

The measure of love is to love without measure.

# St. Francis de Sales Parish

**BE FAITH-FILLED. BE OF SERVICE. BE DEVOUT.**



## **SACRAMENTAL LIFE**

Please call the parish office at 330-644-2225 to make arrangements for

**Baptisms | Anointing of the Sick  
Funerals | Weddings**

Arrangements for weddings are to be made at least six months prior to the wedding date.

## **EDUCATION**

**St. Francis de Sales Parish School**  
330-644-0638 | [stfparishschool.org](http://stfparishschool.org)

## **PSR, Youth Ministry & Faith Formation**

Call the parish office at 330-644-2225 to enroll or find out more.

## **LITURGICAL SCHEDULE**

### **Masses**

Saturday Vigil: 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday: 7:30, 9:00, 11:00 a.m.  
Monday-Saturday: 8:15 a.m.  
Thursday: 6:30 p.m.

### **Confessions**

Thursday: 5:30-6:15 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:00-9:45 a.m.  
or call the office to make an appointment.

### **Adoration**

Monday 7:00-8:00 a.m., 6:00-10:00 p.m.,  
Tuesday-Friday, 7:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.  
(breaking for Masses)

## THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD FEBRUARY 2, 2025



### **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD**

- 7:30 a.m. Pro Populo  
9:00 a.m. Anna & C.A. Reiter & Patricia Meredith  
(John & Helen Deibel)  
11:00 a.m. Evelyn & Wilson Weber (Amy & Jim Hilton)

### **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, ST. BLAISE & ST. ANSGAR**

*The St. Blaise blessing of throats will be offered at 8:15 a.m. Mass and the 9:00 a.m. school Liturgy of the Word.*  
8:15 a.m. Sara Ciciro (Ann Coutts)

### **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4**

- 8:15 a.m. Denise Bowen (Kovesci Family)  
Ron DiSpina – Anniversary of Death

### **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, ST. AGATHA**

- 8:15 a.m. Vicky Bhe (John & Helen Deibel)

### **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, ST. PAUL MIKI & COMPANIONS**

- 8:15 a.m. Susie McArdle (Cathy McArdle)  
6:30 p.m. Donald Knee (Pauline Knee)

### **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7**

- 8:15 a.m. Eleanor Testa (Family)  
9:00 a.m. Ed Blackert (Dan & Sue Wargo)

### **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, ST. JEROME EMILIANI & ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA**

- 8:15 a.m. Edward Murawski (Maria Murawski)  
5:00 p.m. Robert Morrison (Daughter)

### **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

- 7:30 a.m. Chick Watkins (Bill & Anne Richards)  
9:00 a.m. Pro Populo  
11:00 a.m. Jim Evans (Family)

## SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK

- Monday:** Heb 11:32-40; Mk 5:1-20  
**Tuesday:** Heb 12:1-4; Mk 5:21-43  
**Wednesday:** Heb 12:4-7, 11-15; Mk 6:1-6  
**Thursday:** Heb 12:18-19, 21-24; Mk 6:7-13  
**Friday:** Heb 13:1-8; Mk 6:14-29  
**Saturday:** Heb 13:15-17, 20-21; Mk 6:30-34  
**Sunday:** Is 6:1-2a, 3-8; 1 Cor 15:1-11 or  
1 Cor 15:3-8, 11; Lk 5:1-11

## **HAPPY FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD!**

**Catholic Schools Week.** This past week has been an exciting time! As I am writing this, our children at the parish school are partaking in an all-day Carnival! We offer this in light of St. John Bosco, whose feast day was Friday, January 31. Our principal, Mrs. Dougherty wrote this about him: "He would win the hearts of his peers by doing circus stunts like balancing acts, juggling, etc. The admission he would charge them is that they had to say a Rosary or attend Mass first. St. John Bosco is a patron of school children and reminds us that our children are 'a gift to be nurtured and cherished.'" On Monday, we had our Pep Rally. The school staff played the eighth graders in Volleyball. I think the staff is undefeated! Woo! I was surprised that day to see the whole school wearing T-shirts with my face on them. The front of the shirt invites everyone, "Pray for my pastor!" I am very grateful for those prayers! On Tuesday, we were able to praise and worship Our Lord in the gym with Eucharistic Adoration and a procession. It was awesome! I can't wait to see how the rest of the week unfolds.



