

# Feeding Our Faith



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



2nd Quarter 2021



## **Welcome Michele Driver!**

This April the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan welcomed Michele Driver on staff as Endowment Coordinator. We are overjoyed to welcome her!

## **Apology to Fr. Randy Kelly for Misspelling**

The Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan would like to extend a sincere apology to Fr. Randy Kelly for the misspelling of his name in the Q1 2021 Newsletter.

## **2020 Fund Statements**

As of April 2021, the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan has released all 2020 fund statements and current available disbursements. If you did not receive a fund statement please contact Connor Rabine at [connor.rabine@ccfmm.org](mailto:connor.rabine@ccfmm.org) or (989) 797-6684.

**Our meeting dates for 2021 are available on our website at [www.ccfmm.org](http://www.ccfmm.org).**

*"Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, as indeed you do." 1 Thessalonians 5:11*

**Like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CCFMidMich](http://www.facebook.com/CCFMidMich)**

# 15th Anniversary Celebration



Since its inception in 2006, the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid- Michigan has been helping people help others through gifts that serve programs and ministries provided throughout the Catholic Diocese of Saginaw and beyond. To this day an additional 223 endowments for parishes, schools and Diocesan ministries have been created!

It is with great joy that we announce that this year marks the 15th Anniversary of the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan serving the communities of the Diocese of Saginaw. Over the last 15 years donor investments have resulted in over \$12.0 million in support of parishes, schools and diocesan ministries!

As a Staff, we express our sincere gratitude to all those who have been apart of the fruitful journey of the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan.

*“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances;  
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”*

*1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*



# Golden Girls with Golden Hearts:

They lived frugally, with a noble end-goal in sight. Two of the three sisters never married. They saved and dreamed of how they could help the poor and the Catholic Church they so loved. The Koncavich (Kun-ca'-vich) sisters—Stella, Mary, and Helen, at their deaths, left a nearly \$1 million estate to the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan (CCFMM) in 2010. The CCFMM Koncavich Fund was created as a living legacy to these three special sisters.

Lovingly named the “Golden Girls” by the Bay City parishioners of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Church, these remarkable Polish women were born in Mullan, Idaho, to parents Alexander and Agnes (Rzesutkow) Koncavich: Mary, born in 1913; Helen, 1914; and Stella, 1917. Blessed with longevity, the Koncavich sisters lived very modestly for decades so they could donate the money they saved to serve the poor and needy in the Saginaw Catholic Diocese.

Pat Ueberroth, a parishioner at St. Stan's (now part of Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish), remembers that any time an appeal was made for the missions or other worthy causes, the Koncavich donation was always on the large end. She adds that the three sisters were “funny, sweet, and real ladies.” Close in age and life-long Catholics, the Koncavich Golden Girls must have had a remarkable upbringing for the way they lived out their faith. According to Fr. Bill Rutkowski, who knew the sisters well, “Their Catholic faith was very serious to them—it was the heart of their lives.”

Mary, the oldest of the sisters, was 89 when she passed away in 2002 after a long life of service to parish and community. Helen (Crevia), born a year after Mary, in 1914, was the only one of the three girls to marry. She married Leo Maxwell Crevia on September 14, 1935, and they were married nearly 50 years until his death in 1985. They had no children. Helen died in 2007, at age 93.

Stella, who lived to age 91, was the last of the sisters to pass away in 2008, at her residence in Bay City, Michigan. Stella worked for the State of Michigan Employment Security Commission (MESCC) for 48 years, and received many awards for her outstanding leadership. In 1968, Stella earned a Master's Degree in guidance and counseling from the University of Michigan by attending evening classes. Of all Stella's awards and accomplishments, the one she valued most was a Papal Blessing she received. According to Stella's friend and neighbor, Marge Luczak, “Stella received this award upon her retirement, in recognition of the exemplary life she led.”

Father Bill has fond memories of the Koncavich sisters: “They were always together, and Stella was the leader of the ladies, their caretaker. If you saw them enter a



# Faithful Stewards of God's Gifts



room or church, they were always in the same order, with Stella leading. The girls were always all-smiles when you saw them. They were humble and drove a simple older car and lived in a simple ranch-style house in the south-end of Bay City. The interior of the home was also simple, with older furniture that they were quite content with.”

According to Fr. Bill, “Mary and Helen had grey hair and wore everyday clothing; Stella had red hair and was always dressed professionally. She was bright, classy, and a real go-getter. Stella was also one of the first Commissioned Lay Ministers in the Saginaw Diocese. She was well-known in the community and loved ministering to the sick and home-bound.”

