

OUR LADY, QUEEN OF THE YOUGH CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Pennsylvania Charitable Trusts

Our vision is to lead all whose lives we touch into a living relationship with the person of Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament,

Service and Fellowship.

www.youghcatholic.org



WHEN PRAYER COMES TO LIFE...
THE LIVING ROSARY

To our visitors... If you are just passing through, we are glad you chose to worship with us. If you are seeking a new church home, please know there is always room in our pews and a place in our hearts for you.

DEVIVO CENTRE

116 South 2nd Street Connellsville, PA 15425

724.628.6840 (f) 724.628.0838

MON-THU 8:30am-noon /1-4pm FRI 8:30am-1pm

BRADY CENTRE

459 Ranch Road Dunbar, PA 15431

724.277.4236 (f) 724.277.8954

MON, TUE, THU, FRI 9am-3pm



We work with the Holy Trinity Conference of Saint Vincent DePaul to help our neighbors in need. Their number is 724.562.3341.

We are grateful for the advertisers

on pages 4 and 9, who cover the cost of printing our bulletins.

Please frequent their businesses in support of *them*.

This week's featured advertiser is VITO C. MARTUCCI FUNERAL HOME.

Our Faith Community consists of the Parish Families of Immaculate Conception, Connellsville (1869), Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, Dunbar (1874), Saint John the Evangelist, Connellsville (1895), and Saint Rita of Cascia, Connellsville (1915).

We also embrace the former Parish Families of Saint Vincent de Paul, Leisenring (1888-2008), Sacred Heart, Dawson (1889-2007) Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Connellsville (1901-1913), Saint Emory, Connellsville (1903-1970), Holy Trinity, Connellsville (1903-2008), Saint Polycarp, West Leisenring (1917-1997).

OUR STAFF - WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Fr. Paul Lisik

Incoming Pastor plisik@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Fr. Daniel Carr

Administrator pro tem. dcarr@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Fr. Julius Capongpongan

Parochial Vicar jcapongpongan@dioceseofgreensburg.org Hospital ministry, homebound visits

Sr. Donna Mulligan

Director of Pastoral Ministry dmulligan@dioceseofgreensburg.org Communion to the sick/homebound

MARY SAMPEY

Director of Evangelization msampey@dioceseofgreensburg.org RCIA, Foundations of Faith, youth ministry, sacramental prep

Molli Vassar

RCIA Coordinator, Spiritual Counseling mvassar@dioceseofgreensburg.org

LOU ANN LAUFFER

Business Manager, Connellsville llauffer@dioceseofgreensburg.org Connellsville general parish business, cemetery lots/deeds

SUSAN DUNKARD

Business Manager, Dunbar sdunkard@dioceseofgreensburg.org Dunbar general parish business

LISA ANDURSKY

Administrative Assistant landursky@dioceseofgreensburg.org Connellsville baptism, marriage, Mass scheduling

KAREN TWEARDY

Parish Secretary, Connellsville ktweardy@dioceseofgreensburg.org Bulletin (deadline MON at noon), envelopes, membership

TINA MAHALLICK

Parish Secretary, Dunbar tmahallick@dioceseofgreensburg.org Dunbar Mass scheduling

DAVID HERTZNELL

Maintenance, Connellsville dhertznell@dioceseofgreensburg.org

DAVID BALLARD

Maintenance/Cemetery Care, Dunbar dballard@dioceseofgreensburg.org

DAVID PANZELLA

Cemetery Care, Connellsville/Dawson 724.323.5365

SAT-SUN, OCT 19-20 2019 STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Adult	\$4,200.00
Loose	514.00
Maintenance	<u>5.00</u>
Total:	\$4,719,00
1 0 0011	φ 1,1 1 2 10 0
Cemetery	
	\$419.00

ST. ALOYSIUS

Adult	\$3,489.00
Loose	138.00
Children/Young Adults	19.00
Parish Improvements	<u>32.00</u>
Total:	\$3,678.00
Propagation of Faith	\$448.00

St. John

<u>31. JOHN</u>	
Adult	\$2,604.00
Loose	240.10
Maintenance	10.00
Total:	\$2,854.10
	• •
Total: Cemetery Mission Sunday	\$650.00

ST. RITA

Adult	\$3,777.00
Loose	363.00
Maintenance	<u>20.00</u>
	0417000
Total:	\$4,160.00
Cemetery	. ,

THE MISSION CO-OP OFFERING will NOT be collected this weekend. It will be scheduled for a later time.