**First Reconciliation.** This coming Wednesday, February 5, we will be celebrating First Reconciliation with our second graders. It is a joy to walk with them and their families as they prepare to receive God's mercy in a very real and tangible way. It is amazing to stop and think about how God can literally make us new in this sacrament. While we know that sin can distort us, we know the power of Jesus can restore us and help us along the way. He is our light in the midst of darkness!

In the book of Hebrews this weekend, we hear how Jesus has power over death and has the power to free us from the slavery of sin. This is why we approach Jesus. On our own, we are slaves to sin. But with Jesus, we are free!

One of my favorite praise and worship songs is "No Longer Slaves" which proclaims that "I'm no longer a slave to fear, I am a child of God." Then this follows...*"I am surrounded by the arms of the Father. I am surrounded by songs of deliverance. We've been liberated from our bondage. We're the sons and the daughters. Let us sing our freedom..."* We are able to sing our freedom because of our good and loving God who came into the world for us, who adopted us and made us His own. Don't ever forget it.

**Live in His freedom,  
Fr. Jeremy**

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2**

- Donut Sunday
- Children’s Liturgy of the Word, 11:00 a.m. Mass
- Cub Scouts, 4:30 p.m. (Rectory)
- Boy Scouts, 4:30 p.m. (Gym)
- Youth Group, 7:00-8:00 p.m. (Beatitudes Room)

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3**

- PSR & Ignite, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4**

- Women’s Study Group, 9:00-11:00 a.m. (St. Gerard Room)
- Choir Practice, 7:00 p.m. (Church)

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5**

- First Reconciliation, 6:30 p.m. (Church)
- AA/Al-Anon, 7:30-9:00 p.m. (Upper Room)

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6**

- Thursday Scripture Group, 12:30-3:00 p.m. (St. Gerard Room)
- Rosary, 6:00 p.m. (Church)
- St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry Open, 6:00-6:30 p.m.
- Stephen Ministry Continuing Education & Supervision Meeting, 6:30 p.m. (Holy Family Room)

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8**

- Men’s Group, 7:00 a.m. (Holy Family Room)
- Rosary, 8:45 a.m. (Church)

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9**

- Confirmation Preparation Session, 9:00 a.m. Mass, then go to the Memorare Center until 12:00 p.m.
- Children’s Liturgy of the Word, 11:00 a.m. Mass
- Youth Group, 7:00-8:00 p.m. (Beatitudes Room)

PARISH STAFF	ROLE AND EMAIL
Fr. Jeremy Merzweiler	<b>Pastor</b> frmerzweiler@stfparish.com
Fr. David Verbsky	<b>Parochial Vicar</b> frverbsky@stfparish.com
Dc. Raymond Herrick	<b>Deacon</b> deaconherrick@stfparish.com
Dc. Richard Butz	<b>Retired Deacon</b> deaconbutz@gmail.com
Kathryn Dougherty	<b>Principal</b> mrskdougherty@stfparishschool.org
Kara Lloyd	<b>School Secretary</b> mrslloyd@stfparishschool.org
Therese Holderbaum	<b>Parish Secretary &amp; Bookkeeper</b> tholderbaum@stfparish.com
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Shirley Clark	<b>Liturgical Life Coordinator</b> sclark@stfparish.com
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Susan Undercoffer	<b>Administrative Assistant</b> sundercoffer@stfparish.com
Katy Markovich	<b>VIRTUS Coordinator</b> kmarkovich@stfparish.com

