



Wichita, Kansas

JUNE 2018

## Parish son returns home to St. Francis as bishop

On Nov. 21, 2017, news came that Fr. Shawn McKnight, formerly of St. Francis of Assisi, had been appointed as Bishop of the Diocese of Jefferson City, Mo. On Feb. 6, 2018, he was ordained to the episcopate in front of more than 1,200 people.

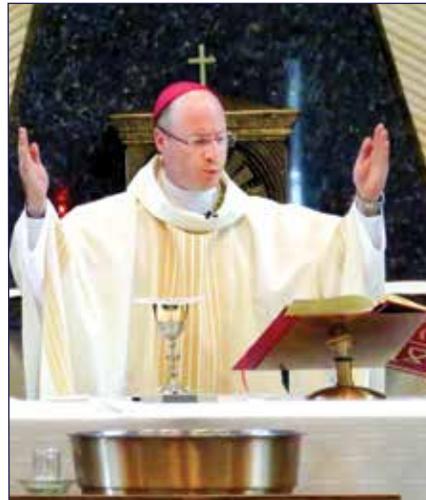
On May 13, Bishop McKnight returned to St. Francis, where he celebrated the 10 a.m. Mass and attended a reception afterward in Cana Hall. In honor of his new appointment and his visit to St. Francis, we took a look at the time he spent in the Diocese of Wichita, especially the formative years at St. Francis.

Lisa (Strecker) Harris, a classmate and friend of Bishop McKnight's from the Bishop Carroll Class of 1986, tells of "the good old days."

"I remember him being a new kid at school. I have many great memories with him. One time I remember getting up super early and driving out to Lake Afton to see Haley's Comet. He seemed to be into science and I just liked his friendship, so I pretended to like science too. He was very intelligent and took school seriously but also knew how to have fun."

It was his interest in science that led him to major in biochemistry at the

University of Dallas-Irving, a Catholic college, with hopes of becoming a medical doctor. After attending a retreat about being a chaplain and receiving a postcard from Rev. James Billinger in Wichita, McKnight decided instead to go to seminary. Friends and



Photos by Sean Beebe

family were thrilled.

"They said they were not at all surprised," Bishop McKnight told a writer for the Diocese of Jefferson City. "That really floored me, because I just didn't see it myself. Speaking in public — I was a SCIENCE major, for heaven's sake! — I just didn't know how I was going to do it."

Harris sees a holy irony in his change of path. "I thought he was going to be

a medical doctor, but he obtained a doctorate in Sacred Theology instead."

After completing his education at Pontifical College Josephinum (which, coincidentally, required him to drive through Jefferson City frequently), McKnight was ordained to the holy priesthood in May 1994.

"He concelebrated our wedding when my husband and I married in 1996 at St. Mary's Cathedral downtown," Harris said. "Now I have bragging rights to say Bishop McKnight concelebrated our wedding."

Since his ordination, he has served at Blessed Sacrament, Newman University, St. Mark's Colwich, and the Church of the Magdalen.



Now Bishop McKnight moves on to touch the hearts of those in his new diocese.

**Bishop McKnight ... cont. on p. 3**

# Wildfire: Spreading the fire of your faith

This fall, St. Francis will be offering a weekend (Friday evening and all-day Saturday) designed to help you share your Catholic faith with family members, friends, neighbors and coworkers who no longer attend Church or have faith in God. To speak of Jesus is not to be a missionary in a foreign land, but in your own home and neighborhood.

Jesus said, "I have come to set the world on fire and how I wish it were already blazing." (Luke 12:49) When a wildfire blazes, it rapidly spreads, heats up the environment, and consumes whatever is in its way. So, too, the fire of the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus, blazes rapidly and spreads to hearts in its path, consuming them with peace and

joy.

Remember the Emmaus disciples who asked, "Were not our hearts burning within us when he spoke to us?" (Luke 24:32.)

How can we be comfortable in our faith when so many people today are consumed by depression, alcohol or drugs, materialism, and the lack of truth? They do not know or understand their faith, and perhaps no one has invited them to a life in the Spirit.

