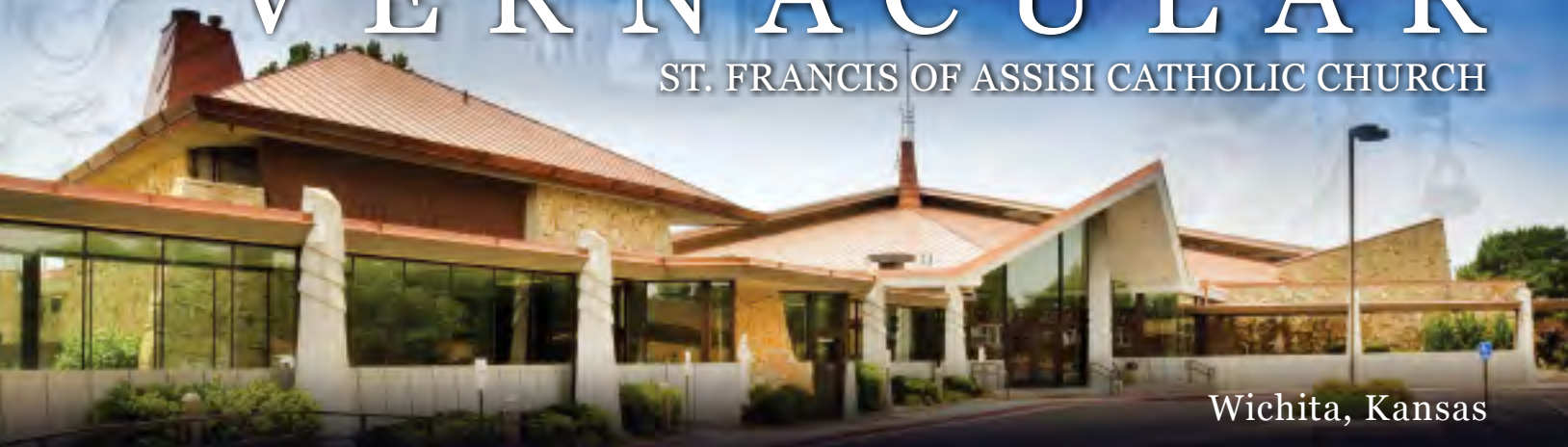


# THE VERNACULAR

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH



Wichita, Kansas

APRIL 2016

## Parishioners: We are less without you

Have you ever driven by a field of sunflowers in the morning with the sun rising in the eastern sky? They lift their drooping heads and wake as if from slumber, and they bask in the rays of the sun as it crests into the sky. The field ignites into a fire of yellow as they follow the movement of that morning star. Like paparazzi following a Hollywood star, they strain their necks throughout the day as they turn their heads to follow the sun. Then at night, they return to their slumber, waiting for the rays' light and heat to reawaken them to their mission: to face the sun and follow its path.

But what if 58 percent of that field's flowers were missing? What if six out of every 10 flowers were gone? Perhaps the field experienced a gully-wash of a flash flood, the trauma of a tornado or simply a drought of water? Or what if every flower, struck by some disease, was missing six out of every 10 leaves? Rather than the full fanfare of leaves receiving the rays of the sun like a solar panel, there were only 42 percent of the leaves flipping in the wind, less supported because of the absence of their counterparts.

This is what's happening at SFA, with 58 percent of our parish in the habit of missing Sunday Mass. Like a field of sunflowers that has experienced some tragedy, our community is not fully engaging in the third commandment, "Keep holy



Message From  
**THE PASTOR**

the Lord's Day." And we are less without you.

What is one petal to a full sunflower? What is one flower to a field of sunflowers? Admittedly, if it were a matter of one petal or one flower, it would not seem to affect the whole. In the same way, an individual Christian, who on a Sunday morning (or Saturday night) may think to themselves, "I'm too tired, I'm too busy, to go to Mass. After all, what's one person to a full congregation?"

What if 58% of the  
Our Father were missing?  
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We are each a letter in one  
great prayer to God. We are  
less without you.

— Fr. Jarrod Lies

The answer is this: we are always less without you. You see, we are not talking about one petal or one flower; we are talking about a field that has been hit by a serious cataclysm. Our community has been hit by the gully-wash of a consumerist culture, the tornado of endless activity, or the drought of apathy. Workaholic and exhausted; over-committed and frazzled; disengaged and distant; many have come to consider themselves as unmissed, unnoticed or unengaged. But this is not so.

