

YOUNG OBSERVER



(Photos provided)

Members of the high school youth group at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in West Dundee are collecting shoes to fund their summer trip.

Send shoes to get West Dundee youth out of town

WEST DUNDEE—The youth group at St. Catherine of Siena Parish is asking for shoes to help them get out of town.

Their shoe collection — which will run until June 14 — will help the youth group earn money to go to a Steubenville (Ohio) University summer youth conference at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wis.

Funds2Orgs will buy the shoes and distribute them to microentrepreneurs in developing nations, such as Haiti, Honduras and other nations in Central America and Africa.

"We are excited to launch our shoe drive," said Jessica Cranston, director of youth ministry. "It will benefit our youth group to raise funds for their trip and will also help those less fortunate to become self-sufficient."

"Most people have extra shoes in their closets," added Deacon Hank Schmalen. "We appreciate all shoe donations as they will give others a second chance to make a difference in their lives. It's a win-win for everyone."

The students are asking for new and gently worn shoes. They hope donations will overflow a box (right) they've placed in the church narthex.

Info: Jessica Cranston, 847/370-2534 or email youthministry@stcatherinechurch.com.



VOCATION CORNER

A prayer for discernment

I believe that often times we can have a desire to pray, but feel like we don't know quite how to do it right. The important thing is simply following the desire to pray in the first place. However, here is a prayer to give some guidance in praying to follow God's will in your life. Pray it as is or make it your own.

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

Lord,

You are all powerful, all loving, and all deserving of all my praise. Without your loving protection and guidance, I wouldn't be able to take a single breath. But you do love me unconditionally which is why you long for me to deeply breath in your Spirit that surrounds me. Help me with the grace of this same Spirit to trust in your mercy and in the designs for my life that are written in your heart. Help me to trust that if I let go of my plans in an attempt to follow your voice, that I will be led on a path that will ultimately lead to peace and joy. So too, help me to persevere through the trials of life that certainly come to all who follow in your footsteps. Help me to never lose sight of the resurrection whenever it is that the cross is before me. Most of all, reveal to me what I must do in order to be most pleasing to your heart this day. Jesus, I trust in you.
Amen.

YO FATHER

Q I don't know much about Orthodox churches, but I just heard they don't usually celebrate Easter when we do. Why is it different?

A I'm not sure what you're talking about, because the Orthodox Christians and us all just celebrated Easter together last Sunday!

Just kidding! You're actually correct, because this was the first time since 2011 that we celebrated Easter on the same day.

In fact, as of right now we are 49 weeks away from Easter of 2018 whereas the Orthodox Christians are a full 50 weeks away. The difference between the two celebrations of Easter actually can be up to five weeks — more than a whole month apart!

The reason the dates are different is the Orthodox Church and the Christians of the west actually use two different calendars. So I think it's time for a history lesson.

You see, way back in 1582 a group of Christian scientists and astronomers came to Pope Gregory XIII and told him the last reform of the calendar was way back in 45 B.C. under the rule of Julius Caesar.

Across the span of time, tiny miscalculations in the 1,600-year-old calendar meant the world was 10 days behind.

So, the decision was made that everyone would go to bed on Oct. 4 (the Franciscans made sure the change took place after Oct. 4 so they wouldn't miss St. Francis' feast day!) and when everyone woke up the next morning it would be Oct. 15. Voila! Thus the Julian calendar was replaced by the Gregorian calendar.

However, because it was the pope who made this change for the world, and Orthodox Christians are not in union with Rome and the pope, the majority of eastern countries practicing Orthodox Christianity decided to remain on the Julian calendar!

As you might imagine, we're narrowing in on our answer as to why Easter is sometimes celebrated on different days by Orthodox Christians and Christians from the west.

Just for the sake of trivia and extra knowledge, I should mention two things.

Since 1582, three more days difference has made it's way between the two calendars,

bringing the difference to 13 days between the Julian and Gregorian calendars.

Also, for the sake of civil use, most eastern countries using the Julian calendar officially switched over one at a time to a version of the Gregorian calendar. The first did so in 1917 and the last finally switched in 1923.

But, for the sake of religious celebration the Orthodox patriarch of Constantinople adopted a revised Julian calendar using the Gregorian calendar in such a way way that the method for calculating the dates for religious feasts would still work according to how they did it with the Julian calendar.

So now it should be clear as to why the dates can be different. But I'm sure you're also now wondering why it could sometimes be the same!

Well, here's how: Both western and Orthodox Christians use the same method for calculating when Easter will be celebrated.

This has been the case since the middle ages when it was declared: "The Sunday following the full moon which falls on or after the equinox will give the lawful Easter."

