

# St. Mary of the Visitation Catholic Church NEWSLETTER

August 2024

Volume 28



Fr. Andrew Rauenbuehler

## A NOTE FROM FR. ANDREW

Hello St. Mary's!

I hope to use this space as an opportunity to give you updates on happenings around the parish, speak about different aspects of the faith, and in general use it as a means to communicate with you all. My first couple of weeks here have been great. I have enjoyed beginning to work with the parish staff and to meet so many of you. Your warm welcome has helped make my move to Iowa City smooth and for that I am very grateful and excited to be with you all.

This week I thought I would simply share a bit about myself. I am 33, having been born and raised in Muscatine. My parents raised my siblings and I to be Catholics and Hawkeyes. My dad and mom, Mark and Sharon, live in Muscatine where they still work. I am the second oldest of five kids, three girls and 2 boys. After college (Iowa for three of them) and getting married, two sisters and my brother have made their way back to Muscatine where they are raising their families. My youngest sister lives in Des Moines with her husband. The Rauenbuehler clan is quickly growing with nieces 11 and 12 on the way later this Fall.

I graduated from Muscatine High School in 2009 and later from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN. My path towards the priesthood was a winding one. I spent just under two years overseas with a group that does international mission work. While Rome was my homebase, I spent a lot of time in Austria, Eastern Europe and Kazakhstan. Following my time spent abroad I returned home where, while working for CBI Bank and Trust, pursued a childhood interest in firefighting. I worked as a medic for two years in Davenport. It was an exciting but also challenging job but one where I was blessed to work with some great people. It was actually during this time that I began more seriously feeling God possibly calling me to the priesthood.

While faith was instilled in me from an early age, as I grew into my young adulthood and was working it became more of a chore and a duty. However, despite my work schedule, I went to Mass

every Sunday I could. While working in Davenport, I distinctly remember a string of calls that had me recognize in a profound way the need for God in people's lives. It was as if I had a desire to tell people simple truths I had been taught since I was a kid—"God loves you"—but I knew that wasn't my job in the moment. But who's job was it? The priest's. God created some space in my personal life during this time for these experiences to get me wondering if by chance this need I saw in the world and the realization that the work of a priest might be able to meet that need was his way of inviting me to consider the question "is God calling me to be a priest?"

With prayer, I pursued an application to the seminary (the school men go to for studies and formation as future priests). I thought that if I gave it a year, it would be helpful in settling these questions I had. I attended the St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, MN. Much thought, prayer and discernment went into those years while I studied and participated in seminary formation. After my time studying in St. Paul, I returned to Davenport where I was ordained in 2021. Since then, I have been serving at Our Lady of Victory in northwest Davenport and taught at Assumption High School. Both Our Lady of Victory and Assumption became like family to me. I have to admit teaching did not come naturally! I joke that, especially the first year, I learned more than my students... it was often a lesson in what not to do. Nonetheless, the last three years have been a real gift.

But I'm in Iowa City now and am very grateful to be with you all. I believe that the Lord has important work for us to do here at St. Mary's. I am confident that he has blessed us with the gifts needed that, relying on his grace, will allow us to grow together in our Catholic faith.

Please know how excited and grateful I am to be with you as we walk together here at St. Mary's.

