



SAINT ANDREW PARISH

1899 McCoy Road
Columbus, Ohio 43220
Parish Office (614) 451-4290
www.standrewparish.cc



OFFICE AND CHURCH HOURS

The Parish Office is open Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM.
The Church is open daily 6:00 AM-8:30 PM.
For more information, visit www.standrewparish.cc.

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil Mass - 4:30 PM
Sunday - 7:30 AM, 9:15 AM, 11:00 AM
Weekdays - 6:30 AM & 8:30 AM
Saturday Morning - 9:00 AM

RECONCILIATION

Saturdays from 3:15-4:15 PM or by appointment at 614-451-4290

To learn more about **SACRAMENTS**, call the Parish Office or visit our website, www.standrewparish.cc and select "Sacraments and Prayer."

For **ANOIDNTING OF THE SICK**, please contact a priest at the Parish Office.

We welcome **NEW MEMBERS!** To register or learn more about St. Andrew Parish, please contact our office by phone, or email Jen Wenzke at jwenzke@standrewparish.cc.

OUR MISSION

St. Andrew Church is a community of Catholics committed to serving God by living our faith.

We exist to fulfill the mission of the Roman Catholic Church at the local level by continuing the saving work of Christ. We accomplish this through the celebration of the sacraments, proclaiming and living the Gospel, reaching out to others in justice and charity, and providing all parishioners abundant spiritual, educational, and social opportunities to be known as a faith-filled, engaged, and generous parish.



 facebook.com/standrewparishua

 standrewparishua

 StAndrewUA

STAFF DIRECTORY

CLERGY

614-451-4290

Msgr. Stephan Moloney, Pastor Ext. 4
 Rev. Lawrence Tabi, Parochial Vicar Ext. 5
 Deacon Thomas M. Berg, Jr.
 Deacon Daniel Dowler
 Rev. William DeVille, In Holy Service
 whd22@aol.com
 Rev. Paul Noble, In Residence,
 pnoble@columbuscatholic.org

PARISH OFFICE STAFF

614-451-4290

Thomas Conigy, Business Manager Ext. 6
 tconigy@standrewparish.cc
 Joe Tomlinson, Accounting Ext. 8
 accounting@standrewparish.cc
 Greg Price, Buildings Superintendent
 gprice@standrewparish.cc
 Philip Lortz, Director of Music, 614-451-1839
 plortz@standrewparish.cc
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 mbeasecker@standrewparish.cc
 Jen Wenzke, Parish Secretary Ext. 0
 jwenzke@standrewparish.cc
 Emily Jaminet, Adult Faith/RCIA Ext. 9
 ejaminet@standrewparish.cc

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

614-451-2855

Tina White, Director Ext. 304
 twhite@cdededucation.org
 Kathy Dowler, Catechesis Coordinator Ext. 305
 kdowler@standrewparish.cc

SCHOOL ADMIN/STAFF

614-451-1626

Joel Wichtman, Principal Ext. 234
 jwichtma@cdededucation.org
 Jenni Duffy, Assistant Principal Ext. 235
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 hroush@cdededucation.org
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 kscheirmann@cdededucation.org

BRYCE ECK ACTIVITY CENTER

614-459-1402

Pat Carroll, Facility Manager
 pcarroll@standrewparish.cc
 Amanda Carter, Preschool Director Ext. 3
 acarter@cdededucation.org
 Maria Moore, Youth Ministry Ext. 1
 mmoore@standrewparish.cc

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday: Sep 30 Vigil, 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

4:30 p.m. Elda Cianelli

Sunday: Oct 1, 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30 a.m. Fenton Moore
 9:15 a.m. Norma Johanni
 11:00 a.m. For the People of St. Andrew Parish

Monday: Oct 2, Weekday Mass

6:30 a.m. John and Rosemary Persinger
 and Joseph and Katherine Reed
 8:30 a.m. J. Richard Lumpe