**COLLECTION INFORMATION**

**January 25 & 26**

	Offertory	Faith Direct
Sunday	\$ 13,804.00	\$ 10,812.72
Assessment	\$ 31.00	\$ 64.00
Capital	\$ 95.00	\$ 154.00
School	\$ 65.00	\$ 129.00
Catholic University	\$ 40.00	\$ 79.00
Latin American Mission	\$ 981.00	\$ 154.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$	\$ 129.00
Special Gifts	\$	\$ 100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 15,016.00</b>	<b>\$ 11,621.72</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 26,637.72</b>	

*Our parish is blessed by your generosity!*



Please remember in your prayers the souls of **Jack Rambacher**; **Peg Demboski**, sister of parishioner Eileen Patton; and **Ellen Rennick**, mother of parishioner Doug Rennick. May the Lord welcome them into eternal rest and comfort their family and friends.

**ADORER NEEDED**

An adorer is needed for the following time:  
Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 p.m.  
Call Joanne at 330-338-4810, if you are able to help with this time.

**WELCOME TO  
ST. FRANCIS DE SALES PARISH**

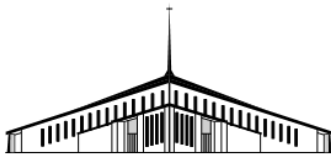


Are you new to the parish? To register as a new parishioner, give our Parish Office a call at 330-644-2225, see the priest after Mass, or join us at Donut Sundays to meet with a fellow parishioner.

**"BE WHO YOU ARE AND BE THAT WELL."**  
St. Francis de Sales

**PASTORAL LETTER SMALL GROUPS**

Bishop Malesic encourages all Catholics in the Diocese of Cleveland to read his Pastoral Letter, A Flourishing Apostolic Church. You can find the letter at this web address or by using the QR code below, <https://www.dioceseofcleveland.org/a-flourishing-apostolic-church/overview>. To foster discussion and help parishioners deepen their relationship with the Lord, we will be offering small group sessions focused on the letter during Lent. If anyone would be open to leading a discussion group, please contact Linda Hetson at 330-819-6490 or [lhets@stfparish.com](mailto:lhets@stfparish.com), or LuAnn Thomas at 330-807-7524 or [lthomas@stfparish.com](mailto:lthomas@stfparish.com). More information will be coming soon!



**REQUEST FOR 2024  
FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Envelope #: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please place this completed form in the collection basket and your statement will be mailed to you.**

**PARISH  
MISSION**

Save the Date!

“Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.” 1 Pt. 3:15

This March, we are welcoming back three priestly sons of our parish for our Lenten mission. They will each celebrate a Thursday 6:30 p.m. Mass and immediately afterward share reflections on hope. Mark your calendar to hear from these sons of St. Francis de Sales!

- Thursday, March 13 – Fr. Matt Jordan
- Thursday, March 20 – Fr. Alex Clark
- Thursday, March 27 – Fr. David Stavarz



**THE VOCATION CRUCIFIX IS BACK!**

Thanks to parishioner John Steurer, our vocation crucifix has a beautiful new box and is ready to start rotating among our parish families again! There is also a new set of prayers to help families pray for the whole array of vocations. If you would consider bringing the crucifix into your home for a week to pray for vocations, please contact the Parish Office at 330-644-2225 or [cwilson@stfparish.com](mailto:cwilson@stfparish.com).



**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY**  
**November-December 2024 Activity**  
*"In the poor, we serve the person of Jesus."*  
 – St. Vincent de Paul



To share how the St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Francis de Sales parish is able to help our neighbors because of your generosity, we hope to give you periodic reports. We will explain how the money you donate is used, how many individuals are helped, and how you can help.