God bless,

Fr. Andrew

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JOSEPHINE JOANN PUGELY

MILLIE LOUISE PUGELY

EVERETT JOHN PUGELY

CHARLOTTE ROSE DERY

MADDEN LEE FRERICHS

JACE JOSEPH WIESKAMP

AMELIA JUDITH CLARK

KAMSIYOCHUKWU ADELLE OKEY

JULIE THOMPSON JACINTO

JOSEPH RICHARD LAREW

ASTRE ANGELA MBEMBU

JOSHUA LUMAUTAS HAMAN

ELIJAH JOSEPH CARRIZALES

CAITLIN KAY CAVEY

ETTA ANNE HILLS MINCER

BEAU CLARK EDWARDS

MURIEL JANICE MCELENEY

**PROFESSIONS OF FAITH**

EMERY CAMPBELL

DAVID SORENSEN

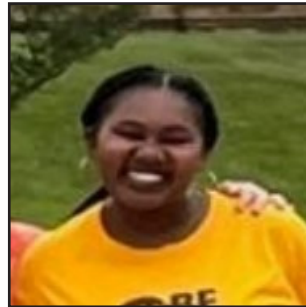
MADELINE BERST

# Our Catholic Faith

from the perspective of five high school graduates.



Ava Garcia



Claudia Wanjiri



Ian Udell



Michael Martin



Tien Pham

Article By: Patti McTaggart

**F**ive 2024 high school graduates from St. Mary's parish share with us their thoughts on the importance of having their Catholic faith in their lives.

**HOW ARE YOU TRYING TO LIVE YOUR FAITH?**

**CLAUDIA WANJIRI:** (City High School Graduate): I try to surround myself with people who help me grow in Christ and build me to be a better Christian and Catholic. I believe in doing things the way Christ himself would have done them. So in situations where someone needs help I do my best to help where I can in whatever way I can.

**IAN UDELL:** (Regina High School Graduate): I try to live my faith by going to adoration and Mass. Both really help me figure my faith out and stay close to Jesus and the Blessed Sacrament.

**TIEN PHAM:** (Liberty High School Graduate): Some ways I am trying to live my faith are going to church and praying every day.

**MICHAEL MARTIN:** (Regina High School Graduate): Going to Mass is how I live my faith. I try, also, to engage in prayer and go to confession monthly. Going to Adoration is also important - just trying to live my faith every day.

**AVA GARCIA:** (West High School Graduate): I live my faith in many ways, but I would say my main way is every time I meet someone I know that I am not to judge others. I go into every interaction with an open mind and an excitement to learn their story. It helps me grow as a person and in my faith.

**WHO/WHAT SUPPORTS YOUR FAITH JOURNEY?**

**CLAUDIA WANJIRI:** (City High School Graduate): I would say my family is where most of my support comes from. Whether it is in prayers or simply teaching me something I didn't know - my family does an excellent job!

**MICHAEL MARTIN:** (Regina High School Graduate) Definitely my parents and my family have helped my faith journey the most. My parents have been my main influence throughout my life - making sure I get to Mass every Sunday and all the good stuff like that. And then my siblings as well. They provide good examples for me by keeping their faith in college - we always help each other out like that.

**TIEN PHAM:** (Liberty High School

Graduate): My family and friends supports my faith. I am grateful for that.

**IAN UDELL:** (Regina High School Graduate) My parents and the community at St. Mary's and the Newman Center as well. And also a structured prayer time – just adding that structure to my day.

**AVA GARCIA:** (West High School Graduate) My faith has been heavily supported by my mother. We always go to church on Sundays. Even when we are traveling we always make time to find a church wherever we are and attend.

### **WHO/WHAT PULLS YOU FARTHER FROM YOUR FAITH?**

**CLAUDIA WANJIRI:** (City High School Graduate): I would say that the times where I've found myself struggling with my faith have been during hard times. It's always the times when things are not going "my way" that I find myself questioning God and wondering if it's worth all the effort if I'm not getting what I ask for. However, every time I find myself there, God gives me a reason to believe and my faith becomes stronger.

**IAN UDELL:** (Regina High School Graduate) Social media pulls me away– just having that mindless scrolling.

**TIEN PHAM:** (Liberty High School Graduate): The devil because the devil brings a lot of temptations and I try my best to not go into the direction the devil wants to send me.

**MICHAEL MARTIN:** (Regina High School Graduate) I would say video games and stuff that I waste my time on – or spend too much time on. It doesn't allow me to prioritize and spend time with God.