Tuesday: Oct 3, Weekday Mass

6:30 a.m. Special Intention
 8:30 a.m. Lane and Joseph Families

Wednesday: Oct 4, Weekday Mass

6:30 a.m. Gilia lafolla
 8:30 a.m. Joe and Louise Karam

Thursday: Oct 5, Weekday Mass

6:30 a.m. Dr. William Miely
 8:30 a.m. Mary Ferencik

Friday: Oct 6, Weekday Mass

6:30 a.m. Hugh Callahan
 8:30 a.m. The Belmaggio/Little Family

Saturday: Oct 7, Weekday Mass

9:00 a.m. Fr. Jim Willig

Vigil, 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

4:30 p.m. For the People of St. Andrew Parish

Sunday: Oct 8, 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30 a.m. Duane Palmo
 9:15 a.m. Joe and Sue Pangallo
 11:00 a.m. Les Hess

BAPTISMS

Leo David Sherman, son of Dylan and Catherine
 Cameron Anthony Rochowiak, son of Drew and Aliya
 Camryn Rose Wozniak, daughter of Walter and Rachel

BANNS OF MARRIAGE...

Ciara Clarke and Jacob Decot
 Sara Pardi and Matthew Redfield

FACILITIES AND ROOM RESERVATIONS AT ST.

ANDREW PARISH: If you would like to reserve one of the meeting spaces at St. Andrew Parish, please contact Jen Wenzke, jwenzke@standrewparish.cc, or Greg Price, gprice@standrewparish.cc. The event calendar can be viewed at standrewparish.cc/calendar.

MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners,

This weekend marks the beginning of the month of October, which is arguably the most beautiful month of the year! I hope this month will be filled with sunshine, blue skies, and colorful Fall foliage for you.

October is also Respect Life Month. Every year during October we are reminded that human life is precious and that the right to life is the most fundamental of all human rights. We as a Church give witness and advocate for the protection of all human life, from conception to natural death. We are urged to help in practical ways to support pregnant women and help them choose life for their unborn children. And we must not relax our efforts in this matter.

But this year in October 2023, there is a great urgency to rally our efforts to defeat State Issue 1 on the ballot this coming Election Day, Tuesday, November 7. That means this month of October is the "final countdown" leading up to the day when this issue will be decided.

Issue 1 would enshrine abortion rights into the Ohio Constitution. If passed, the right to abortion would be protected, but the right to life would not be! This is why we as Catholics have a moral obligation to oppose this amendment. This is why our Bishops are urging us to work to defeat this amendment, and most importantly, to vote NO on Issue 1. This is not merely a political issue, but rather it is a moral issue, and a moral issue of great importance! It is unusual for our Church leaders to make any statements to attempt to influence how we as citizens vote. The fact that they have voiced such strong opposition to Issue 1 is because, as Catholics, there is no other morally acceptable option. I also urge you to vote NO on Issue 1 on November 7.

October is also the month dedicated to the Rosary. I hope you will continue to pray the Rosary each day throughout this month as the 54-Day Novena continues up through Election Day.

Your Pastor,
Msgr. Stephan Moloney

ST. ANDREW ANNUAL

PET BLESSING

To commemorate the
Feast of St. Francis
of Assisi, Monsignor
Moloney and Mabel
invite all parishioners
and their pets to the
ANNUAL PET BLESSING. Bring your cats,
dogs, turtles or frogs, all species, even
lizards, are welcome!

**SUNDAY,
OCT. 1
3PM**



**RECTORY LAWN
MCCOY ROAD LOT**



[save the date]

ST. ANDREW PARISH MISSION

**WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 6, 2023**

Featuring Dr. Edward Sri,
theologian, author and well-
known Catholic speaker.



SUNDAY OFFERING

	SEPT. 17	YTD
ACTUAL	\$ 27,074	\$ 322,136
BUDGET	\$ 32,212	\$ 386,538
LAST YEAR	\$ 28,356	\$ 323,503

Thank you to all who are responding generously to our financial need. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

We encourage you to consider Online Giving, which is safe, secure and convenient. To sign up, visit osvhub.com/st-andrew-parish/funds or contact Business Manager Thomas Conigy, tconigy@standrewparish.cc or 614-451-4290, ext. 6.



WE ARE CALLED TO BE STEWARDS OF GOD'S GIFTS

Christian stewards see themselves as the caretakers of God's gifts and express gratitude for these abundances through prayer, worship, offerings, and actions. Stewardship is a way of thanking God for our blessings as we return a portion of the many gifts we have been given by God. One way to fulfill our responsibility as entrusted stewards is through planned giving.

