

1803 N. Ft. Thomas Avenue • Ft. Thomas, KY 41075 • 859-441-1352 • church@stcatherineofsiena.org • www.stcatherineofsiena.org

Pastor Rev. Stef Bankemper, sbankemper@stcatherineofsiena.org Deacon Brian Cox Deacon Barry Henry

CRE – John David Kimes jdkimes@stcatherineofsiena.org

Masses for Sunday: Saturday: 4:30 p.m.; Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Tuesday: 8:30 a.m.-6:45 p.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Tuesday: *5:30-6:30 p.m.(*verify schedule in bulletin under "This Week" Saturday: Following the 8:00 a.m. Mass; Anytime by Appointment.

Marriage:

One member of the couple must be a registered parishioner of St. Catherine Parish.

Call Parish Office at least six months prior to setting a wedding date.

Parish Office Hours: Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Communion to the Sick: Call Parish Office.

New Parishioners:
Please call the Parish Office.
Notification when leaving the parish is appreciated.

Bulletin Deadline:

Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. Drop off copy at parish or send via e-mail.

Baptism: Baptism is a joyful event "by which men and women are freed from their sins... are configured to Christ by an indelible character, and are incorporated into the Church." (Canon 849 of the Code of Canon Law). People can be baptized as adults or infants. The preparation for adult baptism takes place in the process of the catechumenate, commonly known as the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, or RCIA. Any adult desiring baptism may call the office to begin this process. Preparation for infant baptism happens in baptism classes, generally held on the fourth Thursday evening of each month in the Parish Office. No child will be baptized at St. Catherine unless both parents have attended one of these classes in the last five years. Baptism of adults generally takes place on Holy Saturday night, while baptism of infants can take place on any Sunday. Since baptism "incorporates one into the Church," it is appropriate that the infant be baptized during a Sunday liturgy when the local Church is gathered. There are legitimate reasons for not wanting to have the baptism during a Sunday liturgy; in those cases, baptisms may be scheduled for a Sunday at 1:00 p.m.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

MONDAY – December 25th

10:00 a.m. Bill McCarthy

TUESDAY – December 26th

8:00 a.m. Don Hamberg

WEDNESDAY – December 27th

5:30 p.m. Bill Seiter

THURSDAY – December 28th

8:00 a.m. The Charles Schroder Family

FRIDAY – December 29th

8:30 a.m. Ted Stoner

SATURDAY – December 30th

8:00 a.m. Rick Beiting

4:30 p.m. Bill McCarthy

SUNDAY – December 31st

10:00 a.m. Members of the Parish 4:30 p.m. Jack Rose

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

December 25th, 30th & 31st

Christmas Day, 10:00 a.m

Cup: Pat Desmond, Anita Morris, Two Subs Needed Host: Martie Iker, Nathan Myers, Louise Roth

4:30 p.m. Cup: Kelly Hergott, Sarah Meisenhelder, Lois Roell

Host: Catherine Meisenhelder

10:00 a.m. Cup: Brian Dinkelacker, Anita Morris, Louise Roth,

Heather Shultz

Host: Peggy Birkenhauer, Pat Desmond, Kristen Gerrein

Solemnity of Mary Vigil, 4:30 p.m.

Cup: Kelly Hergott, Kathy Woltermann, Two Subs Needed Host: Diane Hamberg, Martie Iker, Sub Needed

LECTORS

December 25th, 30th & 31st

Christmas Day, 10:00 a.m. Raymond Schlosser 4:30 p.m. Mary Margaret Spica 10:00 a.m. Mike Ruwe Solemnity of Mary Vigil, 4:30 p.m. Peter Djordjevic

SUNDAY COLLECTION RECAP

10/10/0000 10/11/0000

			<u>12/10/2023</u>	<u>12/</u>	<u>11/2022</u>
Weekly Offering		\$	15,165	\$	14,141
Fiscal YTD Offerings		\$	346,732		
Fiscal YTD Budget		\$	561,169		
Fiscal Annual Budget 202	23/24	\$	1,260,000		
Number of registered fan	nilies		371		
Tuition Assistance awarded for 2023/24			4 \$0		
Tuition Assistance donations FYD		\$277			
School Registration for 2023-24			116		
2023 DPAA	<u>Goal</u>		<u>Pledged</u> \$90,645		Over!
(as of 9/30/23)	\$79,100		590,045		\$11,545

