

St. Ambrose Parish

AUGUST 11, 2019
BEEHIVE

A Nun, Guns and the Wild West

Billy the Kid, a notorious bank and stage-coach robber of the Wild West, met his match in the most unlikely of people when he met Sister Blandina Segale. According to legend, and to Sr. Blandina's journal and letters, one of Billy the Kid's gang members had been shot and was on the brink of death when the doctors of Trinidad, Colo. refused to treat him. Sister decided to take him in and cared for him for three months, nursing him back to health.

But Billy the Kid (William Leroy) was still unhappy. Word got out that the outlaw was coming to town to scalp the four doctors of Trinidad in revenge. When he arrived, Sr. Blandina intervened, and convinced him to call off his mission on behalf of his man she had saved. After that incident, Sr. Blandina and Billy the Kid became friends. She once visited him in jail, and he once called off a stage-coach robbery as soon as he realized Sister was one of the passengers.

When she wasn't calling off outlaws, Sr. Blandina was founding schools, building hospitals, teaching and caring for orphans and the poor, and advocating for the rights of Native Americans and other minorities. All in a day's work.

Her heroic virtue and enduring works are why her cause for sainthood was opened in New Mexico in 2015, earning her the title "Servant of God" and allowing people to ask for her intercession. Since then, several documents have come to light corroborating her stories, and the necessary miracle for the next big step – beatification – seems to be well on its way.

"Sainthood isn't about an award, it isn't about honoring, it's about helping the faithful know that there is a source of God's grace being worked on Earth," said Allen Sanchez, president and CEO for CHI St. Joseph's Children in Albuquerque, which Sr. Blandina founded. Sanchez also serves as the petitioner for the cause of Sister's sainthood and has studied her life extensively.

Her early years

Sr. Blandina, born Maria Rosa Segale, was just four years old when she emigrated with her parents from the small town of Cicagna, Italy to Cincinnati, Ohio in 1854 (she had her 5th birthday on the boat ride over).



At the age of 16, Maria Rosa joined the Sisters of Charity and took the name Sr. Blandina. When she was just 22 years old, she was sent – alone – to Trinidad in Colo. territory to teach in the public school there. A few years later, she was sent further south, first to Santa Fe and then to Albuquerque, New Mexico. It was probably quite an adjustment, Sanchez said, going from Europe and the more settled parts of America to the still very rough-and-tumble west.

While in New Mexico, Sr. Blandina helped found the public health care system and the public school system by building the first hospitals and schools in Albuquerque, often asking for the temporary release of prisoners to help her with the labor.

Much of what is known about Sr. Blandina's life comes from a series of letters she wrote her sister, Sr. Justina Segale, who was back in Ohio. The compiled correspondences, which span the years of 1872-1894, were published ten

continued on page 2

Nuns, Guns and the Wild West

Continued from page 1

years before Sr. Blandina's death in 1941. "You're able to see the history of New Mexico happening within her interactions," Sanchez said.

Sister stops a lynch mob

To open a cause for sainthood, examples of heroic virtue of the person must be shown. The specific example of heroic virtue that her petitioners are using involves another story that could only take place in the Wild West; the story that earned her the title "The Fastest Nun in the West" from a 1966 CBS feature on the incident.

Sr. Blandina was teaching school in New Mexico when one of her pupils told her, "Pa's shot a man, and they're going to hang him." That's when Sr. Blandina went to work. She met with the shooter, and was able to convince him to write a confession. She then met with the dying man, and convinced him to forgive his shooter – in person – before he passed away.

After the two men were reconciled, Sr. Blandina then had to face down the lynch mob that was coming to kill the shooter, who, because of Sister, was instead taken to the circuit court and was given life in prison. After nine months, he was released to go back home to care for his four children. "She disarms them from their guns, their hanging rope and their hate," Sanchez said of sister and the lynch mob.

"She must have been charming to them!" he added. "I think they would fall in love with her and do what she would ask them to do, because she cared for them and she honestly was able to see the dignity of every human being from the innocent orphans to the guilty outlaws."