A planned gift is intended to be used in the future. It's a commitment made during your lifetime that can support organizations like St. Andrew Parish when you no longer need your assets. Along with current benefits, like tax advantages, planned giving allows you to make your intentions known (usually through financial or estate planning) today for when God calls you home.

Along with providing for your children and loved ones, have you considered a planned gift to St. Andrew Parish? To start a conversation, please contact **Christy Steffy** at The Catholic Foundation: 614-443-8893, ext. 110 or csteffy@catholic-foundation.org.

HOME VISITS: If you or a family member are homebound and would like a visit from a priest or an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, please **call the parish office at 614-451-4290**. EMs bring Communion to the homebound on Sundays or as scheduled. Priests will see the homebound upon request, however, they usually cannot schedule home visits with Communion on Sundays.



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Please join us for Eucharistic Adoration, on Tuesdays from 6 to 9 p.m. Eucharistic Adoration is simply the act of being in Christ's real presence while the Eucharist is on the altar. Adorers may stay as briefly or as long as they would like. Adoration will end with Compline (end of day prayers), followed by Benediction at 8:45 p.m.

PLEASE JOIN MEMBERS OF PARISH COUNCIL FOR EUCCHARISTIC HOLY HOUR:

Parish Council members invite all to Eucharistic Exposition on **Tuesday, Oct. 3, from 8 to 9 p.m.** We will pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and the Holy Rosary followed at 8:45 p.m. with Compline and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Make time to be in Christ's presence and open yourself to the graces which flow from the Eucharist!



American Red Cross

GIVE BLOOD. HELP SAVE LIVES.

The next Blood Drive at St. Andrew is scheduled for **Thursday, Oct. 5, 1:00-6:00 p.m., in the parish hall**. If you would like to schedule an appointment to give blood, visit RedCrossBlood.org, sponsor code: SACC, or call 1-800-RED CROSS.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING AT ST. ANDREW

**WEDNESDAY, OCT. 11
6 PM VIA ZOOM**



Attending a Protecting God's Children training session is required for anyone who plans to help in the classroom, coach a sports team, or volunteer at a parish event (Fish Fry, Festival, etc.). To register for this session or any other session in the Columbus diocese, visit www.virtusonline.org. For more information, including a list of ALL requirements for becoming a compliant volunteer, visit www.standrewparish.cc/parish-involvement/volunteers/ or contact Mary Beasecker at 614-451-4290, ext. 104, or mbeasecker@standrewparish.cc.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SCHEDULE MASS INTENTIONS?

You can schedule Mass Intentions in one of three ways: 1) Stop by the office during business hours and schedule in person. 2) Mail your request to the parish office (1899 McCoy Road, Columbus, Ohio 43220, attn: Mass Intentions) and include the stipend for each Mass request. 3) Email preferred dates and times to Jen Wenzke, jwenzke@standrewparish.cc and either mail in or drop off the stipend. We will do our best to honor the dates & times requested, but no date/time can be guaranteed. Stipend is \$10/intention.



Join us in prayer

for the protection of human life and
dignity and the defeat of Issue 1.

Catholics across Ohio are praying a 54-Rosary Novena for the defeat of Issue 1. This week the Sorrowful Mysteries of the rosary will be prayed Sunday and Monday followed by 9 days of praying the Glorious Mysteries.

Sign up for a daily email
reminder with novena prayers
here, or at pray54ohio.org.



THE 40 DAYS FOR LIFE FALL CAMPAIGN HAS BEGUN.

We are on the precipice of a critical time in Ohio. We must continue to give prayerful witness to the community to change hearts and minds. **St. Andrew Parish will participate in a day of prayer on Saturday, October 14, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.,** in front of Planned Parenthood on East Main Street. Additional event information and sign-up sheets will be in the church parlor on September 30 and October 1, and October 7 and 8. For more information, contact Life Director Jim Holsinger at 614-394-7202 or jimholsing@yahoo.com.