We are less without you. Even if 99 percent of us were going to Mass, we would still be less without you. Please, please, please do not miss Mass. Hear the words of Scripture when it says, "We should not stay away from the assembly, as is the custom of some, but should encourage one another all the more as we see the day draw near." (Heb 10:25)

***We are less without you ...***  
*cont. on p. 3*

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### May Crowning

May 6, 2:30 p.m., Church

#### 8th Grade Farewell Mass

May 25, 7:30 p.m., Church

#### SFA Last Day of School

May 26

## SFA CYM members attend DCYC 2016

A room full of 600 teenagers completely silent. Some line the walls of the Hyatt's Emerald Ballroom, others kneel on the carpet with eyes closed, still others sit and watch as Father Aaron Spexarth processes between rows of chairs with a giant monstrance, glittering and glaring in Wichita Adore Ministry's spotlights. The 2016 Diocesan Catholic Youth Conference was a conglomeration of the hard work of multiple teams of people, coupled with the excitement and energy of Wichita's Catholic youth.

The weekend of March 12-13 began with half an hour of "pump-up" music, courtesy of Wichita Adore Ministries. The songs slowly transitioned to Mass preparation, and soon, the opening hymn began.

The theme for this year's DCYC was: "Let yourself be taken over by the light of Christ, and spread that light wherever you go." And this idea was stretched through the entire weekend's activities.

After Mass, the Catholic Youth Board, composed of teens from around the diocese, gave an introduction to the weekend and introduced the keynote speaker, Chris Padgett. Padgett followed with a talk on the importance of seeing people and interacting with them below the level of "comfort" and trying to "get beneath the surface."

The morning ended with a solemn hour of Eucharistic Adoration and confession.

After lunch, the various CYM regions gathered in separate rooms, and then broke out into each participant's choice of four different talks. The next three hours were devoted to rotating between these talks.

The breakout sessions included presentations by Fr. Aaron Spexarth, Fr. PJ Voegeli, Jesse Elpers, Sr. Mary Faustina IHM, James Bitting, Chris Padgett, and Joshua Bitting. After a short break, during which everyone changed into formal clothes, teens returned for a dinner and dance, and then ended with Night Prayer.



Photos by Clare Morgan

Sunday morning began with music and Morning Prayer. Chris Padgett gave a summary talk, and then awards for the year were given. From St. Francis, Morgan Werth was recognized with the Regional Outstanding Catholic Youth award, which honors the youth who has exceeded expectations for spirituality and service.

Crystal Nguyen was awarded the Light of Christ, which honors the youth who spreads the light of Christ wherever they go and whatever they do. The youth must be a senior who has participated in CYM all four years of high school.

The Diocesan Catholic Youth Conference was a huge success. The inspiring message for youth "to be taken over by the light of Christ" can be carried out in the daily lives of all of us through prayer and love.

— Clare Morgan

### Stewardship Thought

God settled humankind upon earth to be its steward – "to cultivate and care for it" (Gn 2:15). This human activity of cultivating and caring has a generic name: work. It is not a punishment for, or a consequence of, sin. Work is a fundamental aspect of the human vocation. It is necessary for human happiness and fulfillment. It is intrinsic to responsible stewardship of the world.



Award recipients Morgan W. (left) and Crystal N. (right) pose with youth director Emily Savage.

### BAPTISMS

**Lincoln George**, son of Matthew Alfors and Marie Nguyen, on March 5

**Axle McGlynn**, son of Andrew and Robyn Broughon, March 12

**Emma Grace**, daughter of Scott and Laura Plank, on March 12

**Johannah Lynn**, daughter of Nickolas and Jeanette Hein, on March 19

**Layton Michael Everton**, son of Anthony and Shelley Wadlowe, on March 20

**Lincoln Alexander Cruse**, son of Anthony and Shelley Wadlowe, on March 20

**Sylvia Frances**, daughter of Seth and Cheryl Rundle, on March 27

## Stewardship way of life begins with 'time'

Many songs have been written about time. I might even be able to guess your age if you told me your favorite song about time. Maybe it's a title by Cyndi Lauper, the Rolling Stones or one of my favorites, Hootie and the Blowfish. Time has been written and sung about for as long as songs have been written.

How we use our 25,000 days – or however much time we are given in this life – is a question that man has pondered through all the ages.

I have had a chance to talk a lot about time the last few weeks.

Fr. Jarrod asked me to meet with all parents with children coming into our school for the first time. These meetings are an exciting time for me to get to know many of our young families who are experiencing school application and enrollment. Time is a topic that will come up in every meeting. All of us lead busy lives, but many young parents find time to be a most precious commodity.