Jesus said we are to "Go and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:20)

That means you and I have been sent. James 5:20 says, "If anyone among you should stray from the truth and someone bring him back, he will save his soul from death."

We need to form an army of Spirit-filled believers blazing with love and ready to "Go" out and bring people back, sharing our joy. We need to do as Pope Francis says in his Apostolic Exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel" and be sure that "No one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord."

We all have special talents and abilities, and we all need to use these to spread the Word of God's love.

Come to the Wildfire retreat this Fall and learn how to better share your faith. Your family and friends will thank you in heaven.

More information on the Wildfire retreat will be coming.

— Joan Holmes

## CYM Cookout fun way to kick off summer

The SFA high school youth ministry had a great start to the summer at our annual CYM Cookout. We had a blast playing different yard games, having an impromptu line dance and just hanging out and catching up with the glories of summer ahead of us! It was a picture-perfect evening and

a ton of fun.

It has been a great blessing to be the chaplain for our youth ministry program this past year, and I am extremely excited for year two. It has been a pleasure to watch friendships blossom, to witness the joy of our youth, and to see the great faith and love that our students have for their

faith and for Almighty God.

All high school youth of the parish are invited and encouraged to join us for any and every CYM event this summer and next school year. I couldn't think of a better way to spend a summer evening!

— Fr. Labenz



Photo by SFA CYM

# Priests ready to be present, break chains for us

We have a tendency to see our priests as superheroes. They are men who lead us at Mass, administer the sacraments and wait for us in the confessional so that our sins might be forgiven. These seem like superpowers to us mere mortals.

These men of steel perform heroic acts as they lead us toward Jesus. Yet, they are just men. They are humble men who have answered a call.

I had a front row seat last month as 10 men “presented” themselves to become priests for the Diocese of Wichita. These men placed themselves at our service. Two of those men were parish sons, Fr. Todd Shepherd and Fr. Garrett Burns.

A third member of this group of ten, Fr. Isaac Coulter, was assigned by Bishop Kemme to serve here at St.



Francis. We welcome Fr. Coulter and thank God for the gifts of Fr. Garrett and Fr. Todd as they begin their service to the diocese.

On the back cover of this issue is a picture of Superman breaking chains, an image that has been around since the 1940s. He is a powerful figure, ever present when needed and a breaker of chains that bind. Our priests have many of these same qualities. They are powerful, not in an earthly sense, in that they channel the power of God through the sacraments.

Our priests are called to be ever present when needed. At the Ordination Mass in May, each man was called forward by name and he responded with “present.” That is the call of every priest, to the best of his abilities, to be present every day to

those they serve.

Finally, a priest is called to be a breaker of chains. He is called to break those chains of sin that bind us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Take advantage of our priests this summer. Let them assist you and unleash their supernatural powers to free you from your sins. Having your sins forgiven is super cool.

Maybe then, in some small way, our priests can be our superheroes for a day. (And Fr. Labenz would look better with an “S” on his chest instead of that “N” for Nebraska.)

– Pat Burns, Director of Stewardship & Finance

## NEW PARISHIONERS

**Christian Bosley & Sarah Lugo,**  
2 children  
**Robert & Ann Brown**  
**James Conner**  
**Roderick & Monica Heasty**  
**Steven & AnalynVo**  
**Levi & Amanda Walker**

## FUNERALS

**Gregory Meitner,** husband of Diane Meitner, on May 1  
**William Rambo,** husband of Marilyn Rambo, on May 14  
**Ann Kruse,** wife of John “Jack” Kruse, on May 21  
**Margaret Kessler,** mother of Kay Goodnight, on May 29

## BAPTISMS

**Hannah Rose,** daughter of Thomas and Kelly Anderson, on May 5  
**Lila Raquel,** daughter of Gage and Brianna Stephen, on May 19  
**Ailynn Sanjuanna,** daughter of Jonathan and Norma Garcia, on May 19  
**Jose Gabriel,** son of Manuel and Mayra Garcia, on May 20  
**Camila Rose,** daughter of Alfredo and Michelle Garcia, on May 20

*Bishop McKnight ... cont. on p. 1*

“[The words of his ordination address] made me weep,” said Jane Dalton, a parishioner in Jefferson City. “His words were fantastic, and you could tell they were from the heart, and delivered with so much love. Look, I’m going to cry right now.”