## NEIGHBORS ASSISTED

*During the months of November and December 2024, St. Vincent de Paul members:*

- Made 18 elder care facility visits, interacting with residents. These visits are done on a weekly basis with the purpose of sharing the Holy Eucharist with individuals. Each week, approximately 25-30 individuals are visited. In this two month period the Eucharist was shared over 200 times.
- Members gave out 105 Thanksgiving food bags with grocery gift cards and distributed 115 Christmas food bags that included either a ham or turkey breast.
- Went on 76 home visits meeting with 83 individuals. A number of these home visits were to deliver holiday food baskets for individuals unable to drive.
- The newly established "Furniture 4R Friends" group met with two households and delivered four twin beds, one dresser and bed linens.
- The SVdP food pantry gave out 74 bags of groceries in addition to the holiday giving program.
- Served 210 hours in local outreach programs such as St. Bernard Hot Meal Program, the Ozanam Center or Good Neighbors.
- Made 610 phone calls in efforts to help neighbors receive some relief assistance.
- Notes are written on a weekly basis to shut-ins and neighbors we have assisted. Christmas cards and a parish bulletin were included in our holiday food bags.
- Case managers provided \$4,751.59 in utility (gas, electric, water) assistance to 17 households to prevent shutoff situations.
- Assisted with \$6,639.00 in rent to 19 households to avoid eviction. A number of these cases involved "twinning" with neighboring parishes to share the expense.

## NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS. SPREADING CHRIST'S LOVE.

As a neighbor stopped to pick up her Christmas basket of food, she expressed her gratitude to the SVdP member. She said because of our parish's generosity in the food she was given, she was going to invite two neighbors on her street to Christmas dinner because they were going to be alone on Christmas.

## YOUR GENEROSITY PROVIDES THE OPPORTUNITY TO HELP OTHERS.

- Poor box collections for 2024: \$3,285.00 (the SVdP poor box is located just inside the right door of the Narthex. The SVdP logo is on the box.)
- Wayside Furniture matching Thanksgiving giving program: \$1,870.00
- Holiday (Thanksgiving and Christmas) donations: \$19,270.00
- Annual Thanksgiving Day Mass Food collection. The food collected from this one day of giving provided enough food to fill the Christmas food bags, plus at least 80 more bags ready for distribution from the food pantry. **WE ARE SO GRATEFUL TO OUR PARISHIONERS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

## DID YOU KNOW?

Special SVdP envelopes can be found in the pamphlet case in the Narthex for convenient giving. Simply take an envelope and drop it off in the weekly collection basket or in the Memorare Center.

**A MESSAGE FROM STEPHEN MINISTRY**

It is always nice to know that someone cares, that someone remembers you in prayer, or that someone just wants to be there with you to listen. That is the gift Stephen Ministry is to St. Francis de Sales Parish. Submit your prayer requests in our prayer box found in the Narthex of the church. If you think a Stephen Minister can help you sort out a difficult life situation or just be a caring listener, add your contact information to the prayer box or contact one of our Stephen Leaders: Ann Clark (aclark2@stfparish.com) or Bill Dickey (wdickey@stfparish.com). Stephen Ministers have had over 50 hours of Christian Care training and they just want to be companions to walk through those difficult life moments with you. Take advantage of the gift of Stephen Ministry.

St. Francis de Sales Parish

Save the Date



**Vacation Bible School**



June 16-20, 2025

**PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY**

The Cluster Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet at 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, February 11, at Nativity Catholic Church. Please bring your shawls and any work in progress. If anyone in the parishes knows of someone in need of a prayer shawl or if you have any questions, please contact Barb Zimmerman at 330-699-4769 or Louise Golden at 330-571-3384.



PLEASE JOIN US FOR A

*Senior Valentine's Day Luncheon*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH  
11:30AM - 2PM

FOOD  
GAMES  
PRIZES

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES  
MEMORARE CENTER

SIGN UP  
IN THE NARTHEX  
AFTER ALL MASSES

**MARDI GRAS NIGHT AT THE RACES**

Saturday, March 1, 2025 from 5:30-9:30 p.m.  
in St. Bernard's Parish Hall

Tickets are now on sale for Mardi Gras Night at the Races, a fundraiser for the St. Bernard's hunger programs which provide over 30,000 meals to our neighbors in need each year. Tickets are \$75.00 per person and include dinner, dessert, and a drink, as well as entry for one of three cash prizes. The night will be filled with good food, basket raffles, cash prizes, horse racing, and fellowship. Use this link to buy tickets or find out more: <https://stbernardakron.org/natr25>.