Sr. Blandina also made several trips to Washington, D.C. to meet with legislators and to advocate on behalf of the Native Americans, whose reservation boundaries were being drawn at the time.

And although her own life is being evaluated for sainthood, Sr. Blandina herself knew all about the canonization process – she helped to petition Rome for the cause of two different saints in her lifetime: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and St. Kateri Tekakwitha. She also helped bring now-St. Katherine Drexel and her sisters to the West to help serve the Native American populations.

The next step

In order to be beatified – one step away from canonization – there needs to be proof of an otherwise inexplicable miracle brought about through that person's intercession. There are several possible examples of this being explored, which makes those petitioning for Sr. Blandina hopeful that her cause will advance quickly.

"We know of a baby that was born prematurely with a malfunctioning valve in the heart and collapsed lungs," Sanchez said. "This family immediately contacted us, said they were praying the Sr. Blandina novena for the baby. The doctors had very little hope for the baby living, but four days later they couldn't find the problem in the heart, it was as if it didn't exist to begin with. Doctors are saying it's inexplicable, so we're pursuing that. There's many stories like that that are being pursued to see if Sr. Blandina was involved."

The example of her life on earth is also important for the faithful today, Sanchez said, because Sr. Blandina knew how to address both immediate problems as well as more systemic problems of social justice. "She would follow through from the charity to the social justice," he said. "For example, she would help feed and house the railway workers, but then she would also ask why the railway workers weren't being cared for. And that's the call for us today. Charity is important, that's where you start, and then you move to the social justice from there."

Sister's cause for canonization may take several years, depending on the approval of her heroic virtue and miracles attributed to her intercession, but Sanchez said the board that is petitioning her cause is hopeful that things will progress quickly. "I'd say we're more than halfway through the diocesan phase. For her to be called 'venerable', we just have to prove her heroic virtue," he said.

If he had to describe her personality, Sanchez said, he would say she was tough but spunky, holy but unafraid of conflict. "She wasn't afraid of conflict and to roll up her sleeves and get the work done," he said. "And she was always giving credit to the Gospel, to Jesus' work."

This article by Mary Farrow was originally published by the Catholic News Agency on Aug. 1, 2015.



The Feast of the Assumption of Mary

**This Thursday, August 15th
Masses at 10 a.m. & 7 p.m.**

A Holyday of Obligation for Catholics in the United States.

Bring your fruits, flowers, herbs and vegetables to be blessed at this mass. Leave extras to share with others.

All Things Considered

We often heard it said that “immigrants enrich America” and that “we are a nation built by immigrants.” It’s one thing to hear those platitudes, it’s quite another to see how they actually have played out in an immigrant’s life.

Today’s front page about **Sister Blandina Segale** and her role in taming the American west gives evidence as to how someone who came here as a five-year-old refugee was instrumental in shaping and civilizing a large part of these United States.

Before there was much of a government, police or judicial system in New Mexico – even before there was a State of New Mexico (1912), there was one, strong and clearly charismatic woman who battled the bad guys and shamed the good guys into being better.

As a youngster growing up in the Catholic stronghold of Cincinnati, Blandina worked with the disenfranchised. Blandina would have been a postulant when Pope **Leo XIII** was penning his encyclical about Social Justice. The Catholic Social Gospel was a concept not lost on this young Italian immigrant. As a vowed religious, she accepted a missionary assignment taking her to work with Native Americans, the “banditos” in Trinidad, CO, in Santa Fe and Albuquerque, NM, and at the end of her life, back to Ohio.

At the End of the Santa Fe Trail, first published in 1932, is Sister Blandina’s account of her life in the southwestern U.S. from 1872 to 1892.

This book is based in large part on her journal and on the letters she exchanged with her sister Justina, who was also a religious sister. At a time when lawlessness and brutality were the norm, Sister Blandina displayed courage, tough-mindedness, and a deep religious faith in service to the less-fortunate. There is a new edition of this book recently put out in anticipation of

her cause for sainthood. It would make a good Summer read. And it would bring into focus the lasting good that a single immigrant to this country can bring.

We’re ramping up for OYSTERFEST. The date is always the last Monday of September which this year falls on the 30th, the very last day of the month. But don’t let that lull you into complacency. Oysterfest will be here before you know it.