NEXT weekend there will be a collection for RETIRED RELIGIOUS/DIOCESAN PRIESTS.

One-quarter of the funds stays in our diocese. There is an envelope in your packet for this collection.

Please give to those who have given a lifetime.



Wisdom 11:22-12:2 GENTLE MERCY

When you regard a single grain of sand or a single drop of morning dew, it looks quite small. And it is. When God looks upon each of us, we look quite small. And we are.

We feel especially small when we become aware of our sins. We acknowledge with some embarrassment the evil we have done, the people we have hurt, the lies we have told, and the cover-ups we have made. The awareness of our sin fills us with remorse and diminishes our stature. If our sin becomes public, we want to hide, to go home, and to make ourselves as small as we possibly can.

We do all this as if we could hide from God. We cannot. God notices the tiniest grain of sand and the single drop of morning dew. And God notices us. God notices the tiniest things we do - for good or for ill.

When we sin, when we feel small, we need not hide from God. We can appear before God quite openly and acknowledge the wrong we have done. God will forgive. God sees the intimacy of our lives and loves it.

As the Book of Wisdom says, "You have mercy on all, because you can do all things; and you overlook people's sins that they may repent."

Written by Paul Turner. Copyright © 2009, Resource Publications, Inc., 888-273-7782, www.rpinet.com. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission from Lectionary Bulletin Inserts, Year C: First and Second Readings.

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:15-16

GOD'S MERCY IS FOREVER; IT NEVER ENDS, IT NEVER RUNS OUT, IT NEVER GIVES UP WHEN FACED WITH CLOSED DOORS, AND IT NEVER TIRES.

- POPE FRANCIS

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK:

MON: Eph 2:19-22; Ps 19:2-5; Lk 6:12-16

TUE: Rom 8:18-25; Ps 126:1b-6; Lk 13:18-21

WED: Rom 8:26-30; Ps 13:4-6; Lk 13:22-30

THU: Rom 8:31b-39; Ps 109:21-22, 26-27, 30-31; Lk 13:31-35

FRI: Rv 7:2-4, 9-14; Ps 24:1-6; I Jn 3:1-3; Mt 5:1-12a

SAT: Wis 3:1-9; Ps 23:1-6; Rom 5:5-11 or 6:3-9; Jn 6:37-40

SUN: Wis 11:22-12:2; Ps 145:1-2, 8-11, 13-14; 2 Thes 1:11-2:2;

Lk 19:1-10



RCIA Inquiry sessions continue THUs in IC's Sciberras Hall, 6:30-8pm.

St. John's Fundraising Committee will be making pirohi on TUEs, OCT 22 and 29, NOV 5 and 12 at 8:30am in Moravek Hall for their upcoming sale. Any help is greatly appreciated, whether it be your time or making a monetary donation to help defray food costs. Cash or checks (payable to St. John and marked St. John Fundraising donation) may be placed in the collection basket or dropped off at the DeVivo Centre.

There will be an additional Altar Server training on MON, OCT 28 at St. John at 7pm if you missed prior sessions or need a refresher.

A Mass with the celebration of the

Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will be held TUE, OCT 29 at 11am at St. Rita. Mass will be

followed by a lunch in Bucci Hall.

Tom Severin's Bible study on Job will continue on WED, OCT 30 in IC's Sciberras Hall, from 6:30-8pm.

St. Al's Fundraising Committee will meet on WED, OCT 30 at 6:30pm in the social hall, to discuss 2020 fundraising ideas. All are invited.

St. John's 125th Anniversary Silent Festival ENDS THIS SUN,

OCT 27. Please drop your donation/pledge in the collection basket, or at the DeVivo Centre. Pledges may be paid until DEC 31.

Molli's Bible study
WILL TAKE PLACE THIS FRI
even though there is no
8:30am Mass at St. Al.



The DeVivo and Brady Centres will both be closed on FRI, NOV I in reverence to All Saints Day.

