory Renovation Progress

Fellow Parishioners:

In this quarter's Intercom, you see pictures of the 50 years of deferred maintenance on our rectory. The parish maintenance committee recommended the work that needed to be done to bring electrical, plumbing and living quarters up to date and functional. Much of the work has been done by volunteers and at reduced cost by generous contractors who are part of our parish family. The Finance Council has reviewed the funding sources and the cost of the work that needs to be done, and we are comfortable that we will be able to pay for the upgrades and still be able to maintain our beautiful church building as well. Much of the work has been paid for by private donations designated for this much needed work, as well as maintenance funds set aside and donated each week. Fr. Anthony is anxious to open the first floor to parish members in social and prayerful gatherings once the work is complete. We can all be appropriately proud of St. Joseph Church and the history as well as the future of our parish.



Mike Klepper, Finance Chair 2023



St. Joseph Parish Financial Report

Fiscal Year Report July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023

RECEIPTS-PARISH	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
Sunday & Holy Day Collections	\$772,750.93	\$757,020.67	\$703,941.17	\$668,014.16	\$641,880.17
Christmas & Easter Collections	71,332.49	88,339.45	89,207.62	83,707.84	73,840.24
Mass Stipends & Stole Fees	8,322.52	12,385.97	14,868.97	13,426.83	2,976.21
Votive Candles	6,918.70	7,637.04	7,596.64	5,540.16	4,673.04
Flower Fund Donations	3,782.56	4,943.85	4,492.00	4,049.80	4,326.55
Maintenance Collection	272,232.47	10,214.06	12,278.09	14,730.98	9,596.25
St. Joseph the Worker	27,836.40	28,418.83	37,971.25	30,226.92	19,892.50
Tuition Assistance	3,619.23	4,053.67	5,560.49	4,645.25	4,026.60
Initial Offering	2,718.39	1,628.39	1,766.27	2,339.05	2,023.45
St. Joseph Festival	77,114.38	88,353.63	65,767.66	72,576.76	73,468.09
Jewelry Sales	8,776.75	19,425.31	0.00	8,893.19	19,347.80
Special Projects Fund	10,406.00	19,870.00	39,066.11	17,383.19	116,489.02
Stained Glass Window Fund	27,275.00	18,423.44	0.00	0.00	0.00
Requests/Memorials/Gifts	10,883.71	63,059.25	13,716.67	94,375.45	291,071.54
Rental Income	3,160.00	2,500.00	1,080.00	2,345.00	3,450.00
Religious Education (Youth & Adult)	10,036.00	5,948.00	8,650.56	8,520.44	9,064.00
Other Parish Income	179,371.63	9,318.63	77,177.00	23,483.97	16,781.85
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$1,496,537.16	\$1,141,540.19	\$1,083,140.50	\$1,054,258.99	\$1,292,907.31
EXPENDITURES-PARISH	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
Priest Salary	\$35,705.04	\$40,973.04	\$40,157.04	\$39,616.08	\$38,722.08
Parish Employee Payroll	226,706.62	159,690.89	143,373.26	140,373.41	135,835.45
Utilities	51,840.77	42,259.41	37,605.78	35,174.47	48,485.99
Altar, Sanctuary & Liturgical	24,430.92	8,210.93	8,663.53	8,123.89	8,967.34
Religious Education	37,885.23	28,915.67	27,568.96	27,821.44	28,298.02
Flower Fund Distribution	8,003.35	3,301.10	2,591.00	4,078.83	4,278.02
Administrative Expenses	41,783.03	25,918.22	25,210.38	23,049.99	27,126.40
Maintenance	55,843.14	24,757.54	16,943.97	15,887.94	19,641.10
Diocesan Assessments	81,129.00	67,410.00	67,495.00	48,232.02	65,199.00
Household Expenses	10,651.41	343.97	1,048.46	2,899.36	2,251.37
Parish Activities & Programs	6,996.27	9,644.38	11,912.77	11,490.19	12,112.48
Charitable Distributions	46,460.00	28,313.96	29,324.87	22,771.11	23,220.51
Insurance & Property Taxes	35,798.40	34,785.40	27,851.80	27,641.20	25,533.09
Capital Improvements*	341,351.11	27,037.06	27,999.84	568,592.02	216,880.49
Parish Subsidy to CCS	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.01	400,000.01	400,000.00
Other Expenses	5,396.70	3,161.74	3,306.98	3,396.52	0.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$1,409,980.99	\$904,723.31	\$871,053.65	\$1,379,148.49	\$1,056,551.34
NET INCOME/(LOSS)	\$86,556.17	\$236,816.88	\$212,086.85	(\$324,889.50)	\$236,355.97
CASH	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
Starting Cash, 7/1, Parish	\$1,682,938.14	\$1,472,460.63	\$1,271,538.68	\$1,470,524.16	\$1,230,995.60
Net Income/(Loss)	86,556.17	236,816.88	212,086.85	(324,889.50)	236,355.97
Diocese Collections Not Sent	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Courtesy Exchange/Transfers	(40,385.52)	(26,339.37)	(11,164.90)	125,904.02	(3,172.59)
ENDING CASH, 6/30, Parish	\$1,729,108.79	\$1,682,938.14	\$1,472,460.63	\$1,271,538.68	\$1,470,524.16
Cash—Normal Operations	\$561,881.03	\$563,071.23	\$411,726.30	\$321,548.77	\$187,436.30
Cash—Restricted Accounts	\$1,167,227.76	\$1,119,866.91	\$1,060,734.33	\$949,989.91	\$1,283,087.86