Our immediate need is for help in lining up food vendors and suppliers. We feed just about 1,000 people and they arrive hungry. Not every restaurant can provide food in such a large quantity. So part of the solution is to increase the number of restaurants participating. I’ve asked for your help a number of times in the past, yet there have been only one or two parishioners who have actually rustled up restaurants for us. That leaves the bulk of the burden on our office staff – and the ask is getting more difficult each year. Restaurant folks keep a different schedule than the 9-5 world. Much of this is accomplished on a person-to-person basis. We really need your help in tracking them down and making the “ask.”

You’ve got to know people in the food industry. Somebody has to have a good contact that they can lean on to donate an entree. Maybe it’s not a tradi-

tional restaurant. Perhaps it is a caterer or a food truck vendor? “Ask and ye shall receive.” If you need materials or some coaching, contact us at stambrosechurch.net or 313-822-2814.

We had another shockingly low collection last weekend. If you are going to be away for the summer, please mail us your weekly offering. Better yet, sign up for electronic giving.

Our website is set up to accept electronic transfers from your checking account or credit card. Parishioners and friends have the ability to make an electronic contribution to St. Ambrose on a regular or on a one-time basis. Go to stambrosechurch.net for information.

Meanwhile, although the campaign is officially ended, the Catholic Services Appeal continues to bring in contributions. We’re almost to the point where we can cover our property and liability insurances for the whole fiscal year. It’s just a guess, but maybe the tax-free incentive connected to CSA contributions is the motivating factor. Whatever it is, many thanks!

In preparation for the reception of a Sacrament, the Church invites the recipient to prayerfully reflect on what is about to take place. This reflection period is different for each sacrament.

Concluded on page 4...



First group of kayakers, from last Saturday, listen to instructions before heading out to the canals of St. Ambrose.

All Things Considered

Continued from Page 3

For Confirmation, the norm in this part of the country is for the candidates to partake in a workshop or retreat. There are a lot of different formats for this, and we've tried just about all of them. It's my observation that the retreats that make more demands of the confirmandi tend to produce better results. I am not alone in this thinking, since we've been getting encouragement from some of our Religious Education staff to "go big."

Last Spring, our R.E. Director, Kelly Woolums and I bought into an outstate Confirmation weekend retreat that will be conducted at the Damascus Catholic Mission Camp, a 200 acre woodland facility with a 30 acre lake just outside of Columbus, Ohio. It will be a full weekend which will include adventure activities, inspirational talks, group dynamics, dramas, games, as well as worship and time for Mass and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

The students are covering the cost of their food and lodging. What we failed to calculate into our planning were transportation costs. We had assumed that we could accomplish this with private transports provided by parents. Our Archdiocese, however, is dissuading us from such an arrangement due to liability concerns. That means we now have to factor in a motor coach for the weekend.

In and of itself, that is probably better, since the bonding experience can begin the moment our students leave from our parish parking lot. We'll need some help to cover the transportation cost. Six donations of \$500 would cover it all. And/or maybe someone would like to work with the confirmandi in some sort of fund-raising project?

If we were not running so far behind on our income, we might have been able to cover these costs, but that's not a possibility for us right now. We'd hate to cancel our reservations, since we're all pretty excited about participating in this highly-rated program.

TRP

The Buzz

I'm writing this less than a week after the horrific shootings in El Paso and Dayton. As a person involved in the realm of faith, soon after these events took place, I was quickly struck by the social media postings that proffered prayers from prominent leaders ... which then were countered by statements like "prayers are not enough!" Did you pray when you heard about the tragedies? How did you pray; what was the content of your prayer? Have you done or resolved to do anything in response?

When you heard they had captured the alleged shooter in El Paso, what were your feelings? Many leaders are looking for legal ways to impose the death penalty as "swift and certain justice." Do you agree? If so, you need to expand and deepen your prayer.

Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso – a place with a long history of brotherhood with neighboring Mexico – said that the community had set an example for others to uphold. "In the last several months, the borderlands have shown the world that generosity, compassion and human dignity are more powerful than the forces of division. The great sickness of our time is that we have forgotten how to be compassionate, generous, and humane. Everything is competition. Everything is greed. Everything is cold. Tenderness and the love that knows no borders are crucified in a whirlwind of deadly self-seeking, fear and vindictiveness."

He said that when similar evil forces were present two thousand years ago, God sent Jesus into the world. And when it appeared that evil had won after his crucifixion, Jesus proved otherwise. The bishop ended, "Today let us mourn the dead and pray for them. Tomorrow let us recommit to love. And let us all brace ourselves for just action that will overcome the forces of division and build a more loving society."

What now will you pray? What now will you plan to do? And if you feel powerless, read again today's second scripture from our mass about Abraham and Sarah. Then pray again, have faith, and choose to live and act with divine hope.



Speaking of choosing life . . . October is the traditional month for a special emphasis in the Church to pray, learn, and act on the full range of Respect Life issues – from conception to natural death. In Michigan, the Catholic Church is supporting a petition drive to ban a particular form of abortion – D & E – commonly used during the second trimester of a pregnancy (roughly 12th - 24th weeks LMS). Parishes are being asked by the Archbishop to actively participate in gathering petitions. We're looking to do this in October . . . and for a parishioner or two to coordinate this effort at St. Ambrose with our diocesan regional contact. If you might be willing to do this, contact us at the rectory soon for more details.

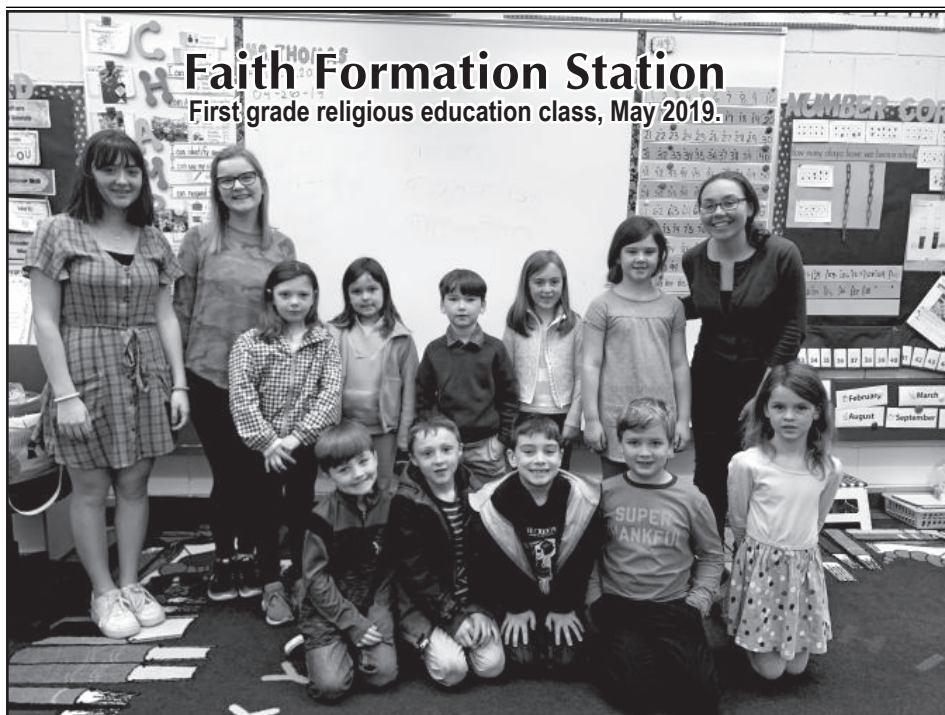


It was on Monday, August 20, 1973, that a young, thinner, dark-haired, clean-shaven, unbespeckled, brand new dad walked up the front steps of a nearby Catholic parish rectory to begin a new work/life in full-time service to the People of God. Now 46 years later, he is here writing this article. He has only one meager and inadequate response when he looks back at all this: Thank you, God, for everything! And especially for the past 23¾ years, my deep and prayerful thanks to Fr. Tim and to all of you members of the Body of Christ at St. Ambrose Parish! Please pray for me that I might always serve you better tomorrow than I did today.