ALL SAINTS MASS SCHEDULE

THU, OCT 31 - Vigil 6:00pm St. John

FRI, NOV I

8:00am St. Rita 9:30am IC (Geibel)

7:00pm St. Aloysius

ALL SOULS MASS SCHEDULE

SAT, NOV 2

9:00am St. Aloysius

*Noon St. John

*Commemorating the recently departed members of our parishes



St. Rita Christian Mothers will meet on FRI, NOV I at 6pm in Bucci Hall for a memorial serviced, meeting and social. They will also attend the 4pm Mass on SAT, NOV 2 at St. Rita, as a group.

Summer grave decorations at all Connellsville cemeteries must be removed by SAT, NOV 2. Thanksgiving/Christmas decorations may be placed on graves after NOV 16.

Our Lady, Queen of the Yough Catholic Community Children's Choir WILL NOT rehearse on SAT, NOV 2. Regular rehearsals will resume on NOV 9 - regular time and place. Children in grades 3-6 in all 4 parishes are eligible for membership. In addition, junior and senior

dition, junior and senior high students are invited to serve as leaders and cantors for the Choir. STATION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE

The Christian Mothers' Advent/
Christmas Party for all 4 parishes,
hosted by St. Rita this year, will be
held at Nino's Restaurant on SUN,
DEC I at 3:30 pm. Cost is \$28,
payable in advance. Checks are payable to St. Rita Christian Mothers,
marked Advent/Christmas Party, and
may be dropped in the collection
basket, or taken to the DeVivo Centre.
Reservations are due by NOV 25, and
can be made through Mary at 628-6832
or Eleanor at 628-3494. Please
bring an unwrapped baby item for
Alternatives. Yes.

St. Rita Christian Mothers' Christmas Cookie Sale will be on SAT, DEC 7 beginning at 9am in Bucci Hall.

Donations of Robin Hood flour, Crisco, Imperial margarine, Domino granulated and powdered sugar and nuts would be appreciated. Also, monetary donations to help defray costs are being accepted by making checks payable to St. Rita Christian Mothers, and can be dropped in the collection basket or given directly to Rita Pratt.

Holy Trinity Conference, St. Vincent dePaul Society, thanks everyone who so generously donated to its food drive last weekend. Your tremendous outpouring has filled our emergency food pantry's shelves once again. God bless all of you!



Nar-Anon will meet on WED, OCT 30 in

Natural Family Planning CM-BBT in-

struction will be held MON, NOV II at 6pm in the Catholic Charities office in Greensburg. Contact Mary Ann Newhouse at Catholic Charities at 837-1840, $\times 1658$ for additional information or to register for this or an upcoming class. Please call at least one week prior to the instruction date to preregister. For more info about Natural Family Planning and the CM-BBT method, visit www.ccharitiesgreensburg.org and link into Natural Family Planning under "Services."

"Pray All Ways - Pray Always," an evening of the art and stories of Edward Hays in concert, will be held SUN, NOV 17 at Christ Our Shepherd Center.

The evening is a benefit for the Diocesan Heritage Center and features the Diocesan Choir and Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Thomas Octave, diocesan director of sacred music; the Saint Vincent Seminary Scholar under the direction of Benedictine Father Cyprian Constantine; the Christ the Divine Teacher School Choir; guest artist and storyteller Tim Hartman; and singer Tom Franzak. An exhibit of Hays' art opens at 5pm with a reception following at 5:30pm and the concert at 7pm. For ticket info: www.dioceseofgreensburg.org/concert.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, North Huntingdon, will sponsor a SAT, DEC 14 bus trip to Heinz Hall for the Pittsburgh Symphony's Holiday Pops concert, followed by dinner at Hoffstot's Café Monaco, Oakmont. The bus will depart from the church at 1pm and return at approximately 8pm. The \$119 cost/person includes the bus, tickets, dinner and tips. For reservations, call 412-751-6283.



Although no one enjoys dwelling on death, most of us will mourn and bury loved ones in our lifetimes. Our faith provides the strength we need to deal with death. The Church has created Rites to help us face the difficulties

and reality of death. Every baptized Catholic has a right to a Catholic funeral, which includes the following:

- ♦ PRAYERS AFTER DEATH
- ♦ PRAYERS IN THE PRESENCE OF THE BODY
- ◆ THE SCRIPTURE PRAYER SERVICE AT THE WAKE
- ◆ THE FUNERAL AT CHURCH (WITH/WITHOUT MASS)
- ♦ INTERNMENT PRAYER SERVICE AT THE CEMETERY.

Together these services not only make up the total Catholic funeral service, but they also provide the Church's special prayers for the deceased, and support those who are grieving for their loved one.

