

YOUNG OBSERVER

Discern Priesthood at July Vocation Retreats

LOVES PARK, BATAVIA—Young men in the Diocese of Rockford are invited to two retreats this summer to discern the priesthood.

Vocations Office director Father Jack Reichardt will lead the one-day retreats along with current seminarians. The days' activities will include talks, games, Mass, confessions, and much more.

The retreats are free and open to any young men ages 12 to 25.

Participants will be placed in one of two "tracks" for different ages: Track One for seventh through ninth grade and Track Two for grades ten and up.

Register at <https://www.rockfordpriest.org/events>. Dates, times and locations are:

■ **July 18—Loves Park:** St. Bridget Parish, 600 Clifford Ave., 10 a.m.-3 p.m.



(Observer file photo)

Bishop David Malloy lays his hands on Nathan Pacer's head during his ordination in 2022 as Ryan Noorae, far right, watches. Noorae is now a deacon for the Rockford Diocese.

■ **July 20—Batavia:** Holy Cross Parish, 2300 Main St., 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

What's Up

■ CRYSTAL LAKE

Holy Happy Hour July 25, Aug. 22

St. Thomas the Apostle and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishes invite young adults (ages 21 and up) to "Holy Happy Hours" July 25 and Aug. 22, 7-9 p.m., at The Quarry Cable Park, 5517 Northwest Highway, here. Both nights will offer faith-filled discussions, adult beverages and fellowship. Leaders will be seminarian Patrick Glanville (July 25) and Father James Linkenheld (Aug. 22).



(Photo provided/Katie Pyles)

One-Day Steubenville Retreat Welcomes Rockford Diocese Participants

JOLIET—Teens and adult chaperones from the Rockford Diocese joined hundreds of Catholics June 1 for a one-day Steubenville conference in the Diocese of Joliet. Of the over 1,200 participants, the Rockford group was the second largest (just behind the Joliet Diocese). Pictured with members of the Rockford group are John Jelinek (left), diocesan director of religious education and formation, and Julieta Jacobo, coordinator of Hispanic catechesis and formation.

The participants had the opportunity to hear testimonies from the speakers and spend time with Jesus in adoration before receiving Him at a Mass celebrated by Joliet Bishop Ronald Hicks. Plans are being set for a weekend-long conference in the Joliet area next summer.



(Photos/Biking for Babies)

In a photo on her fundraising profile, Mary Schiltz gestures to ultrasound photos at Waterleaf, reminders of why she joined the mission: to support women and families in unplanned pregnancies.

Missionary Biker



Geneva Parishioner To Bike for Babies

Mary Schiltz, a parishioner at St. Peter Parish in Geneva, is in the fundraising and training stage of this year's Biking for Babies event to be held July 7-14.

The "three pillars" of Biking for Babies are: 1) young adult formation, 2) pregnancy resource center awareness, and 3) fundraising for pregnancy resource centers. As in past years, young adults commit to participating in the organization's National Ride, and raise money for a prolife organization of their choice.

Schiltz's recipient will be Waterleaf Women's Center in Aurora. The center's services include pregnancy screening, ultrasounds, abortion pill reversal, and access to material goods to support women and families during and after pregnancy. She will be biking the "Wisconsin route" from Green Bay to St. Louis.

"I am a first year (Biking for Babies) missionary from Saint Charles," Schiltz says in her profile. "I wanted to get involved with this mission because it offers tangible support to women and families navigating unplanned pregnancies through raising money for pregnancy resource centers."

She hopes, she says, to be a witness to life. "Our culture is in desperate need of witnesses who can offer hope to the hopeless, especially mothers facing crisis pregnancies," she says. "Hope is found in Jesus' goodness, mercy, and the promise of a future. Even in our moments of deepest despair, God knows us intimately and loves us unconditionally."

In a June 13 update on her profile, she shares her excitement about the Biking for Babies preparation. She and others made a training ride to Green Bay, biking 100 miles on June 8 and 75 miles on June 9, and visiting the Shrine of Our Lady of Champion on the way. "For many of us, myself included, it was our first 'century' ride," she wrote, adding that she was "feeling grateful" for those riders she met.



Mary Schiltz will be biking the "Wisconsin route" from Green Bay to St. Louis, biking over 50 miles per day from July 7 to July 14.

Schiltz's goal is to raise \$3,500 for Waterleaf Women's Center, and she has reached 29% of her goal so far. Those interested in "go(ing) along on this mission with me," she says, can do so by sending a check made out to "Biking for Babies" and mailed to: Biking for Babies, P.O. Box 644, Saint Charles, MO 63302. Those supporting Schiltz's effort should put her name on the check's memo line.

Biking for Babies is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible.

Prayers are appreciated for the young adult missionaries during this test of endurance and public witness to the dignity of human life.

—Compiled by Amanda Hudson, news editor, with information from the Biking for Babies website.