For all of us at St. Francis though, time is that first (and most important) "T" when we talk about the stewardship way of life. All three Ts – Time, Talent & Treasure – comprise our basic definition of stewardship. But the stewardship way of life will

### We are less without you ...

cont. from p. 1

The day of salvation is drawing near, and Christ is the Morning Star who deserves our praise and adoration. Just as a sunflower's mission is to face the sun and follow its path, so too, we are called to face the Son and follow His path. We are disciples of the Lord and, as disciples, we are called to lift our heads and bask in His rays because He is the true "light of the world."

And we each belong to a community – a field of flowers so to speak – that, when we all turn toward the Lord, ignites the world on fire with the light of His love and the heart of His compassion. And the fact is this: without you, we are less.



always begin with "Time."

Time is defined as our prayer life, our time spent in conversation with God. All good stewards

make time to spend in prayer, every day.

Since the Eucharist is the source and summit of our lives, Sunday Mass is that link that binds us all together. For our parish to be whole, we need everyone to participate in Mass. Sunday dinner at the Burns house is not complete if one of us is missing. The meal is good, but not as satisfying as when we are all together. Come share this Eucharistic meal with us

each Sunday here at Mass. It really makes the Father happy when everyone is at the table.

There is no *Time* (Hootie and the Blowfish) like the present. For the *Longest Time* (Billy Joel), you have searched for the *Time of your Life* (Green Day). You tell yourself, *Time is on Your Side* (Rolling Stones), and that you can go to Mass another day.

*Time after Time* (Cyndi Lauper) we are led back to the reality that there is *No Time* (The Guess Who) like the present. The *Time has Come Today* (Chambers Brothers) to close. Sunday Mass is the *Best of Times* (Styx). Clearly it is *Time for Me to Fly* (REO Speedwagon).

— Pat Burns,

Director of Stewardship & Finance

## Parish Nursery Ministry seeks new volunteers

We have all heard the saying it takes a village to raise a child. Insert "church community" for "village" and it addresses the physical and spiritual needs of a family. We are asking you to consider babysitting as an act of stewardship.

Parents easily get worn and weary. Parents are isolated and may be lonely. Your help providing babysitting at parish functions will help tested and tired parents to refresh with some adult formation activities. During Mom's Day Out, mothers of young children receive some free time to run errands, visit Adoration, or simply have some time to rejuvenate.

Requirements simply include Virtus training for anyone over 18. (There are ongoing Virtus training opportunities, so don't let that stop you!)

Who? You! Eligible volunteers include teens, grandparents, seniors, single adults, parents and

non-parents, even parents with little ones (you can bring your littles with you). It is sometimes hard to find ways to get involved with the parish when you have a little one you are caring for, so here is something you CAN do! This counts for Confirmation students looking to earn service hours as well.

When? To start, we are only looking for help with Mom's Day Out, RCIA and adult formation, though we would like to expand the list of babysitting provided as we are able. The goal is to get a large enough volunteer list so that each person is only helping once every two to three months (but more if you want). We will work with your schedule and contact you with the dates you are needed.

Where? The parish has a nursery in Clare Hall. All supplies are provided.

Contact Sarah Steinert at 613-9507 or steinertcs@gmail.com to sign up. Thank you!

— Sarah Steinert

# BC youth go on Spring Break mission trip

During our recent Spring Break, 13 Bishop Carroll students – including some of us from SFA CYM – took a little road trip, accompanied by Fr. Ben Green and religion teacher Abby Johnsen. By “little” I mean 13.5 hours in a pair of Suburbans from Wichita to Gallup, N.M., for a mission trip. We listened to about 30 full CDs during the trip, and it was awesome. Shania Twain was a big hit.

Some of our fondest memories of this mission trip were walking the streets of Santa Fe, seeing the Miraculous Staircase, summiting Mount Taylor and cave diving through some sick lava tubes. However, I think we all can agree that these fade in comparison to the service work we experienced.

It is difficult to adequately put this week into words. However, following are a few quotes from the week that provide a window into our experiences.

*“Sister, what are the police here for?”*  
– Kaylor Nordhus (senior at BCCHS)

Sister took her outside the shelter door and let her see for herself. Sprawled on the concrete was a man, drunken and passed out. His face was bloody from hitting the pavement as he fell. Kaylor went to sit near him and held his hand in what might have been his last few moments alive.