Bishop McKnight turned 50 on June 26; friends suggested showering him with cards. Please send well wishes from Wichita to: Bishop McKnight, Catholic Diocese of Jefferson City, P.O. Box 104900, Jefferson City, MO 65110-4900.

– Kristin Martin

## Parish Picnic 2018



Photos by Christina Brouillette

# Totus Tuus: 25 years of changing lives at SFA

Twenty-five years ago, I was receiving my high school diploma in California and had no clue what Totus Tuus was. Little did I know, God would put this at the forefront of my life in so many ways beginning in 1996 when I met a 20-year-old “kid” from Kansas named Chris. The Totus Tuus effect was very much a part of the person I began to fall in love with. He loved talking about the faith and he witnessed it with his actions.

Chris was a transfer student, and we were both set to graduate from Franciscan University in two years, but that was not a part of God’s plan because a jovial priest named Fr. Bernard Gorges asked Chris to give up his last year at Franciscan to become the new director for Totus Tuus in Wichita. That meant not graduating from Franciscan, and not being able to talk to each other that easily. This was way back in the days of long-distance calling and no cell phones.

For Chris, it meant giving back to a program that had ignited his faith and whose calling card read, “We’re in the business of changing lives.”

Just a few years earlier – 1993 – Fr. Ned Blickhad brought Totus Tuus to St. Francis. The first summer, St. Francis had two teams and no Totus Tuus coordinator or committee. Fr. Ned handled much of the duties. The young men on the teams stayed at the rectory, and Fr. Ned ordered in dinner each evening.

Parents stepped in to help during the day, and the first Totus Tuus committee was formed. Paula Mayhill was the first coordinator for the program at St. Francis the next year, with Pam Hein helping, and a few years later Pam stepped in as the new coordinator.

“I was blessed to have the support of many awesome priests after Fr. Ned,” Pam said. “Fr. Befort, Fr. Hotze, Fr. Hoisington, Fr. Jim Weldon, Fr. Darrin May, and Fr. David Lies were all instrumental in the continued success of Totus Tuus at St. Francis. Totus Tuus began at a time when Catholic families hungered for the opportunity to have a true Catholic spiritual experience for their children. It filled a void and showed our children that

their love for God should not be hidden.”

Ever wonder where the idea of coffee filters for snacks came from? Much of the structure now in place for St. Francis came from the mind of Pam Hein, who led the program

for 10 years. We are grateful for her past leadership and love for the program.

In the beginning years, St. Francis was a hub for Totus Tuus. St. Catherine didn’t exist yet and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton hadn’t yet started its own

program. In 1999, 284 young people in grades 1-8 packed Cana Hall. It was the biggest crowd yet! Totus Tuus changed the program from grades 1-8 for the day program to grades 1-6, and with other parishes hosting, the number of kids in the SFA program gradually decreased.

In 2004, three wonderful ladies stepped up to continue the ministry; Janet Ruder, Martha Dye and Lisa Penellawere the coordinators until 2007.

A request for a new coordinator in the bulletin prompted my interest. My oldest at the time was in first grade. I had already seen the fruits of the program blossoming in her life, and I had so much to be thankful for all it had done for Chris and his vocation, and his heart for ministry.

Mary Kotrba and I coordinated for the first time in 2008. I’ll never forget as the 125 children began to file through the door, I smiled with confidence although in my head I was thinking, “We’re going to die!”