*Stained glass window repairs, rectory renovations, and computer improvements.

2023 St. Joseph Festival Report

	TOTAL INCOME	EXPENSES	2023 NET	2022 NET	2021 NET
RAFFLES					
Main Raffle	\$33,269.00	\$16,997.55	\$16,271.45	\$16,850.24	\$26,282.38
Super Raffle	\$19,904.00	\$922.88	\$18,981.12	\$17,319.11	\$19,639.73
50/50 Raffle	\$6,964.00	\$3,482.00	\$3,482.00	\$5,861.00	\$1,555.00
TOTAL RAFFLES	\$60,137.00	\$21,402.43	\$38,734.57	\$40,030.35	\$47,477.11
GAMES					
Ball and Barrel	\$598.04	\$89.56	\$508.48	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bingo	\$8,526.96	\$2,468.50	\$6,058.46	\$2,162.66	2,570.05
Black Jack	\$860.50	\$0.00	\$860.50	\$719.00	\$1,422.00
Cake Wheel	\$3,937.18	\$0.00	\$3,937.18	\$3,397.28	\$2,393.00
Can Crusher	\$703.77	\$102.28	\$601.49	\$487.70	\$0.00
Coin Toss	\$629.61	\$114.49	\$515.12	\$595.61	\$0.00
Face Paint/Tattoos	\$65.50	\$47.12	\$18.38	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fish Pond	\$430.00	\$0.00	\$430.00	-\$225.65	\$121.99
Instant Games	\$2,078.25	\$756.00	\$1,322.25	\$1,348.80	\$2,810.70
Kiddie Korral	\$1,517.30	\$12.34	\$1,504.96	\$1,760.50	\$1,742.70
Over/Under	\$416.55	\$130.27	\$286.28	\$282.26	\$124.35
Ring Toss	\$1,414.81	\$0.00	\$1,414.81	\$1,599.00	\$1,852.40
Surprise Boutique	\$494.00	\$0.00	\$494.00	\$601.75	\$733.25
Teen Tic Tac Toe	\$476.00	\$89.56	\$386.44	\$547.16	\$42.24
Texas Hold'em	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$370.00	\$460.00
TOTAL GAMES	\$22,398.47	\$3,720.56	\$18,588.35	\$13,646.07	\$14,272.74
RIDES & INFLATABLES					
Pony Rides	\$209.25	\$0.00	\$209.25	\$355.00	\$356.00
Laser Tag	\$141.00	\$0.00	\$141.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Inflatables	\$2,852.00	\$2,175.17	\$676.83	\$0.00	\$0.00
Spartan Express	\$550.00	\$0.00	\$550.00	\$593.00	\$575.00
TOTAL RIDES	\$3,752.25	\$2,175.17	\$1,577.08	\$948.00	\$931.00
ACTIVITIES & EVENTS					
Car Show	\$290.00	\$150.15	\$139.85	\$628.50	\$381.00
Credit Card Booth	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$18.00
General Store	\$4,087.40	\$0.00	\$4,087.40	\$4,530.93	\$4,638.77
Woodcarving Auction	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$730.00
TOTAL ACTIVITIES	\$4,377.40	\$150.15	\$4,227.25	\$5,374.43	\$5,767.77
MISCELLANEOUS					
Advertising	\$0.00	\$420.00	-\$420.00	-\$1,300.00	-\$955.17
Booth Sponsors	\$2,400.00	\$0.00	\$2,400.00	\$2,100.00	\$2,260.00
Donations	\$7,552.70	\$0.00	\$7,552.70	\$5,953.47	\$8,994.85
Entertainment	\$0.00	\$2,050.00	-\$2,050.00	-\$2,550.00	-\$2,325.00
Mailings	\$0.00	\$356.24	-\$356.24	-\$975.59	-\$501.09
Newsletter	\$0.00	\$719.36	-\$719.36	-\$1,442.35	-\$1,113.48
Security	\$0.00	\$393.54	-\$393.54	-\$814.23	-\$716.16
Set-Up/Maintenance	\$0.00	\$998.65	-\$998.65	-\$1,067.41	-\$823.09
Yard Signs	\$0.00	\$25.00	-\$25.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL MISC.	\$9,952.70	\$4,962.79	\$4,989.91	-\$96.11	\$4,820.86
FOOD					
Bratwurst	\$3,616.75	\$1,772.84	\$1,843.91	\$1,313.74	\$1,114.94
Chicken Dinners	\$5,746.00	\$2,988.99	\$2,757.01	\$3,328.23	\$2,553.48
Chicken Noodle Soup	\$3,433.50	\$598.75	\$2,834.75	\$2,012.80	\$818.66
Funnel Cakes	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,055.80	\$2,970.66
Lunch Stand	\$10,532.00	\$4,926.87	\$5,605.13	\$5,839.15	\$6,696.45
Pop	\$1,816.75	\$631.28	\$1,185.47	\$1,341.09	\$0.00
Food Vendors	\$600.00	\$0.00	\$600.00	\$525.00	\$930.00
TOTAL FOOD	\$25,745.00	\$10,918.73	\$14,826.27	\$17,415.81	\$15,084.19
GRAND TOTAL	\$126,362.82	\$43,329.83	\$82,943.43	\$77,318.55	\$88,353.67

