



Week 7/No. 1: "Devoción" by Michelle Candia, St. Edward Central Catholic High School

VOCATION CORNER

Time crunch

Believe it or not we're only one week away from Christmas! For many people I think this is the time of year when they feel incredible pressure and maybe even anxiety to get the last presents purchased and wrapped and to get the house cleaned for upcoming Christmas celebrations.

The bottom line is there are expectations placed on us that need to be fulfilled in this final week, this period of crunch time, and so it is easy to create either a mental list or even jot down a physical list of things to do.

What is harder to do than creating that list is to remember to put "PRAY" as the very first thing on the list.

(And put it down numerous other times on the list as well so that we don't cross it off and call the job done!)

This is especially true when it comes to discerning our vocations and the bigger pieces of our lives. Society places expectations on us when we graduate from high school or college, when we get married, and at other big moments in our lives.

And if we don't know exactly what our next move is, yet the time to make a move is coming close, it can be easy to forget about God. The thing is that this is the time when we need Him and His guidance the most.

So put communicating with God through prayer at the top of your to-do-list each day and then have confidence that everything will work out just fine in the end.

— Father Keith Romke, Diocesan Director of Vocations, kromke@rockforddiocese.org.

ACC, St. Ed photo students

Students from Aurora Central Catholic High School and Elgin's St. Edward Central Catholic High School were ranked among the top 10 photographers in the Kane County Regional Office of Education's third annual contest this year.

And each school had the number one ranked photographer during two weeks of the contest.

In week seven, "Devoción" by Michelle Candia, a St. Edward senior, was the

number one photo.

"Michelle Candia's photo placed first in the seventh week of the contest and Tommy Davidson's photo placed ninth that same week," said St. Edward photo teacher, Madeline Richmond.

"Jordan Mattas' photo placed during the fourth week of the competition, which just so happened to be the first week we participated, which was Oct. 31," she added.

In week nine, "Books on a Shelf" by ACC senior Gianna Polizzi took first place.

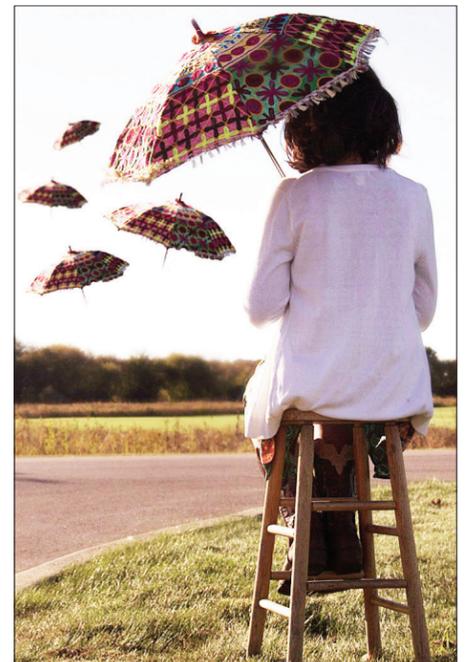


LEFT: Week 2/ No. 3: "Balancing Act" by Crystal Jimenez, Aurora CCHS



Week 8/No. 6: "Head Scarf" by Allison Montana, Aurora CCHS

RIGHT: Week 6/ No 5: "Flying Umbrellas" by Isabel Feldhaus, Aurora CCHS



(Photos provided)



(Photo provided)

St. Charles Teen FORUM Turns 20

FORUM celebrated 20 years of providing a weekly place for high school teens to gather for discussion on topics related to their Catholic faith and as a refuge from the day to day pressures of high school students. The group meets every Thursday evening in The Catacombs at St. Patrick Downtown in St. Charles. Recently, 45 teens gathered to celebrate what they are thankful for, what they can do as amazing young witnesses and to pray. Aided by wonderful weather, they had a small fire, made s'mores and projected praise and worship videos on the side of the Hispanic Ministry office building.

Fine Art

top ROE contest



Week 9/No. 1: "Books on a Shelf" by Gianna Polizzi, Aurora Central Catholic High School

"We jumped in at the third week of the first year's contest," said Samantha Wascher, art and photography instructor at Aurora Central. "In our first week, five of our 10 submitted works made the overall top 10!"

"The kids absolutely love this contest, and it really gives them something to strive for each week," she added. "They are extremely competitive, which they use to better their own work."

Students whose work ranked in the top 10 during this year's nine-week contest are (in order of first appearance in the top 10):

Aurora Central CCHS — Alex Wan, Allison Montana, Crystal Jimenez, Morgan Casey, Megan Shoger, Sarah Zeigler, Natalie Bruss, Isabel Feldhaus, Hailey Catich, Allison Montana, Gianna Polizzi, Sarah Fowler, Adalia Galan, Catherine Klein;

St. Edward CCHS — Jordan Mattas, Michelle Candia, Tommy Davidson.

Student photographers and teachers were honored at an ROE photo exhibition Dec. 15, at Water Street Studios in Batavia.

Regional Superintendent Patricia Dal Santo presented trophies from Image A



Week 7/No. 9: "Cloudy Country" – Tommy Davidson, St. Edward CCHS



Week 5/No. 10: "A Cubs Love Letter" by Jordan Mattas, St. Edward CCHS

Thinking about the priesthood?

Guys: If being a priest has crossed your mind, you have a chance right after Christmas to give it some thought, prayer and conversation.

The annual winter vocations retreat — "Thy Will Be Done" — for high school and college men is slated Dec. 27-28.

The retreat will open with Mass celebrated by Bishop David Malloy and Father Keith Romke, vocations director.

During the retreat, participants will talk with Bishop Malloy, Father Romke and diocesan seminarians.

And there will be plenty of time for prayer and reflection.

The retreat will begin at 7 p.m. Dec. 27 and end at 3 p.m. Dec. 28. It will be at Bishop Lane Retreat Center, 7708 E. McGregor Road. Cost is \$50.

Info: vocation@rockforddiocese.org, 815/399-4300



(Photo provided)

Knights Award Scholarships

Two students at Boylan Central Catholic High School in Rockford recently received Knights of Columbus Scholarships. At the presentation of the awards were (from left) Boylan Principal Jerry Kerrigan, Isabella Paredes of St. Peter and Paul Parish in Rockford, Bill Osborne of Bishop Muldoon Assembly 190, and Wesley Roy of St. Bridget Parish in Loves Park. Each student received a \$350 scholarship.