Seems pretty straightforward.

But here's the catch, due to the 13-day difference in the calendar the equinox will occur 13 days apart for the two groups.

Since the date for Easter is calculated not solely on the date of the equinox but also on the first occurrence of a full moon from that date, sometimes the same full moon would be before the equinox for the one but after the equinox for the other!

So too, the fact that the Orthodox Christians make a point of never celebrating Easter before the Jewish Feast of Passover whereas we in the west do not, this further explains how varying numbers of weeks can separate the different celebrations of Easter!

The real question that you may be wondering is this: Who is right?

Well, I'm able to tell you that we don't know exactly what date on the calendar Jesus rose, but we do know it was on a Sunday! So as long as we all celebrate it on a Sunday we're doing good!

This month's YO Father is answered by Father Keith Romke. Send your questions to youngobserver@rockforddiocese.org



(CNS photo/Dave Hrbacek, The Catholic Spirit)

Nicky Peters, 19, stands outside Planned Parenthood in St. Paul, Minn., earlier this year. Peters stands outside the center twice a month to offer information and compassion to women arriving for abortions.

Her 'heart goes out'

Sidewalk counselor prays for women in crisis pregnancies

By DAVE HRBACEK | CNS

It didn't take long for Nicky Peters to feel the drama of being a sidewalk counselor outside Planned Parenthood in St. Paul, Minn.

The 19-year-old sophomore at St. Catherine University in St. Paul is a member of St. Ambrose Parish in Woodbury, Minn. She decided last spring to take her pro-life passion to the streets.

She signed up to volunteer with Pro-Life Action Ministries in St. Paul and paired with Ann Redding, the organization's sidewalk counseling coordinator.

This past June, Peters had her first counseling experience.

"That day was amazing," she told *The Catholic Spirit*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

"I met Ann there, and within the first hour, a woman came up to us and told her (Ann) that she had changed her mind about having an abortion, but she had already had part of the procedure done."

She had changed her mind, jumped off the examination table and left the clinic without having the initial steps reversed.

When she encountered Redding and Peters on the sidewalk in front of the clinic, Redding hustled into action,

leading the pregnant woman to nearby Abria Pregnancy Resources. Two months later, the woman had a healthy baby boy.

Peters, who is studying sign language interpreting at St. Kate's, as her school is known, will never forget that day. In fact, it's what gives her the strength to spend hours alone on the sidewalk in front of Planned Parenthood, sometimes enduring insults and profanity hurled her way by vocal abortion supporters.

"It all goes back to that first day. The passion that I have is about helping these women," said Peters, who does sidewalk counseling twice a month for about two-and-a-half hours each time.

"My heart goes out to them, honestly. A child is such a wonderful thing that I'd do anything to help (the pregnant women)."

The seed of her volunteer role was planted at the 2016 March for Life in Washington, D.C., marking the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion in all 50 states.

She made the trip out on a plane, but rode back on a bus chartered by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis when flights were canceled because of a powerful storm that dumped nearly 2 feet of snow in the mid-Atlantic region.

She rode back with other teens and

'Even though people will give me the middle finger, I just have to sit there and pray for them and pray for a change of heart.'

— Nicky Peters, 19

young adults from the archdiocese, plus three women who belonged to *Katies for Life* on her campus.

"One girl in my college group who does a little bit of sidewalk counseling and is a prayer supporter described what it was, and it really sounded like something that I was called to do," she said.

After a seminar and training, she went to Planned Parenthood with Redding, who has been in her role with Pro-Life Action Ministries since 2000.

"I'm just really glad she's on board," said Redding. "She's out there to be compassionate with people."

Redding said Peters is the perfect age for counseling because most of the women who come to Planned Parenthood for abortions are 20- to 24-years-old.

She estimates that 30 of the 200 regular sidewalk counselors who volunteer through the pro-life group are in that age group. Many are seminarians who come regularly on Friday afternoons.

"This is the best age group to be out there on the sidewalk," Redding said. "The college-aged have physical strength, idealism and beauty. Young people have that beauty that draws someone to talk to them."

However, the responses can be negative, even ugly, at times. Peters has discovered this, which initially surprised her.

"I do take a lot of heat, especially on the sidewalk, and even from people on campus," she said. "I get profanity, the middle finger. I get anywhere from, 'Oh, you're just totally wrong,' to large profanity statements."

In between the encounters, her go-to practice is prayer. She recites decades of the rosary and calls on the intercession of the saints and Mary.

"I just love it, honestly," she said. "It can get a little bit discouraging, but ... I have to keep doing that so I can help more women. Even though people will give me the middle finger, I just have to sit there and pray for them and pray for a change of heart."

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