Marge Kuczak remembers the strong work ethic of all the Koncavich sisters. She points out that they lived through the Great Depression, and thus took nothing for granted. They lived frugally, prayed the Rosary together, and channeled their time and energies into service to St. Stan’s church and the community.

Ever devoted to Mary, the Koncavich sisters were very active in the Legion of Mary. Through this organization, they visited the sick in hospitals, took Holy Communion to the home-bound and those in nursing homes, and prayed the Rosary. The girls were at the heart of the St. Stan’s Legion of Mary, which was interconnected with other Legion of Mary groups. Fr. Bill recalls one final Legion of Mary service which brought together Legion members from all over the state. “Archbishop Carlson presided at this event, to acknowledge and show his appreciation for all the good Legion of Mary members did,” he said.

The Koncavich sisters beautifully lived out their faith, says Fr. Bill. He adds that this Bible verse comes to mind when he thinks about them:

*For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me feel welcome...*

Matthew 25:35

“The Koncavich sisters emulated the living out of this gospel, of their Catholic faith,” adds Fr. Bill, “and they not only did it while they were living, but beyond, through their CCFMM trust. Because of the Golden Girls’ simple lifestyle, it was surprising to many that they left such a large bequest to CCFMM, to help the poor and needy.”

The CCFMM Koncavich Fund was created in 2010 as a living legacy to these three special sisters. This fund fulfills the mission of the “Golden Girls,” as it disperses money each year to multiple organizations, such as homeless shelters, food pantries, rescue missions, etc. “As that money is feeding and helping the poor, it’s as if Stella, Helen, and Mary are still here doing the work of the Lord,” says Fr. Bill Rutkowski.

**To read more about their beautiful lives, please visit our website at [www.ccfmm.org/story/the-golden-girls](http://www.ccfmm.org/story/the-golden-girls)**

Written by Mary Beth Looby

# Nouvel Students Benefit from Generosity and Good Fortune



The Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan endowment for Barbara Shaffran began with a stroke of luck.

When her son Paul won \$5,000 in the Nouvel Catholic Central Elementary Athletic Association Big Draw Raffle years ago, her husband Charles suggested he donate the money to the Foundation in memory of his mother who died in 2012. And Charles matched it.

Since 2013, Charles has made monthly contributions to the Barbara Shaffran Endowment for Nouvel Elementary School (formerly St. Thomas Aquinas Elementary). The fund has grown to nearly \$27,000 with annual disbursements starting in 2014.

“My wife was so involved in the church and St. Thomas Aquinas Elementary School when our three children attended there,” Charles Shaffran said. “She was on the school board, participated in all kinds of school projects and fundraisers, and volunteered at the school library. The endowment is a way to help the school now and into the future. There always is a need.”

Charles said he and his wife joined St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Saginaw Township in 1969. Both came from good Catholic families and both attended Catholic schools. “We felt that it was important for our children to have a background in their faith and a good education. The endowment helps provide the same for other families,” he said.

Phil Strauss, director of finance for Nouvel Catholic Schools, said the annual disbursement provides needed tuition assistance. “The Barbara Shaffran Endowment Fund helps us fulfill our mission of





offering a Catholic education to any family that needs help. We are grateful that we can count on the annual funds,” he said.

Barbara’s daughter Susan Moody said her mother had a servant heart. “Growing up as children we watched her give and volunteer wherever help was needed,” she said. She remembered that her mother would bring loose change to help students pay for overdue books when she volunteered in the student library. A piece of artwork commissioned by Fr. Randy Kelly still hangs in the elementary school library in her honor.

Jill Friebe, Barbara’s older daughter, echoed that her mother was always at the school. She was President of Home and School, a Brownie and Girl Scout leader, homeroom mom and helped deliver hot lunches. She also was the first school nurse. “If the school called and said they needed help, my mom would go,” Jill said.

The daughters agree that they continued their mother’s legacy by sending their own children to Nouvel Catholic Elementary, volunteering on school boards and committees, and at St. Thomas Aquinas Church. “My mother instilled in us the spirit of volunteering our time, talent and treasure,” Jill said. “That is how we grew up and that is how we were taught.”

**To read more of our story about Nouvel Students Benefit from Generosity and Good Fortune please visit our website at [www.ccfmm.org/story/nouvel-students-benefit-from-generosity-and-good-fortune/](http://www.ccfmm.org/story/nouvel-students-benefit-from-generosity-and-good-fortune/)**

The Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan (CCFMM) is honored to play a role in keeping alive the memory of Barbara Shaffran. In addition to administering the Barbara Shaffran Endowment, the CCFMM has over 250 funds — endowed, scholarship, grants and donor advised — that serve the Diocese of Saginaw. Many of the CCFMM funds, such as the Barbara Shaffran Endowment, have been established in memory of a loved one.

