



Issue 17, November 27, 2019

# The Vianney Vine

"I am the vine and you are the branches." John 15.5

Saint John Vianney Catholic Church

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## Thank you for your giving spirit

I enjoy the months of November and December. These months are especially heartwarming as our thoughts embrace the love of family and sharing that love with others. As a parish, we reach out in love on behalf of all in our faith community.



Father Vrba

You will probably receive this *Vianney Vine* at the same time parishioners donate food to help folks in our community celebrate Thanksgiving.

It's amazing to see the Activity Center transformed into a mobile food pantry. The food collected and distributed is just a reminder of how many depend on the generosity of others to help their families in need. For your generosity, I give thanks.

The parish Angel Tree will soon be in the Gathering Space. Taking a card and remembering others in our community will help so many have a joyful Christmas. These gifts are a reminder of the gifts the Magi presented to Jesus to honor him as the savior of all people. Those who receive them are reminders of the face of Jesus. For making that connection, I give thanks.



This was just the start of the annual Thanksgiving food drive to provide baskets to families in need.

Through your generosity we gift many organizations in our community and beyond throughout the year. They include Bettendorf Food Pantry, Central Food Pantry, Saint James Food Pantry, Café on Vine, Camp Shalom, Habitat for Humanity, Humility Homes and Services, King's Harvest, Our Lady of the Prairie, Salvation Army, Vera French Foundation and Housing, Bettendorf Care Link, Churches United, Oaks Catholic Worker, Project Renewal, Quad Cities Interfaith, Women's Choice Center, Agape Center Project, Winnie's Place and Bridgeway Home. These are in addition to the work of our parish Haiti Committee and the work

# Parishioner generosity funds many organizations

Continued from Page 1

of our parish Haiti Committee and the work of other parish groups.

They are all very appreciative of our support.

**Café on Vine:** “Please know your gift will be used to support the work of Café On Vine ... We are grateful for your generous support as we partner to feed the hungry of the Quad City community. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of our guests who visit the Café.”

**Humility Homes and Services:** “Your support helps create and sustain the housing programs and services our community members need to help them transition from homelessness to housing stability and creating a home. A young child commented last summer after bouncing from one shelter to another, ‘I now have my own pillow – I can watch the TV shows I like to watch – I have a grassy backyard to play in.’”

**Vera French:** “Your congregation has generously supported over the years the vision and critical need for quality, comprehensive and accessible mental health care in the Quad Cities. Your faith community has also worked tirelessly to break down the stigma around mental illness and behavioral disorders.”

In recognition of our support we, and Saint Paul Lutheran Church in Davenport, received the



Father Vrba is pictured with Vera French officials, from left, Stacy Kiser-Wiley, Bill Ashton, Dr. Richard Whitaker and Kathy Langley as the parish was honored with a Friend of Vera French award.

“Friend of Vera French” award. You can see the award at our Welcome Center.

**Women’s Choice Center:** “Your gifts are – in every sense of the word – an investment in the lives of those who come in our door; born and preborn ... Lives are being changed and saved because of your gift and your ongoing prayers. Thank you for investing in all that happens here on Happy Joe Drive.”

For your generous stewardship that enables us to share with others – I thank you!

Every Blessing!

**REAL PRESENCE  
REAL LOVE**

MASS & EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Join us every Friday  
for Mass at 5:30 p.m.  
followed by  
Eucharistic Adoration.



**Saint John Vianney Church  
offers these gatherings  
to celebrate the holy seasons of  
Advent and Christmas 2019.**

**We invite you join us.**

**Snowflake Central (Religious Ed. Event)**  
Wednesday, December 4, 6:00–7:30 p.m.  
Activity Center

**Immaculate Conception Mass\***  
\*Patronal Feastday of the U.S.; not a Holyday of Obligation  
Monday, December 9, 9:00 a.m.  
Church



**Angel Tree Gifts  
to be returned by  
Sunday, December 15**

**All Parishes Communal Reconciliation**  
Sunday, December 15, 3:00 p.m.  
Our Lady of Victory, Davenport  
Monday, December 16, 6:30 p.m.  
St. John Vianney

**Reflect, Refresh, Remember**  
*A ladies' evening of renewal for Advent*  
Sunday, December 15, 7:00–8:00 p.m.  
Mary Chapel

**SJV Preschool Christmas Program**  
Wednesday, December 18, 6:00 p.m.  
Church

**Sacrament of Reconciliation (extended)**  
Saturday, December 21, 3:00–4:15 p.m.  
Reconciliation Room & Mary Chapel

**Christmas Eve Masses (Tue. December 24)**  
4:00 p.m. Music by the Brass Ensemble  
(beginning at 3:30 p.m.)

6:30 p.m. Music by the Celebration Ringers  
(beginning at 6:10 p.m.)