**AVA GARCIA:** (West High School Graduate) I would say there are always challenges to faith in general. Faith is a choice and I choose it every day. There's nothing specific that challenges me and whenever there is, I know that I should do my best to overcome and be rid of that challenge.

### **DO YOU HAVE PLANS POST HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE?**

**CLAUDIA WANJIRI:** (City High School Graduate): I plan to move to Kentucky in August where I will be attending Berea College.

**MICHAEL MARTIN:** (Regina High School Graduate) I am headed to Iowa State University to study aerospace engineering (and hoping to get a degree in that area) and then looking for a job after college.

**TIEN PHAM:** (Liberty High School Graduate): I plan to go to Buena Vista University to study and wrestle there.

**IAN UDELL:** (Regina High School Graduate) I will be attending the University of Iowa for Music and Business and then post-college possibly the Seminary.

**AVA GARCIA:** (West High School Graduate) I plan to attend the University of Notre Dame and study Actuarial Science and Business Analytics.

### **HOW WILL YOU BRING YOUR FAITH WITH YOU TO COLLEGE?**

**CLAUDIA WANJIRI:** (City High School Graduate): I plan on getting myself involved in church in whatever way feels best and is available to me. I also plan on attending more Christ-centered events with friends.

**IAN UDELL:** (Regina High School Graduate) Probably to just try to not be afraid to be authentically Catholic especially at the University of Iowa since it is a public school – and being able to be that Catholic witness to others.

**TIEN PHAM:** (Liberty High School Graduate): I will continue to go to church and pray every day.

**MICHAEL MARTIN:** (Regina High School Graduate) Iowa State is nice because it has St. Thomas Aquinas Parish right on the street. I will be able to get there to Mass every Sunday and to Adoration and Confession whenever I want. So I will be able to stay true to what I've known my whole life and not change anything.

**AVA GARCIA:** (West High School Graduate) Notre Dame is a Catholic college so I will be aided in my journey, but I would say that I will be doing the same as I have. Hoping to embody a good Catholic, I will treat others with kindness and acceptance. I want to be a good role model of the Catholic faith.

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO BE CATHOLIC?**

**CLAUDIA WANJIRI:** (City High School Graduate): Being a Catholic means to be one with Christ through His Body and Blood and through a person's actions outside of the four walls. To act like Christ, love like Christ, and care for people just like Christ would.

**MICHAEL MARTIN:** (Regina High School Graduate) Being Catholic to me means following the teachings of the Church - but also being a good person all around and trying to lead others by example. I hope to always be kind and respectful and mindful of others and help others try to achieve the same goals.

**TIEN PHAM:** (Liberty High School Graduate): Being a Catholic means that you worship God and put your faith into Him because He made a different journey for everyone to go through to be the best person they can be.

**IAN UDELL:** (Regina High School Graduate) Being Catholic to me means to love Jesus and love the Church that He gave us. Being Catholic gives me strength to not be scared about sharing my faith - to boldly proclaim it.

**AVA GARCIA:** (West High School Graduate) To me being a Catholic is to embody and spread the love of God and Jesus through my actions. To be kind and welcoming to all who cross my path, and help those who need it. I believe – for everyone - being a Catholic is being the best version of yourself and utilizing your unique talents and purpose to give back to the world and those in it.



**FIRST  
COMMUNIONS**

DAVID SORENSEN  
 MADELINE BERSSET  
 RYLEY BLAKE  
 MAREN JARRETT  
 GILBERT CAMPBELL  
 NORA TENTINGER  
 JOSHUA TRUONG  
 EVELYN TRUONG  
 JACKSON WITT  
 CURIE MIMS  
 MAELLE AGBO  
 KAYLEIGH ALVARADO  
 ANNA AZZI  
 ADELINE  
 BALKENENDE  
 MYFAITH BATAI  
 EMERY CAMPBELL  
 JOHN FARMER  
 THOMAS FLYNN  
 LOGAN FUNKE  
 CHLOE JACOBSEN  
 SOFIE JACOBSEN  
 ROMAN JORGENSEN  
 MARIE MILUALA  
 ALASTAIR NELSON  
 HANNAH NOONAN  
 TADHG RUIARI  
 CATHAL RUIARI  
 DANIEL SILL  
 MAYA SIMMONS  
 MARIAN STUTZMAN  
 LILY TANDON  
 NATHAN TRAN  
 QUINN TUNNING  
 MOLLIE WEGMAN