One ministry I have thoroughly enjoyed here over the years has been helping to coordinate the R.C.I.A. process. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is designed to help seekers who want to respond to Christ's call to follow Him as a member of His Body in the Church. Perhaps you or someone you know would like to explore joining fully in the Catholic Church Community through Baptism, or a Catholic Profession of Faith, or by completing your sacramental initiation. Give me a call anytime at 313-332-5631 and I'll try to answer your questions about how this process might serve you.

Chuck Dropiewski



Faith Formation Station

First grade religious education class, May 2019.

OUR FAITH FORMATION YEAR IN REVIEW

Two weeks ago I shared with you our kindergarten and first grade catechists' thoughts on teaching their classes this year. This week we hear from our second grade catechists. It is our way of sharing the highlights of the program with our parish community. If you are inspired to become part of our faith formation team, please reach out and let us know. We can always use more helping and prayerful hands.

GRADE 2 : KIM TRUZA & VICTORIA HUGH

The second grade students worked hard all year preparing for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. This year they each received a personalized Christmas ornament. The shimmery yet transparent bulb represented their spiritual life. The first bead they put in was a wooden one with a cross on it to symbolize putting Jesus in their World first. We played a catechism trivia game and they added a new shiny bead representing the knowledge of the Lord each time they answered correctly. The children went home and earned additional beads from their parents each time they performed an act of kindness at home or in the community, representing the sharing of Jesus' love with the world. As a special bonus, they added glitter to the ornament to symbolize the light of the Lord and their special sparkle in the world. These children continued to eagerly learn about what it means to be a child of God and member of the Catholic Church. They are thoughtful, energetic, and wonderful. It was a blessing to guide them on their journey into our St. Ambrose faith community!

GRADE 2: MELISSA KEAGLE

In second grade the students discover that they are part of the Body of Christ. They study about Baptism and learn about God's love and mercy as they prepare to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Some of the highlights of the year include a Rite of Enrollment Liturgy, Palm Sunday Procession, Holy Thursday Eucharist Participation and Breaking Bread Banquet with the Families. Of course, the most significant occasions are their first celebrations of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion.

Kelly Woolums

2	0	CSA
1	9	Box Scores

Number of Families	900
Returns in 2018	262
Returns to date	215
Average Gift ('18).....	\$463
Quota for the Archdiocese	\$85,267
Property/Liability Insurance ...	\$52,000
Parish '19 Target.....	\$137,267
Received as of 7/29/2019.....	\$121,830

- The 38th Annual Catholic Services Appeal is now wrapping up. Remember that now our quota for the Archdiocese is met, all gifts to the CSA are returned to the parish and are exempt from the regular 7% Archdiocesan tax.
- It's a great time to help your parish. All overages go to paying our property and liability insurances.

The Beehive

is the parish weekly bulletin of the
St. Ambrose Catholic Community
Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

Pastor: Rev. Timothy R. Pelc

Pastoral Minister: Charles Dropiewski

Religious Education: Kelly Anne Woolums

Minister of Music: Dr. Norah Duncan IV

Office Manager: Peggy O'Connor

Sacramental Celebrations

Masses: On the Lord's Day –

Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:30 and 11:15 a.m.

Baptism: Arrangements for both adults and infants to be made by contacting the rectory.

Penance: As announced and by appointment.

Marriage: Couples should contact the rectory office a minimum of six months in advance of the proposed date to make arrangements.

Funeral: Normally celebrated within one week after the deceased's passing.