Catholics are entitled to a Catholic funeral whether they are frequent or infrequent Mass attendees.

If you have specific questions, please call the Brady Centre at 277-4236 or the DeVivo Centre at 628-6840.



Congratulations to ANGELICA ROSE, daughter of Matthew & Kristy Porterfield, baptized OCT 20 at IC.

Geibel's winter coat/blanket/sleeper drive continues 'til NOV 3. New/gently used coats, blankets and warm baby sleepers can be dropped off at Geibel from 7:30am-3pm. Items will be donated to St. Vincent de Paul and Connellsville Area Community Ministries. Contact Marian Cadwallader at 628-5600 or mcadwallader@geibelcatholic.org



Door for sale - BEST OFFER 87-3/4" tall x 35-5/8" wide Sale will benefit renovation of former CAPS building.

A little over six months ago, I received a phone call from the Community Foundation of Fayette County. They were choosing finalists for their 2019 Philanthropy Project, and wanted to know if I would like to take part in it. The Philanthropy Project is a six month fundraising competition that supports charitable funds held by the Community Foundation of Fayette Country. Whoever raises the most money for their fund is named the 2019 Fayette Philanthropist.

The Community Foundation had taken notice of many of the outreach efforts made by our faith community as a result of the opioid epidemic, and was hoping that I would create a fund in memory of my sister, who passed away from an accidental overdose in December of 2016. Thus, the Angela Phillips Memorial Fund was created. I had absolutely NO IDEA how to get started raising money on behalf of

Cffc
Crownly Fundation
of Engine Course, PA
Mary Sampey

Angela Phillips
Memorial Fund

2019 Fayette Philanthropy Project

Thilanthropy is about the empowerment of wanting to make things better instead of sitting back and thinking about all of the negatives. You never know when or who you can help with the smallest things.*

our fund, but KNEW that I would like to give the proceeds of our fundraising efforts to support

Connellsville Community Ministries. Thankfully, our faith AND local community stepped up in a BIG WAY!

As a result, we raised \$19,000 for our fund in six months. I am ecstatic to tell you that because of YOUR SUPPORT, I was named the 2019 Fayette Philanthropist!

Thank you will NEVER be enough for each and every last person that has helped me find purpose in the pain by giving back to our local community! It was incredible to see the acts of God occurring during the process. Honestly, many days we weren't even TRYING to raise money. It was JUST HAPPENING! Allow me to share a few examples of how God was clearly at work through all of you....

The first fundraiser we had was a t-shirt fundraiser. In TWO DAYS, TWENTY families and local businesses (many of them parishioners) gave us sponsorships! Many of our parishioners and Conn Area/Geibel students and parents ordered t-shirts. The incredible and talented Kait-

lin Hess (SR parishioner) created a beautiful logo for our fund. The Angela Phillips Memorial Fund was gaining serious momentum already!



For our next fundraiser, we decided to do a Lip Sync Battle Event at Pleasant Valley Golf Club. Susan McCarthy (IC parishioner) offered her services to help plan our event. Father Bob and Mayor Greg Lincoln were good enough to offer themselves up as my Lip Sync Battle competition. Many people from our parishes donated raffle baskets. At LEAST 80% of the 200 attendants were that of our parish community! We even got my



sister's daughters and my children involved as part of the entertainment. My stepdad Chuck was good enough to DJ the event. It was a positive and FUN evening to celebrate my sister's life while raising money for Community Ministries!

Community Ministries supported our efforts by making our fund an integral part of their Heart to Hope Telethon. For one hour of the telethon, 50% of the donations received went directly to The Angela Phillips Memorial Fund. Talk about a community working together!

During the summer months, we weren't doing very much fundraising. That was because MANY parishioners were stepping up and donating either online to our GO FUND ME account or sending donations

to the office. Two particular donations completely BLEW ME AWAY; a \$2,000 donation from the proceeds of the Saint Rita's Festival and a \$1,000 donation from the proceeds of the Immaculate Conception Festival. It was such an incredibly humbling and moving experience to receive these donations and to know that we were being completely supported in our efforts by our faith family.

The community stepped up again as we began the Connellsville Cannonball Challenge. Those who participated were asked to create a video of themselves doing a cannonball, donate \$5 to Community Ministries, and challenge others to do the same. Instantly, videos of parishioners taking part in this challenge flooded my social media accounts. Mayor Greg Lincoln cannonballed into a pool in a Donald Duck costume for crying out loud! It never ceases to amaze me how this community comes together for a cause.