SERVERS SCHEDULE December 25th-31st

10:00 a.m. – Monday, Christmas Day

Grant Desmond, Reese Desmond, Joseph Hicks, Michael Zechella

8:00 a.m. – Tuesday

Ava Hamberg, Cora Hill

5:30 p.m. - Wednesday

Josie Bozeman, Max Holbrook

8:00 a.m. - Thursday

Keegan Collopy, Edie Twehues

8:30 a.m. - Friday

Rachel Burkart, Alison Wagner

8:00 a.m. - Saturday

Michael Hicks, Joseph Hicks

4:30 p.m. – Saturday

Adelaide Foley, Lily Foley, Morgan Kremer

10:00 a.m. - Sunday

McKenna Desmond, Grant Desmond, Reese Desmond

4:30 p.m. – Sunday, Solemnity of Mary Vigil

Morgan Baldwin, Owen Marx, Laney Smith, Frannie Smith

GREETERS SCHEDULE December 30th & 31st

4:30 p.m. Volunteers Needed 10:00 a.m. Mike and Jen Desmond & Family

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

Gn 15:1-6, 21:1-3; Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Lk 2:22-40

THIS WEEK

MONDAY

Merry Christmas! – Mass, 10:00 a.m.

Parish Office Closed

TUESDAY

Mass, 8:00 a.m. – Exposition, 8:30 a.m.

Parish Office Closed

Confessions, 5:30 p.m.

Benediction, 6:45 p.m. – Rosary, 7:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Mass, 5:30 p.m.

THURSDAY

Mass, 8:00 a.m.

Choir, 6:30 p.m.

FRIDAY

Mass, 8:30 a.m.

Parish Office Closed

SATURDAY

Mass, 8:00 a.m.

Confessions Immediately following Mass

Mass, 4:30 p.m.

NEXT SUNDAY

Mass, 10:00 a.m.

Solemnity of Mary Vigil Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Please Pray For Our Sick

Bev Stegman, Barb Venable, Mary Kay Glaser, Carol Ewing, Tom & Mary Ann Ferring, Sherry Milleck, Peter Defoe, Kay Grothaus, Mary Vieth, Ann Basham, Bob Rulli, Cris Bear, Mary Kohrs, Larry Beiting, Mary Hoffman, Bette Riedmatter & David Garner. Also, remember all of our parishioners in nursing homes as well as those confined to their homes in your prayers.

Please Pray for the Following Soldiers Serving Our Country

William Pikar, Luke Norman, Jay Blinn, Michael Beiting, Joe Fitzgerald, Brian Clayton, Adam Beiting, Michael Dunn, Trent Moeves, James Taft III, Drew Cecil, Zack Hehman, Adam Kramer, Wolfgang Davis, Clint & Sarah Brandt, Mark Marten, Zachary Dunn and Fr. Bill Appel.

IN OUR PARISH

UPCOMING HOLIDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve – December 24th – 4:30 p.m. Christmas Day – December 25th – 10:00 a.m. Solemnity of Mary, Vigil Mass, December 31st – 4:30 p.m. Solemnity of Mary – January 1st – 10:00 a.m.

CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR FR. STEFAND OUR DEACONS

There's still time to contribute to a group donation for Fr. Stef as well as Deacon Barry Henry and Deacon Brian Cox. Cash donations or checks are both fine, but all checks must be made out to the individual, not St. Catherine. Please put cash/check in an envelope marked "Christmas gift" and be sure to include your family name as well as for whom the gift is intended. Donations can be turned into the Parish Office (can also be put through the mail slot) by December 27th. If you have any questions, contact the Parish Office at 441-1352.