10:00 p.m. Music by the Exultate Choir and  
Woodwind Quartet  
(beginning at 9:45 p.m.)

**Christmas Day Masses (Wed. December 25)**  
9:30 a.m. @ The Fountains  
10:00 a.m. @ St. John Vianney  
Music by Young Adult Music Ministry  
(beginning at 9:45 a.m.)

**Holy Family Masses**  
Saturday, December 28, 4:30 p.m.  
Sunday, December 29, 7:30/9:00/11:00 a.m.

**Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God Masses**  
Tuesday, December 31, 4:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, January 1, 9:00 a.m.

**Twelfth Night Celebration**  
A night to give thanks to our parish volunteers  
Saturday, January 11, 6:00–9:00 p.m.  
Activity Center

**Parish Office Holiday Hours**  
November 28-29: closed  
December 24-26: closed  
December 27: 8:00 a.m.--12:00 p.m.  
December 30--January 1: closed  
January 2: Return to regular schedule

# Volunteers keep parish environment beautiful

You may not see them at work, but rest assured that the dedicated volunteers who make up the St. Francis Art & Environment Group at Saint John Vianney are constantly busy ensuring that our worship environment is beautiful and inspiring.

The group of 43 women takes care of everything from replacing liturgical banners, arranging flowers, washing and repairing altar linens, seasonally decorating the Gathering Space and making sure the sacred worship areas are clean.

You can find them on Friday mornings replacing vigil candles in the large candle boxes, dusting everything on and around the altar – including the steps -- trimming candle wicks and putting fresh linens on the altar. The Gathering Space and the Eucharistic Chapel and Mary Chapel also get special attention.

“Everyone on the committee takes a great deal of pride and responsibility in making sure that the church looks good and things are prepared for the weekend,” said Linda Schneider, chair of the group. Much of the work in enhancing the environment of the worship space also must follow liturgical guidelines.

Father Jim Vrba said a liturgical document titled: "Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture, and Worship" published by the U.S. Bishops in 2000, is the handbook that guides everything from building and furnishing a new church building to how to renovate an existing building.

“It emphasizes the language of symbol and the importance of signs through



Beth Dittman, a member of the St. Francis Art & Environment Group, puts fresh linens on the altar during the weekly cleaning of the church's public spaces. Members of the group wash and iron the linens at home. More than 40 women volunteer in this ministry.



Joyce Stevenson, left, uses a handled duster to clean up around the altar, while Jane Hughes removes a vigil candle from the candle box before putting in a new one. Cleaning of the sanctuary, the chapels and the Gathering Space takes place every Friday morning.



which we express and deepen our relationship with God,” he said. “Our Art and Environment Committee is very sensitive to arrange and furnish our spaces for worship and hospitality in such a way that they help lead us into the mystery of the presence and

message of Jesus. This is a noble task, which they do well.”

Linda’s interest in maintaining a beautiful church environment grew from her family’s involvement in parish work at St. Joseph’s Church in Aurora, Ill.

Continued on Page 5

# SJV delegation attends national conference

Forty-five teens from Saint John Vianney traveled to Indianapolis this month to experience their faith with thousands of others from throughout the country.

The biennial trip to the National Catholic Youth Conference is always considered a highlight for members of SJV's Youth Ministry and director Jan Stevenson. The conference draws more than 20,000 young people who participate in prayer, daily Mass, discussions and hear from some of the top speakers and entertainers among young Catholics today.

Jan, one of nine adults who chaperoned the youth, was attending NCYC for the 14<sup>th</sup> time. Each time is new, she said.

"I get to see the growth of the young people," she said.