This would have NEVER happened without all of you. The Our Lady Queen of the Yough Catholic Community truly exemplifies what the body of Christ is ALL ABOUT! Because of your generosity, people DO recognize that our faith community is here to SERVE our local community and GIVE BACK!

Because of your support, I will be able to give Connellsville Community Ministries a check for \$12,716. This number is extremely significant to me, as it is the date of my sister's passing (12-7-16). Remaining donations will be used in order to create a permanent fund for the Angela Phillips Memorial Fund so that our fund will have a lasting impact in our local community for years to come! God has taken a tragedy and created so much goodness out of it. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Christ's peace and our Mother Mary's love, Mary Sampey The BOOK OF THE Book
DECEASED has been of placed at the back Remembrance of each of our churches, for you to sign names of family members and friends who have died. Please sign as many names as you wish.

A Dedication Recital for IC's new 3-manual Walker organ will be presented on SUN, NOV 17 at 3pm, as part of the parish's 150th Anniversary celebration.

J. Christopher Pardini, director of music and liturgy/organist at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, Greensburg, will present the recital. Following the recital there will be a reception with light refreshments in Sciberras Hall.

the repose of the souls of CONNIE HATTER, MELODIE

HODNIK and LAURA LIVENGOOD (daughter of Dave Hatter), who died recently. May their souls and the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in eternal peace.

MASS SCHEDULE & INTENTIONS



100 miles		The state of the s
MON, OC	T 28	Sts. Simon & Jude, Apostles
8:00am	St. Rita	Diane Karaffa (Grandkids)
8:30am	St. Al	Philip Bell (Wife, Anna)
TUE, OCT	29	WEEKDAY
8:00am	St. John	Jean Humbert, Monica McCarthy, & Deceased Members
		of the Parr & Sarko Families (Judy)
8:30am	St. Al	Lawrence & Rosemary Bruno (Daughters)
11:00am	St. Rita	Mass with Anointing of the Sick
WED, OC	T 30	WEEKDAY
8:00am	St. Rita	Frank A. Balena (Wife, Eleanor)
8:30am	St. Rita	Adoration until 4:30pm
THU, OCT	Γ3Ι	WEEKDAY
8:00am	IC	Sarah & Elizabeth Cesario (Dolores Hominsky & Family)
8:00am	St. Al	Prayers for Priests & Padre Pio Devotions
8:30am	St. Al	Harry & Dorothy Lizza (Jim & Stephanie Stefano)
		ALL SAINTS VIGIL
6:00pm	St. John	Barbara Masciarelli (Tony Natale)
<u>FRI, NOV</u>		Solemnity of All Saints
8:00am	St. Rita	Donald & Josephine Grenaldo (Linda & Chris Sparks)
9:30am	IC	Lou, George, Fannie & John DeSimone (Family)
7:00pm	St. Al	Gerald & Amelia Gambone (Children & Grandchildren)
<u>SAT, NOV</u>		ALL SOULS' DAY
9:00am	St. Al	All Souls
10:30am	St. Rita	Confession NOTE TIME CHANGE
12:00pm	St. John	All Souls
1:30pm	St. Rita	Wedding of Emily Clarkson & Shane Davis
-		VIGIL
4:00pm	St. Rita	All Souls
5:00pm	St. Al	All Souls
6:00pm	IC	All Souls
SUN, NOV	/ 3	31st Sunday in Ordinary Time
8:00am	St. Rita	Deceased Members of the Talucci Family (William & Family)
9:00am	St. Al	John W. Taylor, Jr. (Brian, Josh & Ben)
9:30am	IC	Clara Severi (Larna Swallop & Earl Halfhill)
11:30am	St. John	Health of Nancy Heinbaugh (Nancy's Family)