## Welcome to St. Mary's, Father Andrew



On the first weekend of July, St. Mary's welcomed Father Andrew Rauenbuehler as our new parochial administrator. Fr. Andrew is a native of Muscatine, Iowa. Most recently, Fr. Andrew served as parochial vicar at Our Lady of Victory Parish in Davenport and as the chaplain of Assumption High School in Davenport.

Fr. Andrew's first weekend at St. Mary's was busy. He began Saturday morning with First Saturday Mass at 9:00am. He followed that with weekly Reconciliation. Next, there was a funeral on Saturday morning. Later that day, Fr. Andrew celebrated Saturday evening Mass. This was followed by the first of three receptions in the Parish Hall with the Mass attendees. On Sunday, Fr. Andrew

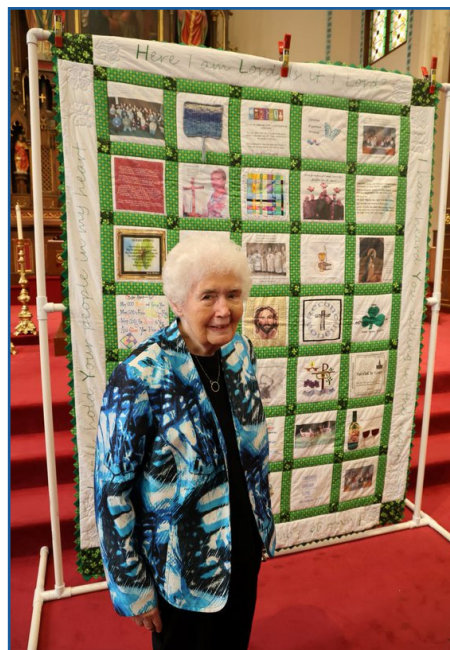
Article By: Bill Doucette

celebrated both the 8:30 and 10:30 Masses, with a reception after each. In addition, after the 10:30 Mass he performed a baptism before attending the reception. All in all, Fr. Andrew was busy meeting the needs of his new parish. We are blessed to have him here at St. Mary's.

In his homily that weekend, Fr. Andrew said he is happy to be at St. Mary's. He knows Iowa City from when his siblings attended the University of Iowa. He told us that St. Mary's is a community, where we can help each other and live our faith as brothers and sisters in Christ. Together we can get to know God, love God and serve God. We can look forward to having Fr. Andrew lead us in being active in our faith. Welcome Father Andrew!



## Sr. Agnes' Faith Journeys Talk



The most common feedback from Sr. Agnes Giblin's Faith Journeys presentation on Sunday, June 9th, at St. Mary's Church was how many people thought it was inspirational and appreciated her humor injected throughout the talk.

I invite and encourage anyone who was not able to be present for the talk to listen to it on St. Mary's YouTube channel. Or, if you were there, you will probably want to hear it again! Here is the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p51Zk58mFH8>

Near the end of her Faith Journeys talk Sr. Agnes said, "I start each day with three requests: I ask the Lord to make me aware of His presence in His surprises in my life. I ask Him to help me be good news to all whom I meet; and to share His love with someone on the way. He always fulfills those requests!" These are great takeaways from the talk and model ideals and actions that we can live by!

