



VOCATION CORNER

Pray the rosary



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During Lent one year in high school, a good friend of mine asked me if I would be interested in praying the rosary each day during our lunch period.

It wasn't the most ideal, but we figured that if we prayed it relatively quickly we could finish it somewhere in the 12-15 minute range. Thus leaving at least 10 minutes to eat our meal.

At the thought of it I felt overwhelmed but once we got a couple of days into the season, it started to become much more natural.

More than that though, it was something I began looking forward to in my day! Up until that point I hadn't really set apart much time to sit and pray in silence.

As I look back at that Lent, I realize that Mary was nourishing the seed of my vocation and allowing it growth in my soul.

But even more than that, I was giving God some solid time — in the middle of my day — to begin a conversation about my life with Him. I encourage you, in this month dedicated to the rosary, to pray it and give God some time to speak to you and you to Him.

National Merit Commended Student



(Photo provided)

Marian Central Catholic High School senior Dean Limosnero has been named a Commended Student in the 2019 National Merit Scholarship Program. Although he will not continue in the 2019 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, he placed among the top 50,000 scorers of more than 1.6 million students who entered the competition by taking the 2017 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.



(Photo provided)

Aurora Central Catholic High School Prolife Club members (from left) Hannah Wiacek, Sadie Romero and Emily Earl, with their club moderator Emily Rogers (right), volunteered to staff the Illinois Right to Life booth at the Sandwich Fair in September.

ACC students promote life

Sadie Romero, Hannah Wiacek, and Emily Earl, all seniors at Aurora Central Catholic High School, had a chance to answer the question, "How can we create a culture of life?" with action this year.

They, with their ACC Prolife Club moderator Emily Rogers, volunteered for the Illinois Right to Life Booth at the Sandwich Fair, held Sept. 5-9.

The students at ACC take the Church's call to support life very seriously. They reach out to their communities in many ways to defend and protect life at all of its stages.

Students are encouraged to write papers on prolife themes such as invitro fertilization, post-abortion recovery, forced abortion and sex trafficking.

Hanna Wiacek wrote a paper in English class titled "The Negative Effects of Abortion on Women." The school wants the students to understand the issues but always takes the side of life.

Sadie Romero is the editor-in-chief of the ACC newspaper and has previously written articles about her experiences attending the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C.

One year there was a winter storm, and the diocese cancelled the trip, but Sadie and Hannah went with their families and enjoyed the experience, even though it meant walking to Mass in a snow storm.

Emily Earl has been a member of the Prolife Club since her freshman year. She enjoys making Christmas cards for veterans and for residents of a nursing home.

"We have participated in St. Baldrick's, which encourages people to shave their heads for cancer awareness and fundraising," Emily said.

"Our club raises money for Waterleaf Crisis Pregnancy Center in Aurora," Sadie said.

"We also decorate a large bulletin board with suggestions on what we can all do to be prolife."

Last summer Sadie did an internship with Students for Life, including making presentations on abortion facts in Oak Park, and DePaul, Loyola, and Northwestern universities.

The students also participate in the ACC Fortress program, which invites speakers to come to talk about how to value life and live as a Catholic in modern culture.

"We also sell T-shirts at 'Rock for Life' concerts," Sadie said. "And now we are participating at the Sandwich Fair Illinois Right to Life Booth."

Emily Rogers has been teaching Latin and theology at Aurora Central Catholic for about five years. She says ACC has a culture of life because "We support an all life environment. We travel with the diocese to Washington, D.C., for the Right to Life March. But we also participate in many all school projects such as a Walk-A Thon to raise funds for our emergency tuition relief fund.

"Our student council works with several veterans' groups from the surrounding area. WGN TV (from Chicago) even covered ACC when we walked with a giant U.S. flag across the football field honoring veterans," Rogers said. "Each year we have a Christmastime toy drive for children. We are also looking into participating in 40 Days for Life."

— Elsie Campbell Morrissey

St. Ed adds drum line

St. Edward Central Catholic High School here has added a drum line to its extracurricular activities this year.

Twelve students participate under the direction of music instructor and St. Edward alumnus Chris Jones (2005). The group has performed at athletic events and pep rallies and looks to expand its performances in the future.

"The 12 dedicated students are the driving force behind the success of this group. We are very excited to see what the future holds for this new ensemble," Jones said.

Students on the drum line are Anna Ashton, Vinny Binetti, Tommy Bruneman, Alec Dunbar, Declan Foley, Evalena Hartke, Henry Herrero, Sophia Kopacz, Eric Ramos, Daniel Schuck, Sara Schuck and Richard Van Durme.



(Photo provided)

Boylan students warned of trafficking

Jimmie Getter of Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling spent a day at Boylan Central Catholic High School in Rockford talking to students about human trafficking.

Getter told students how the sex trade perpetuates itself from an economic standpoint.

"Just as goods like shoes and cell phones are bought and sold through supply and demand, so are people," Getter says.

"That's the key issue here," she explains. "If there is no demand for human commodities, the supply goes down."

Getter also touched on how sex traffickers "groom" their victims through what looks like friendship, care, love and special treatment.

Often times, the perpetrators' "devotion" to the victims is a way to manipulate the victims into sexual servitude. But victims are also forced to work in menial jobs, such as seasonal agricultural work.

Getter adds, "In 2014, we had more people in sexual slavery than we have had in the history of the world."

"The main thing I learned was that it happens everywhere. There is no such thing as a safe commu-

nity," said Boylan junior Valerie Wedoff.

Wedoff, who learned about potential abductions when a friend was almost a victim in a mall, says, "I will be more aware when I am in stores, malls, and public places when I see a younger child alone."

She adds, "High school students need to be more observant, not just in their own surroundings, but also be more observant in any unusual changes in the behavior of our friends.

"I would tell them to be more aware of what is happening in the city they live and if something does not feel right, trust your instincts and get out of the situation."

— Sharon Boehlefeld and Lynne



Jimmie Getter listens to a comment from a Boylan student during her talk about human trafficking at the Rockford high school on Sept. 28.

Resources to help stop trafficking

■ Rockford Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (RAASE) — <https://raase.net/>

■ Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling (RSAC) — <http://www.rockfordsexualassaultcounseling.org/>

■ Winnebago, Boone, Ogle counties 24/7 hotline — 815/636-9811

■ National Human Trafficking Resource Center 24/7 hotline — 888/373-7888

■ Anywhere, anytime — 911



(Observer photos/Sharon Boehlefeld)

Jimmie Getter (walking) leads students in a cheer proclaiming their self-worth.

