

Congratulations Class of 2023

Newman Central Catholic High School, Sterling



Baccalaureate: May 17, Newman Central Catholic High School main gym, 6 p.m.

Graduation: May 17, Newman Central Catholic High School main gym, 7 p.m.

**** National Honor Society**

Graduates: Ava Anderson**, Ayden Batten, Kenneth Boesen, Carlin Brady**, Nolan Britt, Jeremy Castle, Claire Crisham**, Abram Dale, Maxwell DeForest**, Matthew Downs**, Chloe Everly, Dylan Garland**, Tyler Garman, Haily Geske**, Katlyn Grennan, Monica Healy**, Anthony Helfrich, Logan Hermeyer, Blayke Holbrook**, Daniel Jackley, Jaesen Johns**, Hunter Luyando, Adam Morgan, Michael Murray**, Sarah Murray**, Oscar Navarro**, Samuel Neisewander**, Emma Oswalt**, Gabe Padilla, Carson Palmer**, Symantha Porter, Ainsley Reed**, Raul Reyes-Zamora**, Alex Rico, Christafer Robertson, Calianne Sarver, Madison Serrano, Gianna Widolff**, Kathleen Withrow, Hayden Witt**, Kyle Wolfe**, Brooklyn Zigler, Joy Zigler



“I was recently told that, as humans, there are 7 things we must feel in order to be happy, not just to survive but to thrive. I was told we must feel seen, heard, valued, supported, accepted, appreciated, and loved. Thank you, faculty and staff, for not making it easy on us, because if it were easy then it wouldn’t be worth it, right? Thank you again for the opportunities you have given us to value ourselves, support ourselves, and love ourselves.”

—Ainsley Reed, valedictorian



(Photos provided/Gehrig Koerner)

Gianna Widolff (center, left), Ava Anderson and Claire Crisham beam during graduation ceremonies at Newman Central Catholic High School on May 17.



◀ **Corrections and Clarifications:** See page 3.

ENCOUNTER DISCERNMENT RETREAT

Is God calling you to be a priest? Come and see!

LOVES PARK, GENEVA—Young men in the Diocese of Rockford are invited to two summer Encounter retreats to discern the priesthood. The one-day retreats are led by diocesan seminarians and priests and include talks, games, Mass, confessions, and much more.

Participants on each retreat will be placed in one of two “tracks” for different ages: Track One for seventh through ninth grade (12 years minimum) and Track Two for grades ten and up (generally, 25 years maximum, though exceptions can be made.)

There is no cost for the retreats. Dates, times and locations are:

- **July 15—Loves Park:** St. Bridget Parish, 600 Clifford Ave., 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- **July 22—Geneva:** St. Peter Parish, 1891 Kaneville Rd., 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Letters of the law: Students honored for Law Day essays

CRYSTAL LAKE—Seventh-grade students Julia Dovidio and Jacob Polston of St. Thomas the Apostle School were chosen as two of the three winners in the McHenry County Bar Association essay contest. The students received a plaque and cash prize on May 5 at the 2023 Law Day Courthouse Ceremony at the Michael J. Sullivan Judicial Center in Woodstock, where they read from their essays.

Dovidio and Polston reflected on this year’s Law Day theme: Cornerstones of Democracy: Civics, Civility, and Collaboration. Dovidio

concluded her essay by stating, “We will be able to come back together as one united nation by understanding our rights, working together, and getting along in general. We will fill the cracks that divide us.”

Polston quoted Abraham Lincoln: “In the end, perhaps there was no greater expression of unity, civility, collaboration, and hope than in



Jacob Polston

Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address: “It is for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us ... that we here highly resolve ... that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

The students then met and heard a speech from Illinois Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth Rochford at the Bull Valley Country Club and celebrated at a luncheon.

—Provided by Gina Houston, principal.



(Photos provided/Michelle Boppart)

Father Robert Jones (left), St. Thomas the Apostle Parish pastor, celebrates students Jacob Polston and Julia Dovidio, joined by principal Gina Houston and seventh-grade teacher Amy Wittenberg.