# Music Notes

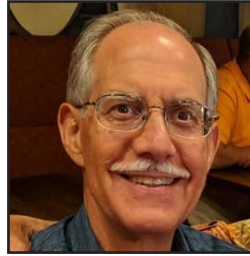
with Bernie Osvald, Jim Sirois, and Michael Valiga



Bernie Osvald



Jim Sirois



Michael Valiga

Article By: Colleen Hogan

## 1. WHAT CREATED YOUR INTEREST IN BEING A MUSICIAN?

**MICHAEL VALIGA:** I've always enjoyed accompanying groups of singers around campfires, at church services, and in informal settings. In college, I bought an inexpensive guitar and learned to play religious hymns for Catholic Student Center services at UW Stevens Point. This skill also dovetailed well with my role as a camp counselor for the YMCA and Boy Scouts.

**JIM SIROIS:** In high school one of my best friends was a musician. That got me interested in the guitar.

## 2. WHEN DID YOU START SHARING YOUR MUSIC AT ST. MARY'S?

**MICHAEL VALIGA:** I've been playing 12-string guitar for St. Mary's since the early 1980s. I moved to St. Mary's from the old Center East here at the University of Iowa.

**JIM SIROIS:** I can't remember the exact date, but I believe it was mid 2000's

## 3. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ASPECT OF BEING A MUSICIAN AT ST. MARY'S?

**MICHAEL VALIGA:** It's rewarding to hear the congregation sing along with the music during church services. I view my role as that of an accompanist rather than a performer.

**JIM SIROIS:** Playing with other musicians.

## 4. WHERE IS YOUR HOMETOWN?

**MICHAEL VALIGA:** Freedom, Wisconsin, a small unincorporated community near Green Bay, Wisconsin.

**JIM SIROIS:** Iowa City

## 5. DID YOU PERFORM IN HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE?

**MICHAEL VALIGA:** I briefly played cornet for my junior high school band, bugle for scout camps, and guitar for church services during college.

**JIM SIROIS:** I was still learning in high school but was in a band in college.

## 6. DO YOU RECALL YOUR FIRST PERFORMANCE? WHEN? WHERE? SONG?

**MICHAEL VALIGA:** I was never really a "performer", but my first public guitar event was for a Catholic Student Center church service at Stevens Point over fifty years ago. I stumbled through whatever the popular church songs were at the time (e.g., "Sons of God").

**JIM SIROIS:** When? My senior year in college. Where? The campus pub. Song? Hotel California.

## 7. DOES A CERTAIN HYMN HOLD SPECIAL MEANING FOR YOU? SONG? WHY?

**MICHAEL VALIGA:** I've always liked the song "On Eagles Wings". It has an uplifting and hopeful message, and encourages us to remember that God is always there.

**JIM SIROIS:** I like "Rain Down" because it has a good bass line and is fun to play.

## 8. DO YOU USE/SHARE YOUR MUSIC TALENT ELSEWHERE?

**MICHAEL VALIGA:** I still play guitar for Scouting campfires, at senior living homes during the Christmas season, and occasionally for my grandchildren.

**JIM SIROIS:** Sometimes I play with friends.

## 9. DO YOU HAVE A DAY JOB/ PROFESSION?

**MICHAEL VALIGA:** I've been retired for the past 10 years from my job as a research department director at ACT where I worked for 37 years.

**JIM SIROIS:** I am retired and work part time.

## 10. OTHER BIT OF INFORMATION TO SHARE ABOUT YOURSELF OR FAMILY?

**MICHAEL VALIGA:** For the past 30 years, I've coordinated the Scouting for Food service project for our local Scouting district. Hundreds of scouts participate in this event annually, collecting more than 10,000 pounds of donated food each year. This year my wife and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary. We raised three children and have eight grandchildren.