MINISTRY SCHEDULE - NOV 2			MINISTRY SCHEDULE - NOV 3				
	SR-4PM	St. Al-5pm	IC-6PM	St. Rita-8am	St. Al-9am	IC-9:30am	St. John-11:30am
ACOLYTES/	K Callahan	M Pascoe	M Grimm	T Barrett	R Trimbath	I House	L Kalivoda
Servers	K Callahan	A Sampey	K Lizza	G Joseph	M Ross	S House	L Hampshire
EXTRAORDINARY	M Pieczynski	K Andolino	J Colvin	B Bielecki	T Dull	I McKenna	J Speeney
MINISTERS	L Sparks	M Vinoverski	D Calinao	L Kozel	K Martray	M DeFazio	J Kosinski
	M Lazor	M Sampey	P Calinao	C Porter	A Trimbath	D Gephart	D Siecinski
CROSS BEARERS	M Martray	W Trimbath	O Spotto	C Joseph	F Vinoverski	M House	D Firestone
LECTORS	V McDowell	S Lincoln	B Colvin	B Casey	D DeCara	E Loyal	A Shoemaker
Rosary		Volunteer			C Johnston		



On Monday I attended the Living Rosary for Immaculate Conception's 150th anniversary. I had never been to a Living Rosary before. The students from Conn-Area

stood with a crucifix in the main aisle and wrapped around the sanctuary in the shape of a rosary. One at a time, the students walked up

to the ambo, prayed their assigned prayers, and returned to their place. It was a touching scene. But, admittedly, it was not all that prayerful for me. I was

busy watching the children, many of whom fidgeted, wiggled, and quietly chatted with their neighbor in between prayers.

It got me to thinking about the message that Pope Francis gave at World Youth Day in Panama back in January. He said to those gathered there:

Dear young people, you are not the future but the now of God and he invites you and calls you in your communities and cities to go out and find your grandparents and elders; to stand up and with them to speak out and realize the dream that the Lord has dreamed for you.

Wow. Young people are not the future but the now of God. When I look around in our community, that is not what I tend to see. I see mostly older people in our churches on weekends, mostly older people volunteering, and mostly older people running things - older people who are worried about the future. But when I look more closely, I can see what Pope Francis means.

I see it in two ways. The first is in the ways that young people are

truly making a difference in our world and in our community. Fr. Bob highlighted the younger generation in this space a number of weeks ago. We have a vibrant youth group, youth choir, and Catholic school system. Events like Gator Fest and the Living Rosary reminded me of this fact. Our youth are indispensable and we must support them.

But there is another more profound way. Perhaps an example would help. A few weeks ago, there was a family at Mass who had fussing toddlers. During most of the homily

"YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT THE FUTURE BUT THE NOW OF GOD." Pope Francis

I was competing for volume and, impressively, despite my microphone advantage, they were winning. I know that family got a number of "looks". Many parents do not bring their children until they are "old enough" because of these looks. But our youth are not just the future but the now. Why do we baptize infants? Because they are a part of our community and they should be present when we gather every Sunday.

I used to be irritated by noise in church. But upon reflection, I realized three things. First, if I want to see more young people at Mass (which I do), then this would be bound to happen. Even the best parents must struggle with toddlers who realize that if they misbehave they get to leave church! At some point, the children must stay and fuss and learn how to act in church, even if it's inconvenient for the rest of us.

Second, even if we don't have a single moment of silence in the Church, everyone has the opportunity to receive the sacrament of Jesus' body and blood and to sing praise and glory to God. Everything else, including the human nourishment that comes from the over-valued homily, can be supplemented outside of Mass if we truly need it and look for it.

The third and most important point I discovered at the Living Rosary. As I watched our young people make mistakes, forget certain prayers, struggle to use the microphone well, and sway back and forth enough times to power a small country, I saw what God sees on Sundays. Oh how adult-like we look and sound and act in

Church, but our minds wiggle and squirm, don't they? At times our distracted heads are the ones crying out and competing with the voice of the priest.

We are no better at worshipping God than are infants. In this way, to para-phrase Pope Francis' words, our youngest children are the now of God, not just the future, and when they come and find their grandparents and elders in church and stand up with them and speak out, it realizes God's dream for us as a community.

"Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." (Mt. 18:3). Notice that Jesus doesn't just say children but little children. We must become more like the crying toddlers and infants who are a part of our church community and not just future members. We must realize that when we pray and worship, we are no better than they who are showing us on the outside what we often do on the inside. When they are noisy or fidgety, when they distract us out of our preferred way of praying, perhaps God is calling us to a different sort of prayer - one that appreciates young life, one that helps us to pray for rather than glare at, and one that ultimately can deepen our hearts to see what God sees in the crying child: an offering that is pleasing.