Written by Joan Ramm

# 2021 College Scholarship Winners



## **Bob Logan Memorial Scholarship**

*Logan Boardman*

## **Craig Siler Scholarship**

*Logan Boardman*

## **Fr. E. C. LeFevre College Scholarship**

*Katherine Sullivan*

## **Fr. Robert G. Navarre Scholarship**

*Benjamin Hale*

## **Larry J. Oswald Memorial Scholarship**

*Marirose LeFevre*

## **Lori Stillwell Memorial Scholarship**

*Jacob Werner*

## **Patrick Ackerman Scholarship**

*Emma Adelman*

## **Rod Luplow Memorial Scholarship**

*Darron Chinery*

## **Scott Dangel Scholarship**

*Katherine Sullivan*

## **Shannan Marie Thompson Memorial Scholarship**

*Ashton Wright*

## **St. Thomas Aquinas Slominski Scholarship**

*Ashton Wright*

## **Timothy Horny Nouvel Baseball Scholarship**

*Benjamin Clevenger*

## **Val and Julie Kostrzewa Scholarship**

*Jelina Murad*

*Want to learn more about these scholarships?*

*Visit our website at [www.ccfmm.org](http://www.ccfmm.org) to read all about the origin of each scholarship!*

**Scholarships still under review:** *Anthony & Elizabeth Brenske Memorial Scholarship • Berberovich Memorial Scholarship  
Cesario Hernandez Memorial Scholarship • Cyril William Brenske Memorial Scholarship • Joshua Robert Jasman Fund  
LeFevre & Rokita Scholarship • Northwest Kiwanis Scholarship • Maria Elizabeth Paquette Scholarship • Regina Graveline Family Fund*

# Stewardship: Giving from the Heart



*“As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace.” 1 Peter 4:10*

What identifies a steward? Safeguarding material and human resources and using them responsibly is one answer; generous giving of time, talent, and treasure is another. As Christian stewards, we receive God’s gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.

There are different areas of stewardship:

Disciples as Stewards - *As members of the Church, Jesus calls us to be disciples.*

Stewards of Creation - *God created the world, but entrusts it to human beings.*

Stewards of Vocation - *Each one of us—clergy, religious, lay person; married, single; adult, child—has a personal vocation.*

*God intends each one of us to play a unique role in carrying out the divine plan.*

Stewards of the Church - *We are also obliged to be stewards of the Church—collaborators and cooperators in continuing the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, which is the Church’s essential mission.*

**Want to learn more about these areas of Stewardship?**

*Visit the U.S.C.C.B website at [www.usccb.org/committees/evangelization-catechesis/stewardship](http://www.usccb.org/committees/evangelization-catechesis/stewardship)*

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  
or email at [ccfmm@ccfmm.org](mailto:ccfmm@ccfmm.org)**

# Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

As the seasons change from spring to summer, we transition from the month of our Loving Mother Mary to June, devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Thankfully, there are many expectations for an end to the pandemic and a return to stages of normalcy. May you and your family be safe, healthy and full of joyful gatherings.

In this newsletter we look back at the story of one of our first major donors — the Koncavich sisters from Bay City. Their love and generosity inspire us. They motivate us to keep working toward the goal of meeting the needs of all God's people through joyous giving in Christ. The story of Barbara Shaffran and the dedication of her family also reminds us of the value of stewardship. Each of us can play a role as good stewards during our life.

We welcome Michele Driver to our CCFMM staff as our Endowment Coordinator. Michele has over 20 years of nonprofit or not-for-profit background. She most recently worked as Training Coordinator for a professional member organization in the oil and gas industry. Prior to that Michele was the office manager for an ecumenical Christian magazine publisher. Welcome Michele!

Finally, we look forward to joyfully celebrating our 15th Anniversary. We are grateful for you, our faithful stewards of God's gifts who allow us to secure and further God's work in the Saginaw Diocese and surrounding communities. May the Sacred Heart of Jesus continue to bless you.

Grace and Peace be with you,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Kristin Smith".

Kristin Smith, Executive Director



# Please Join Us!

## Helping People Help People!

We hope you enjoyed the seventh 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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COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
OF MID-MICHIGAN

*Joyous Giving in Christ to  
Forever meet the needs of  
all God's people.*