**JIM SIROIS:** I am married and have two grown kids and two dogs.

**BERNIE OSVALD:** I have always enjoyed singing and several friends that my wife and I had known since the 1970's had become members of the "Contemporary Group" at St. Mary's. Many times when we got together we would sing. One of them, possibly under the influence of a glass of wine, invited me to join the group. I think that it was possibly in 1997 because I have a picture from the St. Mary's Church directory from 1998 and I was a part of the group then. My daughter, Melissa, joined us in 2002 when she was in eighth grade. She is now the cantor for our group.

I was born in Cedar Rapids and my family moved to a farm in Independence, Iowa, when I was in first grade. Even though I've always enjoyed singing, I was not in choir in high school or college and have no music background. All the music that I know I have learned on the fly from being a member of our group at St. Mary's. I guess that my regret is that I didn't join the high school choir all those years ago so that I might better contribute to our group.

My wife, Denna, and I have been retired for seven years now and will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary in August.



## CONFIRMATIONS

DAVID SORENSEN

MADELINE BERST

RYLEY BLAKE

CHARLIZE SANTOS

DAVID VERASTEGUI

ETHAN TITUS

## MARRIAGES

MAUREEN JENNINGS  
AND SERGIO FLORES,  
JR.ISABEL BERG AND  
MATTHEW BERSTELIZABETH  
PRITCHARD AND  
WILLIAM GUILERPAIGE KAMIN AND  
ALEX WASKOWTHI ANH THO  
NGUYEN AND TUYEN  
NHAT TRANSOFIA LUSIGNAN  
AND OBED LOPEZLAUREN GAARDE  
AND THOMAS RAPP

## FUNERALS

ANNA MAY MILLER

ALICE FUHRMEISTER

CLAUDETTE  
SCHAFER

DALE SEYDEL

DAVID BENEY

MARGARET SEYDEL

ROSE ZINKULA

MELVIN  
DORPINGHAUS

JOAN VANDERVOORT

# Farewell to Fr. David Paintsil

On Sunday June 30th we bid farewell to Fr. David Paintsil who began his next mission as parochial administrator of St. Joseph Parish-Hills, St. Mary Parish-Lone Tree and St. Mary Parish-Nichols on July 1st. He came to us on a journey of faith just one short year ago. His Faith in God's plan brought him 5,245 miles to us from Ghana, West Africa. This journey of faith would have him leave his home, his friends, his loving parents and eight siblings to travel across the Atlantic Ocean to serve our community as parochial vicar then administrator.



Fr. David came to us in a time of transition after Fr. Steve Witt's ten and a half years of serving our community. In the face of uncertainty Fr. David led us with grace, joy, warmth, a brilliant smile and a song from the heart.

At his final mass at St. Mary's of the visitation Fr. David wanted to reiterate and impart three key lessons from his time with us.

1. Have deep faith in the holy eucharist. When we receive Jesus through the Eucharist with faith, we WILL experience an all encompassing healing mind, body and soul.
2. Have faith in Marial devotion (devotion to our blessed mother Mary). Before Jesus died he told Mary, "Woman, behold thy son and (Disciple) behold thy mother." The disciple was not mentioned by name because that disciple was meant to represent you and me.
3. Imitate the faith of Mary. Live by her proverb, "I am the handmaid of the Lord, may it be done to me according to God's will."

Fr. David departed from the lectern after a

Article By: Jeanette Roush-Krafka

Ghanaian song about Mary and how she had done well, and gave us a savior.