**Three EASY steps to support  
St. Francis de Sales Parish School!**



1. **Review your tax liability from last year** (2023 1040 IT, line 8c) to help estimate the amount of your tax liability this year.
2. **Make an ASF donation by April 15 at:** [www.catholiccommunity.org/angel](http://www.catholiccommunity.org/angel). While your donation can be any amount, the scholarship tax credit is limited to \$750 per taxpayer (\$1,500 for married filing jointly) and cannot exceed your state tax liability for 2024.
3. **Claim the scholarship tax credit on your 2024 Ohio income tax return.** You will receive a receipt for your Angel Scholarship donation that can be sent with your 2024 state tax return to obtain the credit.



## ST. FRANCIS DE SALES PARISH CYO SPRING SPORTS REGISTRATION OPENED JANUARY 27TH

Our sports for the Spring of 2025 are open to a variety of grades. For more information on any of our sports, please reach out to your Athletic Director at [athleticdirector@stfparish.com](mailto:athleticdirector@stfparish.com). Most practices are to be determined until we find coaches. **Please note that some sports will likely have combined grade level teams.** The teams would be 3rd & 4th Grade; 5th & 6th Grade; and 7th & 8th Grade.

### TRACK & FIELD, 1ST-8TH GRADE

We are looking for new head coaches for both teams (1st-4th & 5th-8th). Practices are two times a week and there is one track meet each weekend. **Practices can start March 24th.**

### CO-ED VOLLEYBALL, 2ND GRADE ONLY

This is the only Co-Ed volleyball team. **Practices can start February 17th.**

### GIRLS VOLLEYBALL, 3RD-8TH GRADE

Teams will be combined by grade level. **Practices can start February 17th.**

### BOYS VOLLEYBALL, 3RD-8TH GRADE

Teams will be combined by grade level. Last year, our 6th grade boys were the first boys' volleyball team for our parish. They placed first in the championship in their division. We hope to form more boys' teams this year. **Practices can start February 17th.**

### COACH PITCH BASEBALL – CO-ED, 1ST & 2ND GRADE

New to us – if you are interested, please reach out. Coaches are needed.

### BOYS BASEBALL, 3RD-8TH GRADE

Teams will be combined by grade level. Interested? For more information on how long the season goes, contact your Athletic Director.

### GIRLS SOFTBALL, 3RD-8TH GRADE

Teams will be combined by grade level. Interested? For more information on how long the season goes, contact your Athletic Director.

### BOYS & GIRLS TENNIS, 1ST-8TH GRADE

This is an individual registration sport and is held at a tennis club near Akron. More to come soon. Dates are TBD.

### BOYS & GIRLS LACROSSE, 3RD-8TH GRADE

We do not have a team here at St. Francis for this sport, but local sister schools do offer it, and we partner with them to make a team. If you are interested in learning more, reach out. This is an up-and-coming sport.

Contact Athletic Director, Katie Kinsinger at [athleticdirector@stfparish.com](mailto:athleticdirector@stfparish.com) with questions.

Sports Registration Link



Preparticipation Form



### INTERESTED IN COACHING?

We are looking for new coaches to help build up, guide, teach and lead our youth. If you or someone you know is interested and would like more information, contact your Athletic Director for help with registration.

Here are the upcoming classes. You must attend this class to coach.

