

# Feeding Our Faith



A Quarterly Publication by the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan



3rd Quarter 2021



## The Hopeful Future Scholarship

In the Fall of 2021, the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan will be launching the Hopeful Future Scholarship! The scholarship was developed between the Protect Life group at Saginaw Valley State University and the CCFMM to create opportunities for pregnant and/or parenting women to attend college.

## 15th Anniversary Celebration

On Thursday, October 7, in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary, a special Rosary and Mass will be offered at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption. Kristin Smith, CCFMM Executive Director, will lead the Rosary at 5:30 p.m., and Bishop Robert Gruss will celebrate the Mass at 6 p.m. If you would like to join us for this celebration, a limited number of tickets are still available.

Please call the CCFMM at (989) 797-6680 to request a ticket.

## Stay Tuned

The CCFMM will be changing our phone number in the coming months. We will be sure notify you in our newsletter, website, Facebook page and Faith Saginaw magazine article.

# 15th Anniversary Celebration



It's official! We are now two months away from the 15-year Anniversary Celebration of the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan.

We are grateful for the years of encouragement and support that we have received. It is because of donors and supporters of the Diocese of Saginaw that we have been able to spread the joy of the Lord through over 250 endowment funds to schools, parishes and many other diocesan ministries. To date the CCFMM has disbursed over \$14.0 million in grants and received over \$32 million in donations.



To express our gratitude, we ask that if you are in need of prayer, please email us at [connor.rabine@ccfmm.org](mailto:connor.rabine@ccfmm.org) or call us at (989) 797-6680.

*“Prayer is the surge of the heart, it is a simple look turned toward heaven,  
it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.”*

~ Saint Therese of Lisieux

# Grant Provides Sixth-Grade Students with New Bibles

Thanks to a grant from the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan, sixth-grade students at Nouvel Catholic Central Elementary (NCCE) now have their own personal Bibles to read God's word in greater depth this summer and throughout their lives.

NCCE sixth-grade teacher, Janna Witten, who applied for the grant, says it is truly a blessing for the students to have the Bibles. With the new religion book the sixth-grade students are currently using, they are frequently asked to refer to the Bible. According to Janna, "The Christ Our Life book series, adopted by NCCE in the 2019/2020 school year, encourages a lot of Bible reading, which we do in class weekly."



Along with the purchase of the new Bibles, Janna also ordered Bible index tabs to allow her students to mark the 73 books of the Bible. Students spent an entire religion class adhering the tabs, ordered from the Catholic Company, to the corresponding pages. The sixth-graders find it's now much easier to locate specific books/passages in the Bible.

*"They love the ease of finding things through the use of the index tabs," says Janna. "In fact, the tabs help level the playing field, making the Bible more accessible for all my students."*

Students describe the old classroom set of Bibles as having torn covers and brown pages; in contrast, the new Bibles are clean with nice covers and tabs.



After the Bibles arrived in January, Father Rick Bokinske, pastor at Saint Thomas Aquinas Church, visited each of the two sixth-grade classes to bless the students' Bibles. Janna says the students have a real sense of pride in their new Bibles. Some have even gone out and purchased Bible covers.

Providing a Bible for each NCCE sixth-grade student is part of a larger plan, as Janna believes sixth grade is where one gets a start into adult Bible reading. As students move into junior high, they are required to have their own Bibles.

Now, students will enter seventh grade with Bibles tabbed and with valuable experience locating books/passages.

At the request of the seventh-grade teachers, Janna also purchased a couple extra Bibles, so any students new to NCCE in junior high could be given a Bible, a "Welcome to your spiritual journey" gift, says Janna.

Janna and her students are very appreciative of the new Bibles.



*"I see a great deal of enthusiasm for reading the Bible," says Janna.*

*"Two of my students told me they want to read the whole Bible,  
and one girl spends all her free time reading her Bible."*

Kristin Smith, Executive Director of the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan (CCFMM), believes it is very important to provide students with their own Bibles. According to Kristin,

*"The value of providing Bibles for Catholic students to own is beyond measure,  
for reading the Bible will shape the choices they make growing up."*

# Grant Provides Sixth-Grade Students with New Bibles

Kristin was impressed that each of the 35 NCCE sixth-grade students wrote a personal thank-you letter to CCFMM and shared a favorite Bible verse. “Feelings of joy and hope filled my heart with each letter I read,” said Kristin. Below are just a few of the reasons students are thankful for their own Bibles:

*Emma: “The Bibles give us stories about Jesus’ life.”*

*Sydney: “The Bible helps me learn more about God and what Jesus did for me.”*

*Owen: “My Bible helps me lead a better and more spiritual life.”*

*Gabi: “Thank you so much for the amazing Bibles you gave us. It helps me keep my faith.”*

Kristin shares that the students’ thank-you letters have inspired her to find a way for CCFMM to provide all Catholic school children in sixth grade with a Bible to own, and she is confident the Holy Spirit will lead her/the Foundation in finding a way to make this happen. In fact, Kristin envisions that a newly-formed CCFMM society, the Saint Joseph Giving Society (SJGS), may very well be a vehicle through which sixth-grade Bibles will be provided. To learn more about SJGS, please see our companion piece to this story, “Inspired by St. Joseph: Giving from the Heart.”



The CCFMM is pleased to provide this grant, which made it possible for each NCCE sixth-grade student to take home a Bible at the end of the school year. As they read over the summer, Janna offered this advice:

*“Spend time reading the book of James, as it has so many good nuggets for living a good Christian life.”*

# Spending Time with Jesus



The Bible is all around us. People hear Scripture readings in church. We have Good Samaritan laws (Luke 10), welcome home the Prodigal Son (Luke 15), and look for the Promised Land (Exodus 3, Hebrews 11). Some biblical passages have become popular maxims, such as “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Matthew 7:12), “Thou shalt not steal” (Exodus 20:15), and “Love thy neighbor” (Matthew 22:39).