October is Respect Life Month

radical solidarity

to be courageously pro-woman,
promoting a choice that truly protects,
accompanies, and supports
women and their children



RESPECT LIFE



Do **YOU** want to do something locally to make an impact for the moms and babies of our community?

Come pray the Mass with
His Excellency, Earl K. Fernandes,
Bishop of Columbus and the Women's Care Center!

THURSDAY
OCTOBER 19TH
5:30 PM

Please join us after Mass for Exposition, a Rosary,
and Benediction followed by pizza-to-go!

ST. CATHARINE PARISH
500 S. Gould Rd | Columbus OH, 43209



WOMEN'S CARE CENTER

In honor of families and the protection of life
ahead of our upcoming elections.

PLEASE SUPPORT FIRST CALLED YOUTH MINISTRY AND KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS IN OUR BABY



BOTTLE DRIVE FOR RESPECT LIFE MONTH WHICH RUNS THE MONTH OF OCTOBER – look for collection baskets in the Vestibule. Fill the bottles with loose change and return them to St. Andrew. Students will be distributing after Mass today. Any Questions, please contact Maria Moore at mmoore@standrewparish.cc. Drive will end with Adoration for Life, October 31st."



NATIONAL
**Eucharistic
Revival**



Learn, Grow and Share at St. Andrew
**ENCOUNTER THE REALITY OF OUR
EUCHARISTIC LORD**

All parishioners are encouraged to join us for small group study sessions beginning Monday, Oct. 9. Focused on spiritual formation, the sessions include a video presentation followed by prayer and discussion within the small groups. Each session will last approximately two hours.

Study sessions will be held in the parish hall on the following MONDAYS:
October 9, 16, 23, 30, and November 6, 13 and 20.

We hope to have a great turn out for the seven-week program, and lay the groundwork for the parish mission with Dr. Sri on December 6, 2023.

To RSVP for the small study group meetings, scan the code below or visit tinyurl.com/SAP-ER-Meeting.



**SAINT ANDREW
PARISH**

For more information about the National Eucharistic Revival and adult faith activities at St. Andrew Parish, contact Emily Jaminet, 614-451-4290 ext. 9, or ejaminet@standrewparish.cc.



MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL FIRST CALLED!

All activities take place on Sunday evenings at the Bryce Eck Center unless otherwise noted.



UPCOMING MIDDLE SCHOOL FIRST CALLED:

We will view and discuss "Real and True"
October 8, October 22

UPCOMING HIGH SCHOOL FIRST CALLED:

We will view and discuss "Search"
October 1, October 15, October 29

Our theme this year is friendship! Please join us to learn more about true friendship with Jesus.

For more information about FCYM and how to register, visit standrewparish.cc/youth-ministry/ or contact Maria Moore at 614-439-3571 (cell), 614-459-1402 (office), or mmoore@standrewparish.cc.

ST. ANDREW SCHOOL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

AFTER SCHOOL CARE ASSISTANT: Part-time, 2:45-6:00 p.m., on school days. The ASC assistant coordinates, assists and supervises various After School Care activities for enrolled students. For more details about this position, contact After School Care Director, Kyletta Scheirmann, kscheirmann@cdeducation.org.

CAFETERIA ASSISTANT: Part-time, 10:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m., on school days. For more details about this position, contact Cafeteria Manager Valerie Musolino at vmusolino@cdeducation.org.

INTERVENTION AIDE: Part-time, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., on school days. The intervention aide coordinates, assists and supervises various student activities as noted by the assigned Intervention Specialist and appropriate classroom teachers. For more details about this position, contact Principal Joel Wichtman at jwichtma@cdeducation.org.

All positions require current, clear BCI & FBI background checks along with a certificate of completion of the Protecting God's Children (PGC) training or willingness to attend a PGC training session prior to working with children.

ST. ANDREW RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PARENTS OF THE PARISH WEDNESDAY NIGHT GROUP: All St. Andrew Parish parents are welcome to this new discussion group on Wednesday evenings from 4:45-5:45 p.m. in Nugent Parish Hall. The purpose of this group is to build community among parents with a common interest in learning more about our Catholic faith. Discussions will be facilitated by DRE Tina White.