Tuesday, February 18, 6:00-9:00 p.m. St. Paschal Baylon, 5384 Wilson Mills Road, Highland Heights

Saturday, March 1, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. St. Ambrose, 929 Pearl Road, Brunswick

Wednesday, March 19, 6:00-9:00 p.m. Seton Catholic School, 6923 Stow Road, Hudson

**BELOVED IS WHERE WE BEGIN**

Catholic Renewal Ministries will host Barbara Heil, on Saturday, March 1st, at Queen of Heaven Parish (Parish Life Center), 1800 Steese Road, Uniontown. A former Protestant Missionary and Evangelist, Barbara came home to the Roman Catholic Church in April of 2014. Her presentation is a Lenten theme, *Beloved Is Where We Begin*. Bishop Malesic designated Queen of Heaven Parish a Sacred Site for the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope. Come and make a pilgrimage during this Holy Jubilee Year. Doors open for Registration at 9:30 a.m. Visit the CRM website: [www.crmweb.org](http://www.crmweb.org) or call 330-687-8843 for more information. Advance registration postmarked by Friday, February 21st, is \$35.00, lunch included. Registration at the door is \$35.00 with no lunch.

**CHESTERTON ACADEMY GALA**

Join Chesterton Academy Akron for an evening of merriment and good cheer to benefit the students of Chesterton on Saturday, February 15 at the DoubleTree by Hilton, 3180 West Market Street, Akron, OH 44333. The gala begins at 5:45 p.m. To register, visit <https://secure.fundeasy.com/ministrysync/event/home.php?e=28754> or use the QR Code.

**SEEKING A PRO-LIFE LEADER**

Right to Life of Northeast Ohio is seeking a full-time Executive Director who is mission-driven and an experienced business leader. The Executive Director shall demonstrate a vibrant personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and be an active member of a local church. This position will report to and work with a board of directors in our Akron office. This is a full-time position with a competitive salary. We offer paid time off and a health insurance stipend. The ideal candidate would have excellent organizational skills, experience supervising employees and volunteers, strong computer skills including Word, Excel, Publisher, great communication skills, public speaking experience, fundraising experience and some marketing experience. For a full job description, and/or to apply, send a cover letter and resume to [employment@rtlofneo.com](mailto:employment@rtlofneo.com).



Join us on Monday, February 17th at 7:00 p.m., as we welcome our Guest speaker Fr. Michael Marcelli, Parochial Vicar, St. Sebastian Parish in Akron at Our Lady of the Cedars, 507 S. Cleveland-Massillon Road in Fairlawn. The topic is "Suicide and Euthanasia." Appetizers at 7:00 p.m. Program begins at 7:30 p.m. \$15.00 admission fee. Light appetizers included. Cash bar available. Sponsored by St. Sebastian Parish, Akron.

*You are invited to waste time with the Lord...*  
**POUSTINIA Retreat 2025**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 7TH - SUNDAY, MARCH 9TH**

**LOYOLA RETREAT HOUSE IN GREEN, OHIO**

\$185/person includes speaker and priest stipends, lodging, & meals.

Thursday, Feb. 13th - Optional formation meeting on fasting, journaling, and praying with Scripture and icons.

More information and online registration at: [www.tobcle.org/register](http://www.tobcle.org/register)



**EXALT! HOLY HOUR OF ADORATION**  
**Thursdays, February 6 & March 6**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Queen of Heaven Church**  
**1800 Steese Road, Uniontown**

Exalt is a night of worship that emphasizes prayer through music in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Queen of Heaven's Exalt includes healing with the Blessed Sacrament, quiet time, testimonials, scripture, and praise & worship music by PJ Chavez and Melanie Mesmer. All are welcome!

**WORLD DAY FOR CONSECRATED LIFE**

This Sunday, we celebrate World Day for Consecrated Life. We recognize and give thanks for those who have consecrated their lives to God and the Church through the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The consecrated life is one way that women and men live out their baptismal commitment as followers of Jesus. Please pray for all those who have made commitments to the consecrated life and those discerning a vocation to this beautiful way of following the Lord.



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**DAN KLATT** SFD Parishioner-Four Children in Parish School

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