Directory

Parish Office: 15020 Hampton

Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230

Tel: (313) 822-2814 **Fax:** (313) 822-9838

Email address: stambrose@comcast.net

Religious Education: (313) 332-5633

Pastoral Ministry: (313) 332-5631

Ark Scheduling: (313) 822-2814

Parish Website: stambrosechurch.net

Liturgy Schedule for the Coming Week

Monday, August 12

St. Jane Frances de Chantal, religious

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer

Tuesday, August 13

St. Pontian, pope &

St. Hippolytus, priest, martyrs

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Joan Sossi
Ted Zawacki

Wednesday, August 14

St. Maximilian Kolbe, priest & martyr

8:30 - Morning Prayer

Thursday, August 15

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Holyday of Obligation in the United States

10:00 a.m. - Ray & Rosana Tessmer

7:00 p.m. - Mass - Michael McKenzie

Friday, August 16-

St. Stephen of Hungary

8:30 a.m. - Edmund Cardinal Szoka

Saturday, August 17

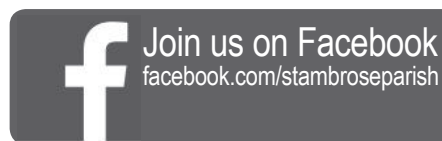
4:00 p.m. - Mass - For All People

Sunday, August 18

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:30 a.m. - Mass For All People

11:15 a.m. - Mass For All People



Scriptures for the 19th Week in Ordinary Time

Monday, August 12

- Dt 10: 12-22
- Ps 147: 12-15, 19-20
- Mt 17: 22-27

Tuesday, August 13

- Dt 31: 1-8
- (Ps) Dt 32: 3-4b, 7-9
- Mt 18: 1-8, 10, 12-14

Wednesday, August 14

- Dt 34: 1-12
- Ps 66: 1-3a, 5, 8, 26-17
- Mt 18: 15-20

Thursday, August 15

- Rv 11: 19a, 12: 1-6a, 10ab
- 1 Cor 15: 20-27
- Lk 1: 39-56

Friday, August 16

- Jos 24: 1-13
- Ps 136: 1-3, 16-18, 21-22, 24
- Mt 19: 3-12

Saturday, August 17

- Jos 24: 14-29
- Ps 16: 1-2a, 5, 7-8, 11
- Mt 19: 13-15

Sunday, August 18

- Jer 38: 4-6, 8-10
- Heb 12: 1-4
- Lk 12: 49-53

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time August 17th and August 18th

4:00 p.m. - Celebrant: Fr. Pelc **Lector:** Mary Urbanski

Eucharistic Ministers: Maria Cox-Borkowski, Cathy McPherson, Karen McShane

Altar Servers: Jack Hern

8:30 a.m. - Sunday - Celebrant: Fr. Bede **Lector:** Karlos Haynes

Eucharistic Ministers: Colleen Drummond, Christopher Harrison, Joan Jackson,

Maggie Jackson, Bob Jogan, Steve Linne, Joellyn Valgoi

Altar Servers: Nicholas, Margaret, & Meredith Kramer

11:15 a.m. - Celebrant: Bp Quinn **Lector:** Michele Hodges

Eucharistic Ministers: Anne Billiu, Joe Hugh, Pat & Michael Mocer, Sue & Roger Playwin, Cristina Swiatkowski

Altar Server: Shea Vatalaro, April Caballero

Your Envelope Speaks ... the Inside Story

To operate, each week our parish requires a *minimum* of..... \$10,100.00

On Sunday, August 4, 2019

in envelopes we received \$6,775.00

in the loose collection \$723.00

in other donations..... \$1,390.00

for a total of..... **\$8,888.00**

Under budget for the week. **\$1,212.00**

Number of envelopes mailed 900

Number of envelopes used..... 132

"For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be." (Luke 12:34)

Jesus encourages us to build up our treasure in heaven. The world encourages us to build up our treasure in real estate, investments, and material goods. How much time are you investing in building up a worldly treasure? How much time are you investing in building up a heavenly treasure? To invest more time in the things of heaven, you must let go of some of the things of this world.

Our Sick

Please pray for those who are seriously ill or who are hospitalized: Pat Blake, Karen Culver, Ann Sullivan Kay, Donald Miriani, Bonnie McKenna, Jeanne Noto, David Schumacker, Matthew Elias, George Buccer, Emilie Kasper, Darby O'Toole, Anna Noto Billings, Vilma Rivers, Vilma Marone, Eileen O'Brien, Martha Luna, Dina Engels, Liz Linne, Donna Barnes, Betty Greenia, Alexandra Cullen, Charmaine Kaptur, Frank Gregory, Alex Billiu, Gladys Bogos, Wayne Wallrich, Fr. Phil Naessens, Jerry Hansen, Lou Rondini and Jackie Walkowski.