Upcoming parent group dates and topics include:

October 4, 11, 18: *Presence*

November 1, 15: *Forgiven*

November 29: *The Faith-filled Family*

CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD (CLOW) has returned to the 11:00 a.m. Sunday Mass. Children ages 4-7 are invited to join Liz Meyers and CLOW Youth Leaders every Sunday during Mass. For more information, contact Liz Meyers, emeyers@standrewparish.cc or 614-451-2855.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

October 25, First Communion Parent Meeting:

Parents will meet in the parish hall at EITHER 4:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. (choose one).

November 19, Confirmation Retreat:

Students attend the 11:00 a.m. Mass followed by lunch and Retreat in Nugent Parish Hall until 5:00 p.m.

For more information, contact Tina White at twhite@cdeducation.org or 614-451-2855.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO REGISTER FOR PSR! Classes are held on Wednesdays from 4:30-5:45 p.m. for grades K-7, and at 7:00 p.m. for grade 8. Please contact the Religious Education Office at 614-451-2855 if you missed registration and would like to enroll in our Parish School of Religion.

OCTOBER SENIOR LUNCHEON

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12
BRYCE ECK CENTER – KELLY HALL

Euchre at 10 a.m. // Bingo at 11 a.m. // Lunch at Noon

The luncheons are a great way to catch up with old friends and forge new friendships with seniors within our St. Andrew Parish community. If you are 55+ and a registered parishioner, come and join the fun! There is no cost. **For more information**, contact Pat Carroll, 614-459-1402 or pcarroll@standrewparish.cc.



ALTAR SERVER TRAINING

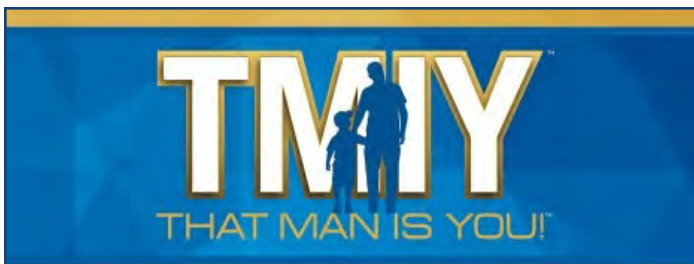
If you are a St. Andrew School or PSR student (grade 4 and older) interested in becoming an altar server at Mass, please attend the upcoming training session on Sunday, Oct. 15, after the 11 a.m. Mass in the church.

Training lasts about 30 minutes. RSVP to Tina White at twhite@standrewparish.cc or 614-451-2855, ext.304.

ST. MONICA CLUB: All are welcome to this monthly study and support experience. Members of the group discuss the book *St. Monica Club* by Maggie Green, and how to gently and prayerfully encourage family and friends back to the faith.

St. Monica has become synonymous with persistent, unflinching prayer for fallen-away family members. The group includes all devoted parents who have experienced the pain of seeing a child leave the Faith and who have prayed ceaselessly for their return.

Upcoming meeting dates: October 30, November 27 and December 18. For more info and to RSVP, contact Amy Tague, at amyliss14@gmail.com.



THAT MAN IS YOU!: THE VISION OF MAN FULLY ALIVE enables men to experience authentic freedom as sons of God. Through living the threefold mission of abiding presence, joyful service and loving sacrifice, their hearts and homes will experience the joy that God desires.

It's not too late to join! The program continues through mid-December on **Saturday mornings at the Bryce Eck Center**. Doors open at 6:30 a.m. for fellowship and breakfast, followed by a presentation and group discussion at 7 a.m. Each session ends by 8 a.m.

For more information and to register, contact Colin Bellantis at 440-728-4166 or colinbellantis@gmail.com.

To learn more about THAT MAN IS YOU!, visit www.TMIY.org.