Meeting with the teens and their parents on November 3, she talked about the expectations and logistics of the trip (what T-shirt to wear on what day). All participants were given T-shirts in orange, burgundy and green, and gray hoodies with the SJV logo. Wearing the same colors makes it easier to find people in your group in the vast Lucas Oil Stadium, where NCYC activities are held.

Her main message to them: "You're looking to see who God is calling you to be."

Participants at NCYC had special journals in which to write down their thoughts about the experience.

As the Indianapolis trip was taking place just as this issue of The Vianney Vine was going to press, look for the teens' thoughts on NCYC in the next issue, which will be published just before Lent.

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## Art & Environment group follows liturgical guidelines

Continued from Page 4

"As a child, I grew up in a family that was involved in parish activities, such as the choir, Mom spending days making donuts, etc., for the parish bake sale, Dad giving his plumbing expertise when the need arose," she said. "It was just what we did."

Ellen Gerard has been a member of the Art & Environment committee for 20 years. She, like others on the committee became involved through founding member Juel Boast. Ellen said it was a great way to become involved and meet people since she and her husband, Dennis, were fairly new to the area.

"My favorite part of Arts & Environment has, of course, been the people. I have enjoyed learning the liturgical aspect of decoration as well as decorating for Advent and Lent," she said. "One of my favorite times is when I have needed to stop by the church for a quick task and I am all alone. It is very quiet and a very spiritual time. I hear so much in the quiet."

Group members who gathered recently for an annual meeting shared tips about their work and also their hopes that



Arts & Environment chair Linda Schneider shows the collection of banners that are put up during the different liturgical seasons.

parishioners would respect the sacred space by picking up their items at the end of Mass.

"The women on this committee and several of the husbands who support the work, are interested in maintaining a Church that is prayerful and inspiring," Linda said.

# The Power of Prayer

## Religious Ed students receive special gift

Prayer is an important part of the family life for Jason and Sonia Meria-Deutmeyer and their children, Hannah and Johann.

So when 11-year-old Johann brought home a special folder of prayers and a rosary, a gift to Religious Education students in grades 1-6 from the SJV Vocations Ministry, the family joyfully embraced its contents.



**The Deutmeyer family — Jason, Sonia, Hannah and Johann.**

“I sure hope and pray that every RE family realizes what great treasures of the Catholic faith tools and spiritual weapons they just received in that packet,” Sonia texted to RE co-director Jeannie Moran. “All the seeds and golden nuggets were there! Wow! Truly Amazing. Thank you!”

As Jason was out of town the week the prayer pack was distributed, Sonia went through the contents with Johann. They included a Grace Before and After meals card, Saint Serra Book of Prayers (“This is a little book of powerful prayers,” she said), How to Pray the Rosary and The Rosary for Children pamphlets, 40 Ways to Foster Prayer in Your Home, Seven Ways Families Can Foster Vocations, a card from the Diocese of Davenport with photos of all seminarians and a Vocations Prayer, and a Prayer to Know my Vocation.

“Praying before going to bed has always been a part of our family routine, but praying the Holy Rosary has now also become a big part of it,” Sonia said. “It opens up discussions and keeps the conversation going about the mysteries of Jesus’ birth, death and resurrection.”

Sonia also sent a copy of the Saint Serra Book of Prayers to her daughter, Hannah, a student at DePaul University in Chicago.

The Vocations Ministry settled on the “prayer pack” project after Vocations Ministry co-chair Pat Monahan spoke with a representative of the Saint Serra Club of Davenport, which fosters vocations, and a parishioner from St. Paul the Apostle parish where children took turns taking a backpack full of prayers home each week. Jeannie proposed distributing a prayer pack to all students, using folders rather than backpacks. Rosaries were purchased by the Knights of Columbus Council 4403.

“We wanted to encourage prayer at home,” said Tom Touney, co-chair of the Vocations Ministry.

The Wednesday classes received their rosaries and folders of prayers on October 2. The children sat in the church while

parochial vicar Father Nicholas Akindele talked to them about the gift of prayer.

“If you want to be a good soccer player, what do you do?” he asked.

“Practice!” was the response.

“If you want to be a friend of Jesus, what do you do?” he asked, before answering, “You pray, to be a child of God.”



