



YOUNG OBSERVER

@youngobserver Young Observer

**YO CALENDAR**

**Winter vocations retreat for men**

**What:** Retreat for high school and college age young men considering the priesthood  
**When:** 7 p.m. Dec. 27-3 p.m. Dec 28  
**Where:** Bishop Lane Retreat Center, 7708 E. McGregor Road. Cost: \$50.  
**Cost:** \$50 per person  
**Info:** vocations@rockforddiocese.org; 815/399-4300

**Priests v Seminarians basketball games**

**When and where:** Dec. 26, 6:30 p.m.; Aurora Central Catholic High School, 1255 N. Edgelawn Dr. Diocesan Priests v. Seminarians.  
**When and where:** Dec. 27, 3 p.m., Boylan Central Catholic High School, 4000 St. Francis Dr. Diocesan Priests v. Seminarians.  
**When and where:** Jan 4, 6 p.m., Marian Central Catholic High School, 1001 McHenry Ave.  
**Cost:** for all games \$2 — age 12 and older; free — 11 and younger.  
**Sponsor:** Vocations Office

**VOCATION CORNER**

**Open God's Christmas gift to us**



By FATHER MANUEL GOMEZ | Assistant Vocations Director

I really enjoy reading letters from friends and family. When I know what's going on with them I feel that I am part of their lives. I think when our communication improves, our friendship increases.

By reading my friend's words on a piece of paper or on the computer screen I experience great joy. I am naturally moved to answer them because affection and friendship deserve an answer, some feedback.

Probably as Christmas is approaching we are receiving some cards, mail, and emails that will make our celebration more meaningful. Besides the messages from family and friends on Christmas, we receive a beautiful letter from God.

This letter is neither written on an actual piece of paper, nor on an electronic device. It is written in the fragility — innocence — of a child, however it contains the eternal word of God.

This letter from God is the most beautiful poem that has ever existed, though it does not have many words — only one word, **The Word**. In fact, this letter from God is the word that became flesh. In fact, this letter is God. "In the

beginning was the Word: The Word was with God and the Word was God."

This Word of God has come to us as a gift of life, so that those who accept Him may become children of God, children of the light. The prophet Isaiah says, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." And John says, "The Word was the real light that gives light to everyone; He was coming into the world."

Probably during the days of Christmas, you will receive at least one present, or letter, or card from friends and family. Open all of them and you will feel the presence and the love of those you are close to. Also, I want to invite you to open the most beautiful present you receive on Christmas. The present is coming from God.

Do not leave Jesus wrapped like a gift under the Christmas tree. On the contrary, get to know Him. Try to discover Him every day more and more.

I invite you to know Him as Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, and Prince of Peace. Then we may love him and experience the love and the closeness of God, the Father to all of us.



"Footprints" — Mac Doherty

**Fine Art '17**



"Friendship" — Michaela DeNeve



"Fishy Bubble" — Hayley Decker



"Sunflower" — Evelyn Blanco



YO Father is answered by Father Keith Romke, diocesan director of vocations. Send your questions to youngobserver@rockforddiocese.org

**YO FATHER**

saying this is a sin, I'd say when it comes to morality there are some things that are objectively wrong, but there are other things where being right or wrong depends on the circumstances and intention behind it.

An example would be if I had a bad habit of sleep walking, and while I was unconscious, I stole money from a friend. Of course it is wrong to steal, but in this case it wouldn't be a sin, because the action wasn't consciously chosen and I never had an

intention to steal.

Along the same lines, if someone decides they simply don't want to stay until the end of Mass and they leave after Communion simply because they have other recreational things they want to do, then I'd say this is sinful because it is a freely chosen and intended action that cuts short our worship of God.

On the other hand, if you make going to Mass each week a priority, but there is something that arises that is vital (supporting

**ACC, St. Ed students' photos top 4th annual Kane contest**



"Umbrellas in the Sky" — Crystal Jimenez

KANE COUNTY—Students of Samantha Wascher at Aurora Central Catholic High School and Madeline Richmond at St. Edward Central Catholic High School in Elgin are again featured in the fourth annual Kane County Regional Office of Education photo contest.

While it took until the second week for a Catholic High School student to place, Crystal Jimenez, a junior at ACC, broke into the list in first place (left).

Isabella Uscia, a senior from St. Ed, took first in week three (right) and Mac Doherty, a senior at ACC, took top honors for the fifth week (top, page 8).