As Catholics we are all called to include reading the Bible in our daily prayer lives. Reading these inspired words, people grow deeper in their relationship with God and come to understand their place in the community.

The Bible is the story of God’s relationship with the people He has called to himself. It is not intended to be read as a history text, a science book, or a political manifesto. In the Bible, God teaches us the truths that we need for the sake of our salvation.

By reading and reflecting on Sacred Scripture, Catholics join those faithful men and women who have taken God’s Word to heart, and put it into practice in their lives. We read the Bible within the tradition of the Church to benefit from the holiness and wisdom of all the faithful.

Source: [usccb.org/bible/understanding-the-bible](http://usccb.org/bible/understanding-the-bible)

*“Before beginning to read: raise your mind to the Lord and implore Him to  
GUIDE your mind Himself, to SPEAK to your heart and MOVE your will.”*

*~ St. Padre Pio*

If you would like to know more about how you can enrich your prayer time by reading the Bible  
please visit: [usccb.org/bible/understanding-the-bible](http://usccb.org/bible/understanding-the-bible)

# Stewardship: Giving from the Heart



*“Do we wish to be disciples of Jesus Christ? The Spirit is ready to show us the way --  
a way of which stewardship is part.”*

In our 2nd Quarter Newsletter, we identified the four areas of stewardship. The first area is being Disciples as Stewards. Members of Saint Robert Bellarmine Catholic Parish in Omaha, Nebraska wrote the article, “Christian Disciples and Stewards,” explaining *A Pastoral Letter on Stewardship* written by the US Bishops. This document explains what it means to be a Disciple of Stewardship.

## *Christian Disciples and Stewards*

*God knew this area would not be easy. He sent Jesus to show us the way by demonstrating how to accept the personal gift of our individual vocation. Jesus knows our strengths and weaknesses and has a purpose in mind for each of us. We need to accept and take responsibility to fulfill the call. In the Pastoral Letter, the Bishops provide a perfect role model, “After Jesus, it is the Blessed Virgin Mary who by her example most perfectly teaches the meaning of discipleship and stewardship in their fullest sense. All of the essential elements are found in her life: she was called and gifted by God; she responded generously, creatively, and prudently; she understood her divinely assigned role as “handmaid” in terms of service and fidelity.” (See Luke 1:26-56)*



*One of the major convictions identified by the Bishops in “Stewardship: a Disciple’s Response” is as follows:*

*“Stewardship is an expression of discipleship with the power to change how we understand and live out our lives. Disciples who practice stewardship recognize God as the origin of life, the giver of freedom, the source of all they have and are and will be. They are deeply aware of the truth that “The Lord’s are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it” (Ps 24:1). They know themselves to be recipients and caretakers of God’s many gifts. They are grateful for what they have received and eager to cultivate their gifts out of love for God and one another.”*

*Source: Christian Disciples and Stewards, Saint Robert Bellarmine Catholic Parish*

It is important to ask ourselves daily, “God, how do you want to cultivate the gifts you have given me?”

We are happy to talk with you about your parish, school or ministry endowment or explore opportunities for giving.

**Call us at (989) 797-6680**

*“You make a living by what you earn. You make a life by what you give.”*

*~ Matthew 6:38*

# Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

As summer winds down and fall approaches, we look forward to celebrating the 15-year anniversary of the founding of the CCFMM, which took place in 2006 under the leadership of Archbishop Robert J. Carlson. We give thanks for his vision — along with the support of community leaders — in creating a means of financially providing for the long-term needs of our beloved parishes, schools, and ministries. We also are grateful for the founding board members, current leaders, donors and benefactors for their trust in the CCFMM.

During this milestone year, the CCFMM Board of Trustees has met several times to formulate a strategic plan to fulfill the mission of “Encouraging faithful giving that is responsibly managed and reflective of the teaching of Jesus Christ.” The plan will lead the CCFMM into the next 15 years, and beyond.

We also celebrate a milestone for the St. Gerard Society. About five years ago, the CCFMM and the St. Gerard Society entered a collaboration to support the current needs of Diocesan Catholic schools. The St. Gerard Society has raised several hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarship funds for students attending the Nouvel Catholic Central Schools. SGS will continue to support the current scholarship needs of Nouvel students under its own 501(c)(3) designation. The CCFMM wishes to thank and congratulate the SGS and we look forward to new collaborations to support their efforts to secure Catholic education for students.

Finally, we hope you enjoy the stories that we share in this newsletter. We invite you to follow us on Facebook or visit our website at [ccfmm.org](http://ccfmm.org) for more highlights about the many ways our donors' endowed giving impacts the community. Also look for more stories in *Faith Saginaw* magazine.

May God Bless you and keep you safe.

Kristin Smith, Executive Director



# Thank You

## Helping People Help People!

We hope you enjoyed the eighth edition of *Feeding Our Faith*, a quarterly publication by the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan.

New stories and endowments are featured monthly.

## Mission Statement

*We encourage faithful giving that is responsibly managed and reflective of the teachings of Jesus Christ.*

## We hope to hear from you!

Visit us online: [www.ccfmm.org](http://www.ccfmm.org) or in person:

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# Catholic

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
OF MID-MICHIGAN

*Joyous Giving in Jesus Christ  
Forever meeting the needs of  
all God's people.*