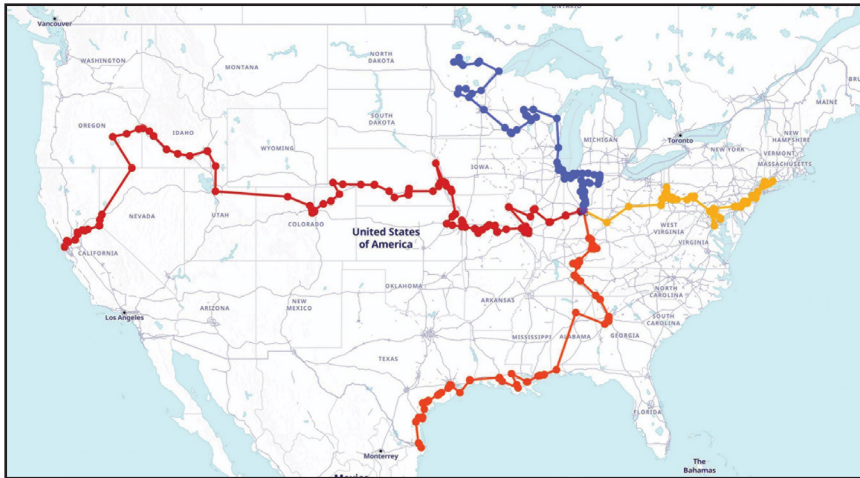
Fr. David taught us a great many things during his brief year with us. He conveyed to us the importance of Marian devotion, he reminded us of the great value of Eucharistic adoration by resuming the sacred ritual of a weekly Holy Hour and Eucharistic Adoration. He also began a Eucharistic procession to show us the visible expression of our faith by literally taking Jesus out into the world and proclaiming the good news. Fr. David brought some of the Ghanaian culture of music to us and showed us that mass is a celebration intended for us to extol as a unified community.

Sr. Agnes said it best in her farewell from the ambo, "We bid you farewell with a song in our heart. You have filled our hearts with love, care, concern, welcome, joy, warmth, smiles, spiritual nourishment, just to name a few. These are memories we will always treasure. We send you forth with our gratitude, our love, blessings and a promise of our continued prayerful support, with a reminder that Hills is only eight miles away."





# A Day in the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage



Leading up to the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis on July 17-21 this summer, there were four National Eucharistic Pilgrimages that lasted about 60 days. In each of the pilgrimages a Eucharistic procession and daily Mass were held, letting the faithful spend time with our Lord Jesus. The routes were the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton route from New Haven, CT, the St. Juan Diego route starting in Brownsville, TX, the St. Junipero Serra route from San Francisco and the Marian route starting near the headwaters of the Mississippi River in northern Minnesota.

The Marian route pilgrimage started in Minnesota, went across Wisconsin and then dropped down into Illinois north of Chicago. On June 26 the pilgrimage spent time at Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, IL. On that day, Jane, Bill and Father Isaac Doucette drove to Mundelein



from Iowa City and participated in the pilgrimage activities there. Isaac had attended seminary at Mundelein, so it was a bit of a homecoming for him – returning as a priest after years there as a seminarian.

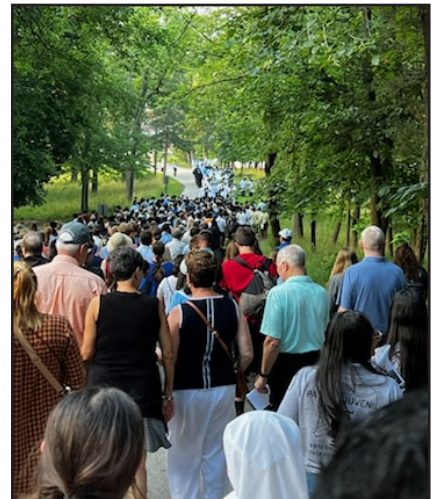


The first event of the pilgrimage was a Mass, in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, with more than 500 people in attendance. In addition to Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago Jeffrey Grob, more than 20 priests and 15 deacons celebrated the Mass. Fr. Isaac was able to join some of his former teachers and classmates in celebrating the liturgy. The Gospel (MT 7:15-20) talked about how like good and bad trees, we are judged by our fruit. What type of fruit are we producing in our lives?

After the Mass, Jesus was placed in a monstrance on the altar for adoration. After a period of silence, prayers were chanted and songs sung (e.g. Tantum Ergo). Then Bishop Grob, carrying the monstrance, led a procession out of the church with the priests and deacons next and the assembly following reverently.