School Foundation & St. Joseph Cemetery Financial Reports

SCHOOL FOUNDATION	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
Balance at beginning of period	\$332,434.90	\$369,865.52	\$309,197.28	\$275,232.50	\$271,092.46
Plus: Income July 1-June 30	32,957.17	24,610.24	63,950.22	35,412.75	4,140.04
Less: Expense July 1-June 30	10,575.28	62,040.86	3,281.98	1,447.97	0.00
Balance at end of period	\$354,816.79	\$332,434.90	\$369,865.52	\$309,197.28	\$275,232.50

ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
Balance at beginning of period	\$233,088.63	\$239,633.06	\$242,458.88	\$239,655.09	\$243,877.00
Plus: Income July 1-June 30	114,338.10	88,060.71	71,018.80	76,167.20	148,658.98
Less: Expense July 1-June 30	98,321.03	94,605.14	73,844.62	73,363.41	152,880.89
Balance at end of period	\$249,105.70	\$233,088.63	\$239,633.06	\$242,458.88	\$239,655.09

Parish Statistics “Status Animarum”

	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
Number of Parishioners	4,232	4,172	4,233	4,220	4,229
Number of Households	1,769	1,735	1,742	1,744	1,757
Baptisms (includes RCIA)	52	56	34	30	62
Confirmations (includes RCIA)	31	35	31	27	37
First Communion (includes RCIA)	48	33	30	31	41
Marriages	15	16	19	15	18
Funerals	50	69	74	62	63
Religious Education Program (CCD)	85	81	107	103	114
Average Weekly Mass Attendance	1161	1147	844	1,098	1,078

Celebrate Life Fundraiser

Welcomes Laura Strietmann



Laura Strietmann will be the guest speaker at Tiffin Right to Life's 8th Annual Celebrate Life Fundraiser Dinner to be held Saturday, October 28 at the Chandelier in Tiffin. The event will begin at 5 pm.