**Religious Education students in the class taught by Michelle Steen and Lara Dague hold up their new prayer packs and rosaries.**

Continued on Page 7



Father Nicholas led a discussion about prayer with Religious Education students before blessing their new rosaries, below.

Continued from Page 6

After the rosaries were distributed, the children were asked to hold them up while Father Nicholas blessed them.

“When you pray the rosary, you become closer and closer to God,” he said.

In a letter to Religious Ed families that accompanied the prayer pack, Pastor Father Jim Vrba noted what a treasure the Catholic prayer tradition is.

“Please pray that everyone will follow God’s call to holiness given at baptism,” he wrote.

“Pray also that young people will listen and follow God’s call to a vocation as a priest, a deacon, a religious sister or brother, or a faith-filled married or single life.”

While speaking with Jeannie Moran at the Newcomers Luncheon in October, new parishioner Holly Parsons spoke of the impact of her daughter Kate, 7, receiving a rosary.

“She wanted to practice saying it,” Holly said. “I recorded her saying it. Afterward, she said, ‘I have never felt so good in my entire life’.”

And, Holly noted, “I was filled with so much joy.”

Religious Ed teachers Robin Moralez and Tammy Guest took a lesson about the rosary outdoors, as a “Living Rosary” was drawn in chalk on the sidewalk outside the north door of the parish complex.

Contact Tom Touney at [ttouney@aol.com](mailto:ttouney@aol.com) if you are interested in getting a prayer pack for your family.





# Medical trip canceled amid safety concerns

Normally at this time of year, members of the Saint John Vianney medical mission team to Haiti would be counting medications and making plans for setting up a weeklong clinic in January to serve residents in Jean Denis, the community where SJV's sister parish, Notre Dame du Rosaire, is located.

Instead, they wait anxiously for word from the community that has been struck with the violence that has plagued the rest of the country in the wake of political unrest and human rights violations. The situation prompted a cancellation of the January trip because it is not safe to travel to the village where the SJV team has made so many friends.

So, they pray and ask all parishioners at SJV to do the same.

"There are no words to describe how devastating this is," said Ann Wester, a registered nurse who has made the annual trip since SJV embraced a mission to Haiti 10 years ago.

Ann has been in touch frequently with the pastor of Notre Dame du Rosaire, Father Jean Salomon Vincent, to get updates on the situation there. And the news is not good.

In an email to Ann, Father Sal spoke of bandits attacking people in broad daylight and burning homes.

"But we keep the faith and we pray every day so that God protects us and separates us from this threat," he wrote.



Members of the parish's Haiti Committee stuff envelopes on November 11 for its annual appeal to parishioners for contributions to the work that Saint John Vianney does in Jean Denis, Haiti. The committee's work falls in three areas — medical assistance, education and economic sustainment.

The SJV Haiti Committee has authorized an emergency allocation of \$5,000 for the parish, and it is being prioritized to disburse to families who did not harvest this year, who do not have enough money to feed their children, and for pregnant women and families with babies.

"As we celebrate 10 years partnering with our twinning parish, Notre Dame du Rosaire, we are saddened by the ongoing political unrest and violence throughout the country," wrote committee Chair Tia Watson in a letter to parishioners. And though the annual medical mission trip has been canceled, "our commitment to Notre Dame du Rosaire has not wavered, and our faith remains strong as we work to improve the educational, medical and economic needs of the people of Jean Denis."

The Haiti Committee meets on the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Vianney Room. Parishioners are invited to attend.

# Getting social



From left, Ann Quist, Bette Seres, Beth Dittman, and Ann and Mike Fisher enjoy a variety of wines.

More than 75 people signed up to attend the October 26 Wine and Cheese event held at the Activity Center. It was a fun night, with a variety of wines offered for tasting, and a chance for parishioners to enjoy a night out.

“It’s another form of fellowship,” observed Bette Seres.



Emeric and Shirley Solymossy, above, staffed one of four tables, where a number of domestic and foreign wines were offered for tasting. At right, Les Lipinski samples wine poured by Steve Cox, while John Fischer chats with Jean Lipinski in the background.



## One step at a time – all the way to one million!

It’s no wonder that Saint John Vianney won the traveling trophy in the 2019 Diocese Summer Walking Program – parishioner Andrew Gizicki logged in more than 1 million steps over the course of the six-week program.