The police car that eventually came wasn’t typical; it was a big truck with the back open and exposing a large metal cage that had bodies stacked inside it. A couple men came out the front, grabbed the man and tossed him in the back with the rest. Sister explained that this was the “detox” van, which travels around the alleys of Gallup and picks up men who have passed out.

They go to a location to sober up, and then are released. While this seems inhumane, it has saved dozens of lives. The men otherwise would just die in the streets.

This experience obviously dropped our jaws and widened our

sheltered West Wichita eyes. To the Missionaries of Charity, however, this was simply Wednesday. The Sisters spend every day cooking a large meal for the homeless of Gallup.

After some form of prayer, dinner and cleanup, nearly 40 men line up to receive their numbers. The number indicates which bed they get to sleep in for the night. They are given clean pajamas and a shower before retiring in a large dormitory around 6:30 p.m. Wake up call is bright and early: 4:45 a.m. to be exact.

Once all the men have left for the day, chores begin. Laundry is hand-washed and hung out on lines to dry, and pajamas are paired up with towels for the next night’s visitors. Dinner is prepared using donated food, and there is always a

plethora of it. One of my personal favorite chores was using the Holy Water Squirt Bottle to spray the beds each day before the men slept on them.

*“The Sisters rule the streets.”*  
– Fr. Ben Green

Father got the chance to run an errand with a couple of the Missionaries of Charity. He sat in the back of their car and smiled as he watched all the homeless men stop and enthusiastically wave to the Sisters as they drove by. Everyone there knows them, and respects them.

So many times a tussle would break out among the men, and Father or one of our boys would step in, but

*Mission Trip ... cont. on p. 5*



Photos by Abby Johnsen

*Mission trip ... cont. from p. 4*  
the men seemed to look past them. However, once one of the Sisters spoke up, the trouble seemed to cease. I think the men all respected the MCs so much because of the love that is shown to them. The Sisters treated each man as if they were their brother.

They knew all the ways the men had gone wrong in the past, and the things they would do wrong tomorrow, but it didn’t matter. They laughed and had conversations with them as if they were old friends.

*“Sweetheart, I can’t hear you!”*  
– Luby

I had the pleasure of having lunch with Luby (not pronounced Loopy, as I was reminded many times), who will be turning 102 in August. She is a resident at the Little Sisters of the Poor Nursing Home. While her

short-term memory wasn’t fantastic, her long-term memory was sharper than a tack.

She reminisced with us about losing her mother at a young age, and living in Croatia for a time so her father could figure things out with six kids.

“Those were hard, hard times. But we made it!” she said with a laugh.

Luby loved to talk about her granddaughter, her special buddy. Luby was just one of the many great people I met and stories I heard about over several meals at the Little Sisters facility. Something that struck me with every single person I talked with was their joy when they told their story, even if it was one clouded with poverty.

They were proud of how far they had come. Without the Little Sisters of the Poor, they wouldn’t have a solid place to finish out their life. They

might still be struggling, still looking for the happy ending to the story.

A few of the residents could only speak Navajo, and thus shared quiet meals with us. These were the most peaceful meals I’ve ever experienced.

Benny and Jose were experts, and they taught me more about landscaping than I ever thought I would know. Regardless of how their story will end, every resident there is in love with where they are, and that’s not something you get to see in every nursing home.

*“Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier.”*

– Mother Teresa

Both the Missionaries of Charity and the Little Sisters of the Poor exemplified this quote every single time we had a conversations with one of them. The Sisters always wore a smile, and it was amazing how once they entered the room, their smiles seemed to transfer to us and they didn’t even say anything yet. They were bursting at the seams with joy and charity.

By the end of the week, I was pretty worn out from everything, but the Sisters seemed to gain energy. They never got tired of the huge dishes or of hearing the same life story, again and again. These women are beautiful vessels of the Holy Spirit, and it’s safe to say that the city of Gallup and the 15 volunteers from Wichita will never forget them.

– Kylee Mernagh



Photo by Abby Johnsen

## St. Therese group

The “Singing Sunflowers” 8th grade St. Therese group – Amelia V., Lauren S., Emma F. & Cara B. – has fun making a fruit cake at a recent “overnight.” They also learned about nutrition, put together “fast food” bags filled with veggies, and made pitchers of flavor-infused water.