As Mary prepared for her son’s deaconate celebration, the next year two other friends joined me: Theresa

## Totus Tuus 2018

The Totus Tuus day program for all incoming first through sixth graders runs 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. July 9-13. Incoming seventh graders through graduating seniors are invited to the Evening Twilights – 7:30 to 9:45 p.m., July 8-12.



*Totus Tuus at SFA (1999)*



*Totus Tuus at SFA (2006)*

## Boy Scout Troop 762 celebrates 55 years at SFA

The Boy Scout Court of Honor brought back many familiar faces to celebrate 55 years of scouting at SFA, 100 years in this council, and many achievements by the boys in our troop. From gardening to geocaching, first aid to engineering, and special classes to receive their Rosary patches, the boys have learned many new things and received the badges to show for all their hard work!

We witnessed rank advancements from Scout to Eagle, and former Scoutmasters were given certificates

of appreciation signed by the Mayor of Wichita.

Bernard Wells had the distinction of being the oldest former scoutmaster; he just celebrated his 90th birthday! Ray Frangenberg presented the award named for his father, Joseph Frangenberg, first scoutmaster of our troop, to this year's recipient, Nathan Koehler.

Many of our 126 Eagles returned to celebrate with us, including Kipton Emrich, eighth Eagle Scout of Troop 762. We also dedicated four

new memorial plaques in honor of Eagle Scout Michael Pracht of our parish and troop, who passed away in 2017.

Later in May we held the annual Parent and Son fishing trip at QSR. Record numbers of delicious fish were fried, and the meal was declared the best in years by all in attendance. Participants especially enjoyed the homemade ice cream with berry sauce made by Collin O'Neil.

– Sandy Rongish



Photo by Sandy Rongish

## Totus Tuus ... cont. from p. 4

Elpers and Dianne Carter (“Flo” for Florence Nightingale). The years we spent coordinating together have been sheer joy. We’ve seen many kids come and go throughout the program as teachers and students, and we’ve enjoyed the ability to be “big kids” with an insiders’ view.

I’ve grown in incredible appreciation for the wonderful families who give to this program every year. I see clearly why my husband left that year to answer Fr. Bernard’s call.

Since 1987, Totus Tuus has been in the business of changing lives. More than 61,435 youth are served each year in 41 dioceses across the nation. I was reminded of the national impact

when we were heading north on vacation a few years ago in route to visit my college roommate from Sioux Falls, S.D. She said that her kids would be around except for one week ...the week of Totus Tuus at their parish.

To say that our Totus Tuus program at SFA has impacted thousands of lives is an understatement because it has a ripple effect. Young men have committed their lives to God in the service of the priesthood, young women have answered the call to religious life, and many other young people have received the seeds to become the husbands and wives God calls them to be.

This summer marks 25 years of changing lives at St. Francis. Last year, we were blessed to have 205 students in the day program – over the limit for two Totus Tuus teams. This year, we will bring in three teams ready and willing to bring our youth closer to God. Let’s fill Cana Hall once again. Invite a friend and invite youth in your neighborhood. Let’s all be in the business of changing lives!

Totus Tuus signups start July 7-8 after all Masses, but you can also sign up the first day of Totus Tuus. Even if your child can only spend one day, it will be worth it.

– Maria Stewart

## SFA School says 'farewell' to 8th graders

Congratulations to the 59 eighth graders who marked the end of their time at St. Francis School at a Farewell Mass in their honor on May 24.

Grace Ast, Emma Benefiel, Kadence Brewster, Kiley Brewster, Peter Burns, Andrew Bye, Seth Charlton, Avery Daigle, Rebeca De La Torre, Mallory Do, Katelyn Doffing, Austin Dowell, Jadyn Exley, Jennifer Exley, Hailey Faber, Liliana Felts, Dalton Fisher.

Ruben Flores, Kendall Forbes, Noah Garcia, Pyper Garcia, Rudy

Garcia, Paige Golden, Daniel Halbleib, Jack Hartman, Brynna Hermann, Sophia Jordan, Alan Kerschen, Ryley Kirk, Nathan Landon, Jaden Lara, Jack Loyd, Gibson McElhiney, Brenna Mileham.