Andrew, 26, was the top walker among 65 parishioners who took part in the program coordinated by SJV’s Health Ministry. Health Ministry nurse Deb Morse said four other parishes in the diocese participated.

Andrew says he does most of his physical activity outdoors, in nature.

“I enjoy nature because it helps free up my mind,” he said. “I enjoy the struggle and determination of pushing myself the most.”

Andrew keeps track of his steps with an app on his phone and walks a set route daily.

Look for the walking program to return next summer, says Deb.



Andrew Gizicki with the trophy.



# Bringing God's Word to children

By JAN TOUNEY

As the children file out of the sanctuary each Sunday at 9 a.m. Mass for the Children's Liturgy of the Word, there is a sense of joy and anticipation on their faces.

If you follow them to their classroom, you'll understand why.

Teacher Alyssa Uker, who has a lead role in this ministry, begins a discussion about heaven after reading a version of the Gospel written in words that children can understand.

"What do you think is in heaven?" she asks.

The responses are plentiful and she writes them on a white board behind her: Clouds, angels, Jesus, animals, light, love. Even hotels, suggests one boy. (From the mouths of babes!)



Alyssa Uker passes out paper for the children to draw their vision of what heaven looks like.



Katie Flores leads discussion on the Gospel reading.

The children are given crayons and paper and are asked to draw their vision of what heaven looks like.

The Sunday before, teacher Katie Flores talked about the story of Zacchaeus the tax collector in relation to forgiveness. They talk about forgiveness in their own lives, like when a friend does something hurtful.

"Is Jesus going to forgive Zacchaeus?" she asks the

50 children.

"YES!" is the resounding response.

Katie then turns the conversation to footprints. The kids understand what it means to leave footprints, or tracks, when they hike. They trace their own footprint on a piece of paper and write, "I will follow Jesus" on it.

On both Sundays, another mom, Rebekah Weber, walks around the room, assisting when necessary.

The teachers get much accomplished in their sessions, and reinforce a takeaway message the children can discuss with their parents. There is a closing prayer.

Alyssa says she answered the "tap, tap, tap" often referred to by Father Jim after longtime leader Ed Finn announced he was moving out of town. She followed the group out one Sunday when Father Jim asked for additional help and found out she enjoyed teaching to the children.

Both Alyssa and Katie say the preparation work is a good opportunity for them to learn the deeper lessons in the Word of God and to share them with their families.

"I enjoy teaching because of what I don't know," Katie said. "I dig for understanding in the Word. I teach to learn with careful preparation and utilize a strategy with five components: purpose, perspective, patience, process and prayer."

Alyssa encourages other parents to consider assisting with the Sunday ministry and would be happy to speak with anyone who wants more information. Contact her at



# A warm welcome



## Luncheon for newcomers brings together parish women

The beauty of autumn and the warmth of welcome greeted all those who attended the October 24 luncheon for newcomers sponsored by the St. Anthony's Circle at Saint John Vianney.

Held at the Davenport Country Club, the annual tradition is a way to welcome women new to the parish, enjoy fellowship over what is always a delicious meal, and do some networking.

Sue Coffin, president of St. Anthony's Circle, noted in her welcome address that "the women of this parish are supporters." She explained the different circles that comprise the Curé of Ars Guild.

Five women who are new parish members —Catherine Hamling, Kathy Hunt, Holly Parsons, Rita Pribyl and Sheila Zack — introduced themselves and told what brought them to SJV.

They spoke of everything from a welcoming environment, beautiful liturgies, opportunities to get involved, and activities for families with young children.



TOP: The scene in the dining room at the Davenport Country Club.

ABOVE: Sue Coffin listens as Holly Parsons introduces herself.

ABOVE RIGHT: Kathy Hunt tells her story.

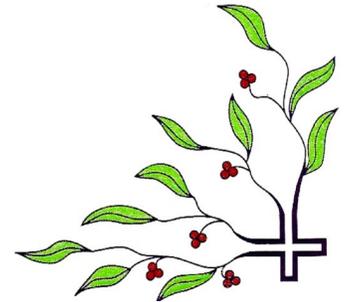
RIGHT: Father Jim Vrba gives a blessing before the meal.



*The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."*

Luke 2:10

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