LITURGICAL VOLUNTEERS

SAT, OCT 7: Vigil, 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

4:30 PM Mass

Rita Medaglia	EMHC - B1
Don McNeal	EMHC - B2
Wini Chuidian	Lector - A
Cathy Covarrubias	Lector - B
Jackson Wenzke	Altar Server
Noah Wenzke	Altar Server

SUN, OCT 8: 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30 AM Mass

Dick Curtis	EMHC - B1
Mike Plahuta	EMHC - B2
Tom Levenick	Lector - A
Randy Doherty	Lector - B
Mary Jaminet	Altar Server
VOLUNTEER NEEDED	Altar Server

9:15 AM Mass

Iris Freisner	EMHC - B1
Suzanne Meyers	EMHC - B2
Herm Mollmann	EMHC - B CHOIR
Jennifer Schaefer	Lector - A
Joseph Chatlos	Lector - B
VOLUNTEER NEEDED	Altar Server
VOLUNTEER NEEDED	Altar Server

11:00 AM Mass

Mary Kaminski	EMHC - B1
Damion Faulkner	EMHC - B2
Mike Stuhldreher	Lector - A
Marty Majka	Lector - B
Ben Stuhldreher	Altar Server
Matthew Stuhldreher	Altar Server

To volunteer, visit www.rotundasoftware.com/ministry/standrewcolumbus, or use the QR code here. If you need help with your username or password, contact the Parish Office, 614-451-4290.



BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS: Send requests no later than Monday at 10:00 a.m. for the following weekend. Include a brief description, date, time, location and contact name and send to bulletin@standrewparish.cc. Bulletin requests may be edited for clarity or space.

ePOST WEEKLY EMAIL: To subscribe, contact Mary Beasecker, mbeasecker@standrewparish.cc. The ePost includes information about upcoming events and activities within the parish. To submit information, please email to Mary before Noon on Mondays. ePOST submissions may be edited for clarity or space.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

CATHOLIC MEN'S LUNCHEON, FRIDAY, OCT. 6: Join us at St. Patrick Church in downtown Columbus for a luncheon featuring a talk titled "What is a Man? The Hunt for Manhood" by John Bradford, Founder and President of Wilderness Outreach, a 501(c)(3) public nonprofit corporation. Learn more about Wilderness Outreach at www.wildernessoutreach.net. If you are interested in sponsoring this or another luncheon, contact Jim Gernetzke at jimgernetzke@noslumine.com. Mass (optional) begins at 11:45 a.m., followed by lunch at 12:10 p.m. and Mr. Bradford's presentation. No reservations are necessary. \$12 covers the lunch and meeting. Bring a friend! Our next luncheon is Friday, November 3.

**OHIO DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY
PREVIEW DAY ON WEDNESDAY, OCT. 25**

All high school students are invited to attend Ohio Dominican University's Preview Day from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 25. The free event will take place on ODU's campus at 1215 Sunbury Road, Columbus, 43219. Students will have a chance to tour campus, explore majors, and learn about ODU's Honors and Early Admission programs.

Register today at ohiodominican.edu/Preview.



**COLUMBUS CATHOLIC
YOUNG ADULT
CONFERENCE**

PSALM 37:3-5
TRUST IN HIM
10.14.23

OCTOBER 14
CCYAC.ORG TO REGISTER

ABORTION CHANGES EVERYTHING
Mood swings • Intimacy issues
Isolation • Depression

BETHESDA
HEALING
MINISTRY

If you or someone you know is struggling from a past abortion experience, call 24/7 at **614-309-0157**, bethesdahealing.org

THANK YOU, BULLETIN SPONSORS! Thanks to our sponsors & Dee Printing, the bulletin is published weekly at no cost to the parish.

ADVERTISE IN OUR BULLETIN! Please help support our parish by advertising in our bulletin. Contact Kati at Dee Printing, 614.777.8700 or kati@deeprinting.com.



**12TH ANNUAL
SACRED HEART
CONGRESS**

NOVEMBER 4, 2023
ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE CHURCH
313 NORTH STATE ST | WESTERVILLE, OH

8:00am - Noon

Special Youth Program (K & Up)
Daughters of Holy Mary of the Heart of Jesus

WELCOME HIS HEART
SACRED HEART ENTHRONEMENT

REGISTRATION IS REQUESTED AND APPRECIATED: \$15 Individuals | \$25 Families
REGISTER AT: www.WelcomeHisHeart.com



The Mass

✚ ***"Do This in Remembrance of Me"*** ✚ **A Step-By-Step Walk Through the Mass**

