



February 2021

# The Compass

IN THE

# Bulletin

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## Oshkosh sister marks 96th birthday



MICHAEL COONEY | FOR THE COMPASS

John Fuller, left, director of SSM Franciscan Courts in Oshkosh, holds a door open while Mary Zentner, longtime liturgical music coordinator at Franciscan Courts, takes a photo of Sr. Frances Meyer, a Sister of the Sorrowful Mother, who turned 96 on Jan. 13 and was honored by a drive-by birthday caravan of cars.

### SPECIAL TO THE COMPASS

**OSHKOSH** — Sr. Frances Meyer celebrated her 96th birthday on Wednesday, Jan. 13. To celebrate, the sisters and staff at SSM Franciscan Courts prepared a surprise “drive-by” caravan of cars to safely offer birthday wishes to Sr. Frances

during the pandemic.

The birthday caravan participants decorated their cars and got in formation, then drove through the front parking lot at SSM Franciscan Courts. Approximately 25 to 30 vehicles participated. Seated just inside the entrance foyer to the SSM regional office, Sr. Frances

enjoyed watching guests drive by, offering well wishes, smiles and waves, while holding signs and gifts. The staff then held a celebratory luncheon for Sr. Frances, complete with a birthday cake.

**Our full story** appears in the Jan. 22 issue.

### FRANKLY, FRANCIS



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let us continue our catechesis on prayer, and today we will give space to the dimension of praise.

We will take our cue from a critical passage in the life of Jesus. After the first miracles and the involvement of the disciples in proclaiming the Kingdom of God, the mission of the Messiah undergoes a crisis. John the Baptist has doubts and makes Him receive this message — John is in jail: “Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?” (Mt 11:3). He feels this anguish of not knowing whether he is mistaken in his proclamation. There are always dark moments, moments of spiritual nighttime, and John is going through this moment. There is hostility in the villages along the lake, where Jesus had performed so many prodigious signs (cf. Mt 11:20-24).

+ Pope Francis, Jan. 13, 2021

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## Parish staff members in Oshkosh team up to form ‘The Polka Saints’

### BY SAM LUCERO | THE COMPASS

**OSHKOSH** — Whistling while you work is a practice made popular in a Walt Disney movie. At St. Raphael the Archangel Parish, three staff members have one-upped Snow White’s seven whistling friends.

Fr. Kevin Ripley, parochial vicar, Mark Lindekugel, business manager, and Howie Frank, facilities manager, have formed a polka

band. Although they don’t actually play and sing polka tunes while working, they are making their work environment more exciting for themselves and others.

On Thursday, Jan. 28, the polka band will hold its first concert, a virtual event beginning at 6 p.m. The concert can be viewed at [raphael.org/media/live](http://raphael.org/media/live). Billed as “The Polka Saints,” the band will perform five songs. “We will also talk about our music back-

ground and the background of the songs we are doing,” said Lindekugel.

The livestream concert is part of the parish’s “Choir Connection” program held on Thursday nights. According to Lindekugel, forming a polka band came up in conversation with Fr. Ripley after he was appointed to the parish last summer.

**Our full story** appears in the Jan. 22 issue.

# 5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

## About Valentine's Day

BY PATRICIA KASTEN | THE COMPASS

**1** Feb. 14 is Valentine's Day. People think the day honors a saint. However, at least three "Valentines" exist on saints' lists.

**2** These include Valentine the Presbyter (priest), Valentine of Interamna (a bishop) and Valentine, an African martyr.

**3** Lacking clear records, but lots of legends, the church removed Valentine from its calendar in 1969. This doesn't mean he isn't a saint, but no special Mass for him is held that day.

**4** One medieval legend says birds build nests on Feb. 14. This began the tradition of Feb. 14 love notes.

**5** Two saints honored on Feb. 14 are Cyril and Methodius, 9th-century brothers called "the Apostles to the Slavs."

## A crisis of truth in our nation

Dear friends and followers of Jesus:

**O**ur hearts are saddened because of the terrible violence that struck the nation's capital on Wednesday, Jan. 6. Just as we mourned the violence this past summer following the death of George Floyd, we are in mourning again. It is sad that our country has become so divided, so rancorous, that such an uprising could happen. All of the events of the past months of heightened division, put on steroids by social media and the media in general, have brought us to a very somber and sobering moment.



### BISHOP'S CORNER

Bishop David Ricken

We are a nation in crisis. In one sense, what we are witnessing is a crisis of truth. Our society tells us that truth is whatever we make it, that each person determines their own truth. To maintain our own personal understanding of truth, we seek out anyone or anything that will confirm our beliefs and we dismiss anyone or anything that will challenge our beliefs.

This is not the way of the Gospel. While it might be comforting to shape truth to fit our own ideas, we cannot grow as humans unless we are willing to be shaped by the truth. You see, brothers and sisters, the truth is not just an idea, the truth is a person, Jesus Christ,

and the challenge each of us faces is to become like Jesus. This is no easy task because it requires us to surrender our own ideas, our own agendas, our own truth.

As a nation, we have been on a downward trajectory now for many years insofar as our religious, spiritual, familial and moral lives go. For too long, we have placed our faith in other people and things, rather than in God. This is not just a problem in the world at large, it is a problem within the church as well. The events of last week show us what happens when we place our faith in people and political parties over God. It doesn't matter if we are talking about Republicans or Democrats, no government official and no public policy can save us. Only Jesus can. And while we believe that God can bless the efforts of our political leaders, they are still broken human beings, who at times will fall short.

This is a moment of decision for the country. We must realize the centrality of God in our lives and humble ourselves before him. Without God, we are nothing and everything will continue to unravel unless we turn back to God, who made us and so desperately wants to pour out his love and mercy upon us. Jesus Christ is the King of All Nations. During these weeks and months ahead we must repent of our sins and turn humbly to God, begging his assistance.

The entire column appears in our Jan. 15 issue.

**The Compass**  
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## Parish SNAPSHOT



Alynn Fowler-Doxlator, left, Athena Ghent and Hannah Yeager, students at Sacred Heart School in Shawano, hold up a "We Love Our School" poster Jan. 13. Catholic schools in the Diocese of Green Bay kicked off National School Choice Week on Jan. 25 and will kick off Catholic Schools Week on Jan. 31.

SUBMITTED PHOTO | SPECIAL TO THE COMPASS