Alecio Morgan, Gabriella Navarro, Halene Nguyen, Alexandra O'Connor, Brooke Prichard, Meredith Robinson, Grace Rogers, Itzel Sanchez, Hannah Saville, Grace Schuster, Alexander Shoup, Grace Simon, Gabriel Sladek, Natalie Smith, Evan Snell.

Jason Stephenson, Bryce Strunk, Jack Stuckey, Lillian Taylor, Colin

Thomas, Luke Timmermeyer, Jessica Tran, Jaxon Trower, Julia Vega, Grace Vopat.



Photo by Emily Schuster

## SFS Ministries has humble beginnings at SFA

*"You are invited to begin a journey of spirit, heart and soul, in search of deepening your relationship with God, of seeking intimacy with him in prayer, contemplation and spiritual reflection. This program has been developed especially with you in mind."*

These are words of invitation to imprisoned men in long-term solitary confinement to participate in a program called Spiritual Formation in Segregation. This invitation had its beginnings at St. Francis of Assisi almost 20 years ago when as co-chair of the Social Justice Committee I began volunteering in prison ministry.

I have never been made to feel more welcome at a Mass than at the first Mass I attended in prison. My joy for serving in this corporal work of mercy led me on an unexpected path of ministering to the lost and forgotten – those locked in solitary confinement 23 hours a day, often for many years, with no opportunity for worship, communal study, programs or family visits.

As a volunteer chaplain, I began visiting these men in their cells and encountered men who were broken in spirit, experiencing an interior

darkness and deep loss of hope. Simply sharing with them the love of Christ allowed them to express their desire to know God in a deep way, an urgent way.

After earning a master's degree in pastoral ministry, I continued seeking ways to serve the incarcerated. I don't know if it was God working through the Department of Corrections, but one day I received a call from the facility chaplain stating that after a general security review, only state employees would be allowed into the segregation cell houses.

A hard blow for sure, but not enough that God would let me off the hook! It served as the springboard for the founding of SFS Ministries and the Spiritual Formation in Segregation program, which included spiritual formation materials, spiritual reading books, written reflections and spiritual direction. The program was approved for implementation within the segregation units of the prison.

Today, SFS Ministries is a 501c3 non-profit organization serving prisons in Kansas and five other states across the country.

We believe no one is beyond

the mercy of God. SFS invites the offender into a community of faith without walls or boundaries, creating an atmosphere of hope for a future that can reconcile the individual with God, family, community and the Church.

Parishioners can participate in this ministry that had its beginnings at SFA. Prayers of support, articles for our monthly Community Letter, and financial donations are all needed. A daily prayer of mine that speaks so powerfully of this ministry is the Prayer of St. Francis. The next time you pray it after Mass, do so for the 20,000-plus men in segregation cells around the country.

SFS Ministries has published two books: "In Solitary with God" and "Praying out of the Darkness." Both include reflections and prayers written by segregation prisoners and by volunteers. They can be found at Wichita-area Catholic bookstores and through Amazon. All book proceeds will be used to provide spiritual formation and a community of faith to the many thousands in solitary confinement we have yet to reach.

– Jim Rundell, Director of SFS Ministries

# 61 SFA parishioners graduate from BCCHS

Congratulations to all high school seniors from St. Francis Parish who graduated this year, including 61 from Bishop Carroll Catholic High School who celebrated their commencement May 20 at Hartman Arena. BC Class of 2018 graduates from SFA – including \*National Honor Society members, +Kansas State Scholars, and ^Kansas Exceptional Academic Performance Award winners – are:

Hanleigh Allen, Tyler Alverson, Camiela Bacha, Elizabeth Bachman, Laci Becker, James Belton, Lauren Beugelsdyk, \*Alec Bevis, +^Maisy Brouillette, Brynn Brummett, Jacob Buchanan, Jake Campbell, \*Loraine Cao, Katelynn Carroll.