Fr. Luke Spannagel

Part 6: The Sign of the Cross

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." Once we have finished the entrance hymn or antiphon at the beginning of Mass, there is a familiar gesture we do at every Mass and frequently with our prayers: we make the Sign of the Cross. Why? As Dr. Edward Sri writes, "The Sign of the Cross is not simply a way to begin praying. It is itself a powerful prayer that is meant to pour out tremendous blessings on our lives. When we make the Sign of the Cross...we enter a sacred tradition that goes back to the early centuries of Christianity, when this ritual was understood to be a source of divine power and protection. In making this sign, we invoke God's presence and invite him to bless us, assist us, and guard us from all harm. It is not surprising that the early Christians made the Sign of the Cross quite often, desiring to tap into the power that lay therein" (A Biblical Walk Through the Mass, p. 17).

Sri goes on to quote the early Christian writer Tertullian (A.D. 160-225), who said, "In all our travels and movements, in all our coming in and going out, in putting on our shoes, at the bath, at the table, in lighting our candles, in lying down, in sitting down, whatever employment occupies us, we mark our foreheads with the Sign of the Cross" (A Biblical Walk Through the Mass, p.17-18).

A Holy Gesture

Since we use the Sign of the Cross so frequently, it is important to recall what a meaning-packed gift it really is. The gesture itself points us to the Cross of Jesus—it reminds us of his saving sacrifice—the place where Jesus gave everything out of love for us to conquer sin and death. The words we say remind us that we have been brought into the life of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is important to notice that we pray "in the name" and not "names." Praying in the singular "name" recalls that God is One God in Three Persons. In addition to reminding us of the Trinity and the Cross of Christ, the Sign of the Cross also reminds us of our Baptism, when we were brought into God's family and given a share in the life of God: we are literally baptized "... in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"! We are

reminded that the Father loved us so much that he sent the Son to save us and that the Holy Spirit was sent to guide us on our way home to heaven. That's a lot of meaning for a little action that only takes a couple of seconds!

When I think of the Sign of the Cross, one of my favorite meditations is imagining how it looks when Our Blessed Mother Mary makes it. I remember hearing a story about how St. Bernadette would sometimes comment to the other sisters that their Signs of the Cross needed more reverence. I was always struck by the thought that St. Bernadette saw Mother Mary make the Sign of the Cross as she followed along with the Rosary beads (during Our Lady's appearance to St. Bernadette at Lourdes). It must have made a powerful impression on her! Although for now we might have to imagine this scene, we can review the classic steps in making the Sign of the Cross in the Roman Rite: using the right hand and touching the forehead (saying: "In the name of the Father"), the middle of the chest (saying: "and of the Son"), the left shoulder (saying: "and of the Holy"), and right shoulder (saying: "Spirit. Amen.")

A Grace-Filled Gift

Like almost anything in our lives, frequent repetition of the Sign of the Cross can sometimes lessen our attention to what we are doing and what it means. However, as we noted, the Sign of the Cross is an incredibly powerful prayer and gesture full of meaning. Next time you are starting a prayer or at Mass, I invite you to pause for a brief moment and really make the Sign of the Cross a true prayer from your heart. Maybe imagine what it looked like when Mother Mary, St. Bernadette, or one of the saints made it. Consider moving your hand and saying the words more slowly. Think about the love Jesus has for you as you trace the shape of the cross. Thank God that you have been given a share in the life of the Trinity through Baptism. What a grace-filled gift the Sign of the Cross truly is!

For Reflection:

1. Reflect on St. Paul's words to the Galatians: "But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14). In what way is the Cross of Christ a reason to "boast"? Consider your current relationship to things of this world. What may need to be crucified in you so that God can reign more fully in your life? Bring this challenge to prayer the next time you make the Sign of the Cross.
2. How do you feel when you make the Sign of the Cross? Confident, foolish, something else? St. Paul explains that "[t]he message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:17) and that Jesus "endured the cross, despising its shame, and has taken his seat at the right of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). Call to mind the areas in your life where you feel foolish or powerless, and invoke the power of God's name by making the Sign of the Cross.
3. Do you know or work with any children who do not yet know how to make the Sign of the Cross? Hand on the faith by showing someone else how to make the Sign of the Cross prayerfully and reverently.



Source: www.eucharisticrevival.org/blog