Laura Strietmann serves as Executive Director of Cincinnati Right to Life. While she was raised in a pro-life home and family, it wasn't until a pilgrimage to Fatima in 2006 that Laura began to serve on the frontlines of the prolife movement as a volunteer at a local pregnancy center that targeted abortion intended women. She soon became Associate Director at the pregnancy center, working for 10 years while studying in the Lay Pastoral Ministry Program at The Athenaeum of Ohio. Laura completed her Master's Certification at the Theology of the Body Institute, studying Christian Anthropology in the thought of Pope St. John Paul II.

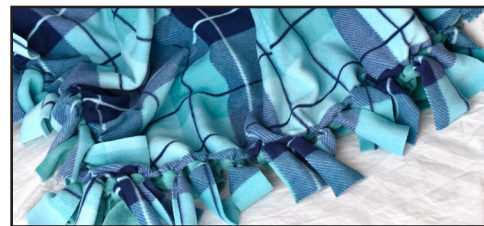
After five years of spreading John Paul II's Theology of the Body teachings around the globe through the Ruah Woods Institute curriculum, she was called to her current role at CRTL and finds herself in a post-Roe, yet unpredicted battle for the dignity of the human person in Ohio as we face the upcoming radical abortion amendment on Ohio's November 7 election.

Tickets to the Celebrate Life Event are \$25. Reservation forms are in the bulletin and on the Right to Life facebook page and website www.righttolifetiffin.org. The link to charge your reservations is <http://tiffinrighttolife.company.site>.

In addition to the speaker and a delicious meal, there will be a 50/50 raffle, cash bar, exciting raffle and door prizes. All proceeds will be used to continue the vital work of the organization, including support for mothers and their children, providing public messaging and educational information about life issues.

“Covered in Love”

Blanket Ministry Starts 9th Year



St. Joseph Church “Covered in Love” blanket ministry is about to begin its 9th year! To date, over **870 blankets** have been made and donated to the needy in Seneca County and beyond. This year we will be adding baby blankets and will need some sewers to help with these. They will be donated to Hope Medical for mothers who need help in caring for their babies. This ministry is not possible without generous donations from groups and individuals.

If you would like to donate your time in making the blankets, please contact **Laura Haines at 419-937-6681**.

Monetary donations can be placed in the collection basket in an envelope labeled “blanket ministry” or dropped off at the rectory. Thank you for any help you can give or have given in the past!

St. Joseph Parish Spotlights

Meet some of the St. Joseph Parish staff, volunteers, and parishioners! The spotlight will continue to shine within each edition of the Intercom as we feature additional individuals and families.



Zac Felton

I am Zac Felton, and I am thrilled to become a part of the St. Joseph Parish team in the capacity of Faith Formation Director (FFD). I graduated from Calvert Catholic Schools in 2011 and the University of Dayton in 2015. Post-college, I returned to my hometown, where my wife, Sara, and I, both natives of this community, put down roots. In 2017, we were married, and now we are blessed with three beautiful, spirited daughters: Violet (4), Marlee Mae (2), and Adelaide (1). Our household is a lively one, with the addition of a dog, two cats, a rabbit, and 14 chickens.

The dynamics of family life have profoundly influenced my approach to ministry. It's in these moments, navigating the joys and challenges, that I've come to understand the importance of supporting families in their faith journeys. It's a lesson that has transformed the way I perceive my own faith and how I aim to nurture it in others. As the FFD, my role will encompass working with individuals of all ages to orchestrate faith formation, lead faith-based experiences, and serve as a bridge between the schools and student parishes for sacraments.

My diverse professional background has given me a range of unique skills that I believe will align well with this new position. My previous experience includes serving as a CCD teacher, where I played a role in coordinating Confirmation and retreats, as well as chaperoning the Steubenville Youth Conference. Along with my wife Sara, I currently lead the Engaged Couples' Conference in the Seneca County area.