Isaiah Carter, \*Chloe Charles, Braden Charlton, Noah Cutler, Benjamin Daigle, Danah Dean, Katie Dold, Jacob Exley, Grant Falconio, \*+^Kian Farley, \*Steven Farley, \*Emma Finkeldei, McKenna Fisher, Samuel Garrison, \*^Allison Gregg, +^Alexandra Grieve.

\*Ryan Griffin, Madelyn Hammer, Kora Hanna, Jackson Hanson, Daniel Jasinski, Kevin Kelly, Tyler Knolla, Richard Lara, Dawson Lee, Kyle Linsner, James Lynch, +Dillon

Malone, Jillianne Malone, Arden Mans, Joel McBeth, Austin Mernagh.

Joseph Nguyen, \*+^Kramer Pascal, Olivia Phelps, Lauren Riley, Mary Rongish, Luke Rosenhamer, Zachery Roth, Arianna Saville, Lakin Shelton, \*Tessa Simon, Brendan Snell, Skyler Stuckey, Brayden Stump, Theresa Tran, Anna Vogel.

Congratulations, also, to these SFA parishioners for their additional achievements and awards:

- Lauren Beugelsdyk and Allison Gregg, Msgr. Barth Award
- Kian Farley, National Merit Finalist
- Chloe Charles, BC/KSHSAA Citizenship Award

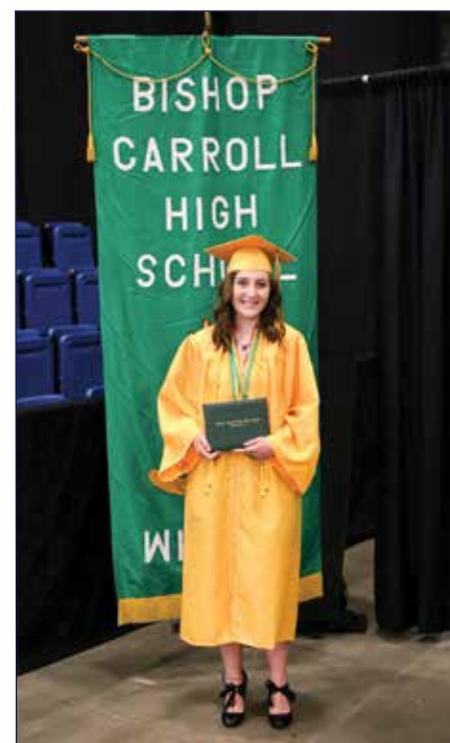
The Msgr. Arthur Barth High School Scholar Award recognizes graduates who have all As, with the possible exception of one B+ in an honors class. They have taken at least eight hours of honors courses, scored Exemplary on the two most recent diocesan religion assessments, have a minimum 30 ACT score, and an exemplary discipline record. In addition, they are active in parish stewardship, have recommendations from their pastor and the high school

chaplain, been involved in at least two school activities, and demonstrated effective leadership in at least one organization.



Allison Gregg

Photos by Pete Iseman



Lauren Beugelsdyk



Photo by Bryan Malone



# BREAKING BONDS

*“For freedom Christ set us free”*

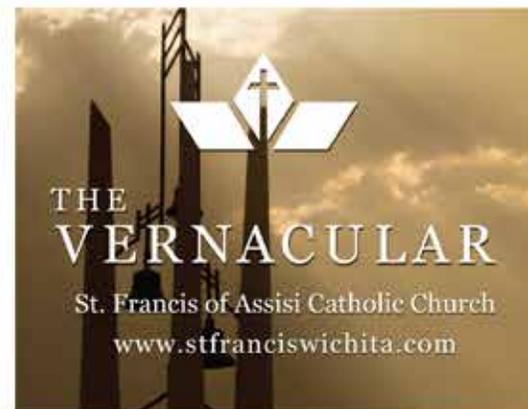
Galatians 5:1

Bishop McKnight,  
parish son, visits SFA

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Let priests be your  
superheroes for a day

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