Mike Ademe, communication coordinator for the Kane ROE, said more than 325 students competed this year. The 10-week contest produced 10 winners each week. The 100 top photos were displayed from 6-8 p.m., Dec. 14, at Waterstreet Studios in Batavia.



(Photos provided) "Imaginative Prodigy" — Isabella Uscila

The display is "an opportunity for people to celebrate the arts in schools," Ademe said.

If you missed the show, you can see all the photos online at <http://kanecountyconnects.com/?s=photo+contest>.

**2017 Kane County Regional Office of Education photo contest winners**

<b>Week 2</b> 1. "Umbrellas in the Sky" — Crystal Jimenez; Aurora Central Catholic High School junior 9. "Life in Brazil" — Mackayla Meighan; St. Edward Central Catholic High School senior 10. "Sunflower" — Evelyn Blanco, Aurora Central Catholic High School junior	Central Catholic High School senior 5. "Friendship" — Michaela DeNeve, Aurora Central Catholic High School junior <b>Week 4</b> 5. "Over The Bridge" — Andrew Johnson, St. Edward Central Catholic High School senior 6. "Reflecting On Time" — Bri Perkins, Aurora Central Catholic High School senior	Catholic High School junior <b>Week 5</b> 1. "Footprints" — Mac Doherty, Aurora Central Catholic High School senior 3. "Split Hand" — Isabel Feldhaus, Aurora Central Catholic High School junior <b>Week 6</b> 3. "Lightbulb" — Mac Doherty, Aurora Central Catholic High School senior 7. "Fishy Bubble" — Hayley Decker, Aurora Central	Catholic High School senior <b>Week 7</b> 3. "Model Doorway" — Judith Hoffman, Aurora Central Catholic High School senior 7. "Colored Lines" — Haley Decker, Aurora Central Catholic High School senior 8. "Misty" — Abby Armstrong, St. Edward Central Catholic High School senior <b>Week 8</b> 8. "Red Rose" — Rachel Harreld, Aurora Central	Catholic High School senior 9. "Strings Attached" — Abby Armstrong, St. Edward Central Catholic High School senior <b>Week 9</b> 5. "Apple Of My Eye" — Abbey Shepley, St. Edward Central Catholic High School sophomore <b>Week 10</b> 2. "Fashion Slinky" — Hailey Catch, Aurora Central Catholic High School senior
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**Q** I just got a new job where I have to work on weekends. I'm scheduled Saturday nights and Sunday mornings. I've been going to 4:30 (p.m.) Mass on Saturdays and leaving right after communion to get to work on time. One of my friends says that's a sin. But it's the only time I can get to Mass. I figured it was better than not going at all. What do you think?

yourself is a necessary thing) that you absolutely can't change, that makes it so you have to leave Mass after Communion, I wouldn't consider this sinful.

I guess another consideration here would be that perhaps your friend is commenting on the fact you're working on Sunday, while the Third Commandment says to "Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it Holy."

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains this commandment obliges us to participate in Mass on

Sundays and Holy Days.

It also teaches "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are to refrain from engaging in work or activities that hinder the worship owed to God, the joy proper to the Lord's day, the performance of the works of mercy, and the appropriate relaxation of mind and body. Family needs or important social service can legitimately excuse us from the obligation of Sunday rest. The faithful should see to it that legitimate excuses do

not lead to habits prejudicial to religion, family life, and health." (CCC 2185).

I'll admit there is a lot included in this teaching, and for the sake of our consideration I want to zero in on the section that says "the faithful are to refrain from engaging in work or activities that hinder worship owed to God."

I had a priest in seminary who explained this in a way that made a lot of sense to me, and so I'll pass his wisdom along.

He said Sunday is meant

to be spent growing in our relationship with God and on this day above all others we have to make an effort to do more to deepen our love of God than we do on other days. That is how we keep it holy.

He added that at times things will arise we cannot get out of, and if this happens, we are ok so long as we make sure we get to Mass and we make sure to spend other parts of the day either praying or doing spiritual reading.

In other words, there may be work that has to get

done, and that is ok, so long as that work doesn't hinder us from getting to Mass or from doing whatever extra things we feel called to do to sanctify the day and keep it holy.

So in the end I'll say I'm proud of you for making it to Mass, and just try to do all you can to make sure in the midst of what you have on your plate, you make an effort to keep your Sunday holy!

And your Christmas Day!