Photo by Linda Fox

## Finance Committee reveals parish fiscal status

A parish exists to proclaim the Good News, and to encourage the faithful to imitate Christ so that we may gain eternal life in heaven with God. A challenge in this mission is that we have a spiritual purpose in a material world. The parish needs donations of time, talent, hospitality and treasure to carry out its mission. The Finance Council advises Father on how to be a good steward of the gifts of treasure that the parish receives. Part of this role is communicating the financial status of our parish to you, the parishioners. Over the past couple of years in August, the Finance Council and Stewardship Committee provided an annual report to the parish.

While the annual report provides additional transparency, it summarizes a lot of information in a limited space. As a result, the financial status of the parish may get lost. The purpose of this article is to articulate where we are financially as we approach the end of our fiscal year in June.

Since 2012, parishioners have

annually pledged gifts of treasure of around \$3.3 million. The parish also receives approximately \$1.2 million in unpledged gifts, for a total operating budget of about \$4.5-5 million. For several years, we have received about \$200,000-\$300,000 less in contributions than what was pledged. It is not a coincidence that we have a coincidence that we have failed to meet our collections budget by this amount on a regular basis.

Through careful budgeting, deferring various maintenance projects and expenses in our parish, and last year's push to eliminate our deficit, we were able to start our fiscal year in July 2015 debt-free. However, the lag in collections cannot be sustained.

What can you do?

### Become a percentage giver.

If you have not done so, prayerfully consider changing from a dollar giver to a percentage giver. Percentage givers start with a certain percent of annual income and then, as years pass, gradually increase the percentage with the ultimate goal of sharing 8 percent of their income with the parish. This requires a shift in thought, and it requires prayer.

### Meet your pledge.

Your pledge on your stewardship of treasure form is your promise to your parish that you will contribute a certain financial amount to our community in a given year. It is a free will amount arrived at by each family, and there is no dollar amount mandated by the parish. Many families have endured job loss over

the past few years, resulting in them not having the anticipated income over the course of the year, and this can significantly impact their ability to satisfy their pledge. But making a pledge with no intent of meeting it is dishonest with the parish and with oneself. Living as a faithful steward means satisfying the pledge to which one has committed. Faithful stewardship of treasure is an opportunity for growth as a disciple.

### Look into matching gifts.

Finally, many employers match gifts made to certain charities. Ask your employer whether they offer matching gifts to the church or school. If so, invest a gift of time to find out how to qualify your tithe for your employer's matching program. You don't have to have kids at St. Francis or Bishop Carroll to take advantage of the matching funds. Additionally, some retirement pension plans match retiree contributions as well.

We are a stewardship parish. We will be prayerful, if we pray. We will be generous, if we are generous givers. We will be a parish of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, if we live the stewardship way of life.

– Finance Council

## FUNERALS

**Patricia Macfarlane**, mother of Patricia Morgan, Pamela Williams, Donna Scott and Shawn Allen, on March 4.

**Markita M. Terhune**, mother of Bob Terhune Jr., Tom Terhune, Kenny Terhune, Jim Terhune, Kathy Terhune, Karen Nelson, Becky Barragree and Mary Gorges, on March 12.

**Bernice I. Dick**, mother of Brent Dick, on March 16.

**William C. "Bill" Peltzer**, husband of Mary Kay Peltzer, father of Rev. Michael Peltzer, Christopher Peltzer, Theresa Elpers and Heidi Peltzer, on March 28.

**Lloyd J. Wilbert**, husband of Donna, father of Warren Wilbert, Kenny Wilbert, Judy Lawson, Paula Espinoza and Brian Wilbert, on March 30.

## NEW PARISHIONERS

**Gregory and Teresa Bergkamp**, 4 children

**Quyen and Tuan Nguyen**, 1 child

**Tyler and Jenna Smith**

**Richard and Debra Svetec**

## SFA SOCIAL SITES



If you're on any of these social sites, please take a few minutes to follow or like us:

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- Spread the word!

## The Vernacular

This monthly newsletter is published by and for the parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi Parish. It is mailed to each registered parish household by the end of each month.

To submit articles, photos or story ideas, send them via email to [sfavernacular@gmail.com](mailto:sfavernacular@gmail.com). Photos must be high-resolution print quality images.

Contacts for *the Vernacular* are news editor Lanette Belton, 722-3952, and copy editor Ann Walden, 249-2430.

Deadlines for submitting information are the beginning of each month.

New volunteers – especially reporters, photographers and layout editors – are always welcome.



*We are less  
without you*

*We should not stay away from the assembly*

- Hebrews 10:25 -

LESS WITHOUT YOU: ATTENDING MASS  
IS IMPORTANT TO PARISH COMMUNITY

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