

# First ‘Mercy Day’

## St. Edward CCHS institutes day of confessions March 20

ELGIN—During Lent, the Diocese of Rockford holds its annual Be Reconciled Day, this year on March 29. Parishes around the diocese offer confessions (where possible) from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. The wide range of times makes confession accessible to hundreds of Catholics.

But for high school students who are in class before 9 a.m. and may be occupied after school with sports, clubs and studying until long after 8 p.m., confession may still be out of reach on March 29.

So to meet the spiritual needs of its students, St. Edward Central Catholic High School will hold its first-ever “Mercy Day” just over a week before, on March 20.

In a video at <https://stedhs.org/>, spiritual advisor and assistant principal Father Robert Blood invites the school and Elgin community to come, speaking first of the school’s mission this year to “serve the Lord with laughter.”

But “if we’re honest,” he says, “there are certain points in our life where I don’t feel like laughing. I might be struggling or weighed down or frustrated. And in the season of Lent, in a particular way, Jesus is saying to us, ‘I don’t want you to have to be burdened. I want you to experience freedom and light.’”

Students will be able to attend during their theology classes. Then, from 3:15-8 p.m., Father Blood will offer drive-through confessions for



(Observer screengrab/ Megan Peterson)

Father Robert Blood invites the school and Elgin community to come to confession on Mercy Day.

members of local parishes and the parents, alumni, siblings and other members of the St. Edward CCHS community in the Greg True Field parking lot, 335 Locust St.

Those attending are welcome to come alone or in a group. “If you come with a car full of people — which I hope you do — you can park and walk up one by one,” Father Blood explains.

“Rain or shine, I’m gonna be here,” he says.

And to those who may be uncertain or nervous about coming to confession, Father Blood offers reassurance: “The Lord just wants you to be unburdened.

“So, we pray for that grace and the confidence to take part in Mercy Day here at St. Edward High School. See you soon!”



(Photo provided/ Robbin Clifton)

### X=Excellent for Sterling Math Winners

STERLING—The math team from St. Mary School placed first overall in the annual competition for the local chapter of MATHCOUNTS, held at Sauk Valley Community College on Feb. 18. The MATHCOUNTS Foundation, a nonprofit organization for junior high students, provides three extracurricular math programs and many resources to “make math fun.” Two team members also won additional honors; Alex Dang placed second and Timothy Papoccia placed third in the individual competition phase. The team members, coached by Ryan Sotelo (left), are (from left) Jeffrey Thormeyer, Alex Dang, Timothy Papoccia, and Will Dang.

## ACCCHS Presents High-School “Chicago” March 24-26

AURORA—Aurora Central Catholic High School’s drama department will stage the high school version of the musical “Chicago” during the March 24-26 weekend.

Show times are 7 p.m., March 24-25; and 3 p.m., March 26, at the school, 1255 N. Edgelawn Drive in Aurora.

General admission is \$10 and reserved seats are \$15. Concessions will be available. Parking is free in school lots.

Set in the 1920s, “Chicago” follows Roxie Hart and Velma Kelly, women accused of murdering their husbands.

Fans of the 2002 movie may find a surprise. ACC drama instructor Phil Nole said, “Our production is very different from the movie.”

According to Nole, “Our production flips back and forth between the reality of the 1920s and the dream world of Roxie’s mind.”

Deadline to order reserved seats is Friday, March 24. Call (630) 907-0095 or visit [auroracentral.com](http://auroracentral.com).

—Information provided by Al Benson.

## Marian CCHS Presents “The Lightning Thief” March 17-19

WOODSTOCK—Marian Central Catholic High School’s theatre department will present “The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical” during the March 17-19 weekend.

Show times are 7 p.m., March 17-18; and 2 p.m., March 19, at the school, 1001 McHenry Ave.

Buy tickets at the door: \$13 for adults and \$7 for students and senior citizens. Grade school and kindergarten students are free. Scan the QR code for a pass.



The musical retelling of Greek mythology, adapted from the book “The Lightning Thief” by Rick Riordan, is written by Joe Tracz with music and lyrics by Rob Rokicki.

—Information provided by Laurie DiSilvio.

# Wrestling History

## Boylan CCHS junior first in Rockford to win Girls’ Wrestling Championship

ROCKFORD—Boylan Central Catholic High School faculty, staff and students gathered in the main gym on March 1 to celebrate junior Netavia Wickson’s state championship win in the IHSA Girls’ Wrestling 135 lb. Weight Class State Finals.

Wickson and the Boylan Wrestling team is coached by her father, Dathan Wickson.

Netavia Wickson ended her 2022-2023 regular season with a 15-5 individual record. She won the 2023 title in Bloomington after an undefeated 4-match run in the tournament and a huge 9-1 win over Kinnley Smith of Canton High School.

She was one of three NIC-10 female wrestlers to take home a title in their respective weight classes, and the first

ever from the city of Rockford to win a Girls’ Wrestling IHSA Championship.

The previous year, at the 2022 Girls’ Wrestling State Finals, Wickson placed second in state as only a sophomore, and came into her junior season with the intent and motivation to take home the top spot this year.

—By Anabel Nosek, marketing coordinator.



(Photo provided/ Devin Mainville)

Netavia Wickson ‘24 poses with her team coaches: head coach Dathan Wickson (right), her father; and assistant coach Dathan Wickson, Jr. (‘21), her brother.