Article By: Bill Doucette

The procession, which lasted about an hour, went across the grounds of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake, which houses Mundelein Seminary. Five times the procession stopped and the Bishop or a priest performed benediction while hundreds of people knelt on the ground or street. We walked under the forest that lines the roads and along the shore of the lake. It was uplifting to see Jesus being adored by so many Catholics in such a beautiful setting. The procession ended back outside the Chapel, where it began.



We found the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage to be a spiritually moving event. Sharing our love for Jesus in the Eucharist was renewing and exciting. Spending 4-5 hours with Jesus with hundreds of faithful pilgrims made our hearts burn for Him. It was a special day that we will long remember. Thanks be to God.

# St. Mary of the Visitation Catholic Church

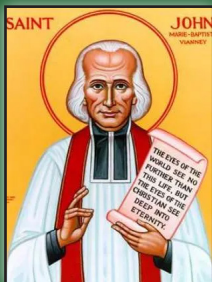
302 E. Jefferson St. Iowa City, IA 52245



ST. MARY'S NEWSLETTER VOL. 28

## Saint John Vianney 1786-1859

(Feast Day: August 4)



John Mary (Jean-Marie) Vianney was born on 8 May 1786, in the French town of Dardilly, and was baptized the same day. He was the fourth of six children. The Vianneys were devout Catholics who helped the poor.

By 1790, the anticlerical Terror phase of the French Revolution forced many loyal priests to hide from the regime in order to carry out the sacraments in their parish. The Catholic Church was re-established in France in 1802, resulting in religious peace throughout the country. By this time, Vianney was concerned about his future vocation and longed for an education. He was taught at a "presbytery school" in the neighboring village of Écully, conducted by the Abbé Balley. He was having great difficulty in his studies for the priesthood. Mathias Loras, perhaps the most intelligent of Jean-Marie's fellow seminarians, was assigned to help him in his lessons. One day his patience was exhausted by the sheer incapacity of the young man, and he chastised him in front of all the other students. Jean-Marie he knelt down before Mathias and humbly asked his forgiveness. Mathias felt smitten with grief and he threw himself into the arms of Jean-Marie. This incident marked the beginning of an abiding friendship. Mathias Loras subsequently became a missionary in the United States, and eventually Bishop of Dubuque, Iowa, but never could he forget the humble actions of Jean-Marie. Because of Vianney's deep desire to be a priest, he persevered. He was ordained a priest in

1815 and was appointed the assistant to Balley in Écully. In 1818, shortly after the death of Balley, Vianney was appointed parish priest (Curé) of the parish of Ars, a town of 230 inhabitants. As parish priest, Vianney realized that the Revolution's aftermath had resulted in religious ignorance and indifference, due to the devastation wrought on the Catholic Church in France. Vianney spent time in the confessional and gave homilies against blasphemy and profanity. His stern sermons were later collected together in the famous "Sermons of the Curé of Ars" along with his moral Catechetical Instructions. He is known for his priestly and pastoral work resulting in the radical spiritual transformation of the community and its surroundings. He came to be known internationally, and people from distant places began travelling to consult him as early as 1827. The number of pilgrims reached 20,000 a year. Vianney yearned for the contemplative life of a monk, and four times ran away from Ars, the last time in 1853. He decided after the final time that it was not to meant to be. During the last ten years of his life, he spent at 12 to 16 hours a day in the confessional. When he passed away August 4, 1859, he left behind a legacy of faith and was viewed as a champion of the poor. On October 3, 1873, Pope Pius IX proclaimed Fr. Vianney as "venerable" and on January 8, 1905, Pope Pius X beatified him. St. John Vianney was canonized on May 31, 1925. His feast day is August 4. He is the patron of parish priests, confessors, Personal Apostolic Administration of Saint John Mary Vianney, Archdiocese of Dubuque, and Archdiocese of Kansas City.