Catholic Night at Comerica Park

Come join the Archdiocese for a relaxing night of faith, fun and fellowship at the ballpark. The Archdiocese of Detroit is hosting a Catholic Night at Comerica Park and all are welcome.

On Tuesday, September 10th, the Tigers will take on the Yankees at 6:45 p.m.

All parishes & parishioners in the Archdiocese and beyond are invited for a night of fun and fellowship.

Each ticket purchased includes a donation to Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan and also a limited-edition Detroit Tigers + Unleash the Gospel hat. Don't miss this great event, get your tickets today at utgdet.org/catholicnight

Sheep Among the Wolverines

From the heart of Ann Arbor, a young and growing community of religious Sisters is bringing a joyful witness to Catholic education and evangelization.

Join them on Thursday, September 19th at 6:30 p.m. at the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club for an evening with the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist. The Sisters will share musical selections from their Billboard-topping CDs and the counter-cultural story of their young and growing community. Hors d'oeuvres and curated wines and beers will be served. To register go to sistersofmary.org.

How to Celebrate the Feast of the Assumption



Cleveland's Assumption Procession

The Assumption (August 15) refers to the Blessed Virgin Mary being assumed — body and soul — into heaven at the end of her earthly life. “Assumption” is different than “ascension” because one is passive (i.e. one is assumed) and the other is active (i.e. one ascends). It is by the power of God that Mary was assumed.

As evidenced by the writings of many early Church fathers, Christians have believed for more than a millennium that the Blessed Virgin was assumed into heaven. In 1950, Pope Pius XII officially defined the Dogma of the Assumption. This means that the Church officially recognizes this belief as a true and necessary part of our Catholic beliefs about Mary. Like all beliefs about Mary, they illuminate our most treasured beliefs about her Son. The Assumption illustrates to us the truth about Christ’s promise of eternal life and the resurrection of the faithful.

There are so many wonderful ways to celebrate and honor Our Lady for the Feast of the Assumption. Here are a few ideas to make this day special:

Go to Mass

The Assumption is a Holy Day of Obligation, which means Catholics are obligated to attend Mass this day. Make it a priority to get to Mass. If you are working, check out the mass schedule of a local Catholic Church on your lunch hour. If you are traveling, plan on attending mass at a nearby parish. Wherever you are, gather to show our love and affection for Our Blessed Mother and by doing so we bring glory to her Son.

Attend a festival

The number of cities (large and small) that host processions or parades for the Feast of the Assumption is staggering. Our Lady is loved and celebrated in every corner of every continent! Processions range from small and solemn to large and boisterous. This is what the procession looks like in Paris, New York, and Cantillana, Spain. There are so many more!

One of the biggest in the mid-west is in Cleveland’s Little Italy neighborhood. Held every year since 1898, it incorporates a procession, mass and fireworks.

In addition to its religious nature, the Feast celebrates Cleveland’s Italian community and is renowned for its nourishment, with eateries and shops from around the area pitching customary Italian sustenance.

Bless the bounty of your garden

In Europe and throughout the world, it was (and is still) traditional to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption by bringing the summer harvest to be blessed. The first fruits — herbs, tomatoes, summer squash, etc. — are often associated with the Feast of the Assumption both because of the time of year and because Mary was the first believer in Jesus to experience the promised resurrection. She is the first fruit of a great coming harvest.

As a point of liturgical fact, the Church asks God to bless herbs and flowers — and thus us — to remind all of us of the gifts God has given us for our sustenance, healing and beauty. In many places the faithful had all their flowers blessed, especially those closely associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary.

(Ed. note: see p. 2 of this bulletin with an invitation and details about how to be involved in this at St. Ambrose)

Eat!

Oh, how we love to have something special to eat for a feast day! Your plans can be as simple as a picnic or cookout or as fancy as a formal sit down dinner or a proper tea. Try using fresh herbs and summer produce from your local farmers market.

Adapted from Busted Halo: Faith Shared Joyfully