While I've been a lifelong, active member of St. Mary's Parish, I view the Catholic community of Tiffin as one united in faith. Sara and I are eager to embark on this new chapter of our faith journey at St. Joseph's. I'm genuinely excited to collaborate with all of you and reignite the flames of faith within our community. Please know that I am always available for discussions, open to suggestions, and eager to grow together with the faith community. If you happen to spot our family around, please don't hesitate to introduce yourself if we haven't crossed paths yet. You will all be in my prayers, and I hope you'll keep my family in your thoughts as well.

An Introduction to CCD

By Mary Claire Griffin

I am Mary Claire Griffin, the CCD and Sacramental Coordinator here at Tiffin St. Joseph Church. I am not a new face to many of you, as I am a graduate of Calvert Catholic Schools (class of '91) as well as a 4th and 5th-grade teacher at Calvert Elementary School. I felt the call to help my parish in a different capacity in the summer of 2022. It came to my attention that we were in need of a new CCD leader. This position afforded me the challenge I wanted in a new leadership role but still allowed me to do what I love, which is teaching! My husband Eric and children, Corinne, a senior at Calvert, and Max, a freshman at Calvert, were, and continue to be, very supportive of this new role as "CCD Principal," as the students call me.



The goal of the CCD program is to provide weekly religious education to students in grades 1-8 who do not attend Catholic school daily. CCD classes are held on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 7:45. In addition to classroom instruction, the students participate in a "mock" Mass, Adoration, and have the opportunity to attend Mass as a school several times throughout the school year. Grades 2 and 8 focus on preparation for the corresponding Sacraments: First Communion and Confirmation.

It is not too late to register for CCD! Registration and medical forms can be found on the parish website at www.tiffinstjoseph.org/ccd.

Thank you, John!

By Kevin Maiberger



Tiffin, Ohio, has been blessed with many great keyboard players, yet one individual truly stands out due to his extraordinary versatility – John Whitlow, affectionately known

as "Jits." John possesses the remarkable ability to draw the fullest sound from our splendid organ at St. Joseph. His unwavering dedication to performing during mass, even after late-night gigs with other bands or on the same day, has consistently amazed me.

Keyboardists often fall into two distinct categories: those with classical training who can read musical notation, and those with a keen ear who can effortlessly reproduce songs by listening. John is a master of both.

Additionally, the world of keyboarding can be further categorized into pianists, organists, and keyboardists – individuals who understand and can play electronic instruments like synthesizers. Here again, John emerges as a true virtuoso, excelling in each of these domains. Playing and understanding electronic instruments such as synthesizers is a realm of its own!

One of my best memories with John occurred when I asked him what Max Middleton, Jeff Beck's keyboardist, was playing on a complicated song, which I could not learn even after listening to it for hours. He listened to it in front of me and told me the exact notes without even having a keyboard in front of him.

Did I forget to mention the other instruments that he can play? His mastery extends to an impressive array of instruments, including the guitar, bass, drums, brass instruments, and strings.

John possessed the remarkable ability to arrive at Mass 30 seconds before his performance, sight-read any sheet music placed before him, and flawlessly execute every note. We at St. Joseph's are immensely proud to have had one of Tiffin's finest musicians as our organist for all these years. His absence will be deeply felt, and his musical legacy will be sorely missed.



THANK YOU to our organist, John Whitlow! After 56 years of playing the organ at St. Joseph Church, it was John's wish to quietly move into retirement. If you would like to send him well wishes, please send cards to John at 38 Jackson Street, Tiffin, OH 44883.



St. Joseph Church

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The Intercom

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Upcoming Jewelry Sale Canceled

We have recently been notified that "Jewelry For Missions" is going in a new direction. As a result, all future jewelry sales at St. Joseph Church are canceled (including the sale that was scheduled for November 9-11) and we are no longer accepting jewelry donations.

We wish to thank Bec, her church, and her jewelry volunteers for allowing us to share in this wonderful mission over the last 10+ years that benefited Calvert Catholic Schools. We also thank everyone who visited our sales or donated jewelry or supplies over the years. We are especially appreciative of all our volunteers who worked at the sales.

Any fresh ideas for a new fundraiser to replace the jewelry sale may be submitted to the Parish Office.