NEW PICTORIAL DIRECTORY – It's not too late to have your picture taken for our new Parish Directory. Remaining photography days are December 28, 29, 30 and January 4. To schedule your photography appointment online, simply go to www.ucdir.com, click on photography appointment scheduling login on the right side, enter "ky415" in the Church Code field and enter "photos" in the Church Password field. Follow the prompts to schedule your family's appointment time. If you have six or more in your family, please use two consecutive time slots.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP WITH DIRECTORY PHOTO SESSIONS – We are in need of people to help sign in families as they arrive to have their picture taken for the new directory. We are going to need two people per two-hour shift on all of the days pictures will be taken. (See above paragraph for remaining dates.) If you would be willing to help with this, please sign up using the link that was in the parish email or contact the Parish Office at 441-1352.

PARISH WEEKLY RAFFLE WINNER – The winner for the week of December 18th will be reported next week.

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head . . .

> Today a Virgin gives birth to Him who is above all being, and the earth offers a cave to Him whom the world cannot contain. (Kontakion of the Nativity)

Christians throughout the centuries have been struck by the lowliness and poverty of the place where Jesus was born, and the manger, stable or cave, the hay, are all good symbols of this, but the truth is that even if Jesus were born in the Taj Mahal or Hilton's finest hotel, it would be lowly and poor to the Son of God. Simply taking on a human nature was beneath the dignity of the second person of the Holy Trinity. We have the expression, "In for a dime, in for a dollar," meaning if you are going in, you might as well go in all the way. God is always in for the dollar, is always allin. So when God commands us, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might (Deut 6:5)," He is, in effect, saying, "Love God the way God loves you." Jesus is the living symbol of God's love. He emptied Himself to take on our nature. He was born in lowliness, He gave up His life, all for love of us. And His love continues: think of what we say before receiving Holy Communion: "Lord, I am not worthy/ that you should come under my roof." We were not worthy to have Jesus born for us, are not worthy of His continued attention. And yet, if we dropped something precious to us in the mud, we would not be looking at the mud as we dug for the precious object, we would be looking for the treasure. The lowliness of the stable or cave in which Jesus was born reminds us of just how precious we are to Him. He was not looking at the manger; He was reaching for us.

Although I cannot love the way He loves, you are precious to me, also.

Merry Christmas! *Fr. Stef.*

LET'S GO TO MEXICO! Our Mexican themed winter fundraiser will be held on January 27th at the Ft. Thomas Mess Hall. As usual, we will have plenty of food, drinks and music to celebrate. We will also be raffling off chances for an all-inclusive trip to Cancun, Mexico!! Trip includes coach airfare, four nights all-inclusive accommodations and a sunset cruise. 2nd Prize is 10,000 MXN Pesos (approximately \$575.00 USD) and 3rd prize is dinner for two at Nada (\$150.00 gift card). Cost of the ticket is \$50.00. Tickets will soon be available in the Parish Office and on our website. Attendance is not required to win. If you would like to join the committee planning the event, please reach out to Wade and Tina Smith at garrett_wade smith@hotmail.com or call/text 859-816-2145.

WE NEED YOU! We could use your help in making our "Let's Go To Mexico" winter fundraiser a successful night for our parish. We need volunteers to help with raffle ticket sales, silent auction, basket raffle, decorations, set-up and marketing the event. Since things are always more fun in a group, consider gathering some friends together and taking on one of these tasks! Maybe your friend group could put together a basket for the basket raffle, gather items for the silent auction, take on overseeing reservations, or getting the word out to the community about the event. Any and all help is needed and greatly appreciated. Please contact Wade Smith at garrett_wade_smith@hotmail.com or call/text 859-816-2145 to volunteer.

PRO-LIFE THOUGHT – "O Blessed Mother, at the angel's word you went in haste to the aid of your cousin Elizabeth. Although pregnant yourself, you placed her needs before your own. By your example of radical solidarity, teach us to reverence and protect those in need, without conditions or expectations... Obtain for us the grace to bring Christ to any expectant mother who is alone and afraid."

USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, Prayer for Radical Solidarity (www.respectlife.org/prayer-for-radical-solidarity)

END-OF-YEAR GIVING – If you are over age 70-1/2 and required to take a distribution from your IRA, you can circumvent the tax law change and still, in effect, deduct your charitable gifts to St. Catherine by giving to St. Catherine directly from your IRA. This gift would count as a part of your required distribution, yet would not count as income to you, so effectively giving you a deduction you might not otherwise get. If this sounds like an option for you, consult your tax advisor for a detailed explanation.

ST. BERNARD PANTRY – The pantry is always in need of any nonperishable food items (peanut butter, cereal, pasta and sauce, canned soup, beans, etc.), paper products and hygiene items for their clients. Additionally, they need clean plastic bags for food distribution purposes to their clients. All donations are gratefully accepted and can be dropped off in the box at the Rossford entrance or Parish Office. Please be mindful of the Expiration Date or the Best Used by Date when considering your donation. If each family donated just one food item per month, what a difference we could make!

IN OUR DIOCESE

SACRED MUSIC CONCERT – With praise and thanks to Almighty God, the Roman Catholic Parish of St. Augustine, 1839 Euclid Avenue, Covington, invites you to celebrate the installation of their new organ with a FREE concert of Sacred Music on the Solemnity of the Epiphany, Saturday, January 6, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE DIOCESAN YOUTH MINISTRY EVENTS

Contact Angie Poat for information, apoat@covdio.org or visit covdio.org/youth/.

January 18, 2024 – High School Mass and Social – Location: Holy Cross Parish, Latonia, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Learn more about the Mass and worship with your peers in a vibrant faith community. All are welcome.

February 8, 2024 – THRIVE Peer Ministry Leadership Training for High School and College Leaders, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Curia. Attend as an individual peer leader or with your parish, school, music, or retreat team. Newcomers are welcome. RSVP by February 1. Together we THRIVE!

February 10, 2024 – **JUNIOR HIGH CONNECT RETREAT**. Calling all 6th, 7th and 8th graders to a high impact day of connecting with self, others, and God. CONNECT retreat includes: Music, Games, Witness Talks, Adoration, Food, Fun – lead by a team of dynamic college students. RSVP by February 1. Location: TMU from 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

COVINGTON YOUTH MISSIONARY TEAM

FORMING – Seeking high school peer leaders from every high school and parish in the diocese. Team formation begins in February and missionary youth ministry service to the diocese begins this summer. To recommend an individual, email apoat@covdio.org.

SUPPORT GROUP FOR SEPARATED AND DIVORCED

New Beginnings is an eight-week program for separated or divorced individuals, which provides an opportunity to heal and move forward despite a complicated situation. Lead by facilitators who have been through their own personal losses, this program invites participants to move toward their own new beginning. The next session will be held on consecutive Thursdays – January 25, February 1, February 8, February 15, February 22, February 29, March 7, and March 14, 2024. Time: 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Holy Trinity Elementary, 235 Division Street, Bellevue, KY. For more information and to register, visit https://covdio.org/new-beginnings-2/.

NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONFERENCE

July 17th-21st, 2024 in Indianapolis. Marian University (located 15 minutes from Lucas Oil Stadium) is hosting high school teens for the Conference and will by house, feed, transport, mentor and accompany youth ministry groups through the Conference. This is an opportunity for youth from the Diocese of Covington, to dive deeper into their faith and journey with Catholic youth from around the country. Preregistration deadline is early January. Inquire ASAP.

KENTUCKY MARCH FOR LIFE

Save the Date – Join other Pro-life Kentuckians on Tuesday, January 23rd for the 2024 Kentucky March for Life and "Love Them Both" Rally. The program will begin with Mass at Good Shepherd Parish in Frankfort, followed by a rally at the State Capitol. The event will end with a procession to the Cemetery of the Innocents in the historic Frankfort Cemetery. The Pro-Life Office will be organizing buses that will leave from Northern Kentucky. If you are interested in traveling with other parishioners from the Diocese, please contact the Pro-Life Office for more information at 859-392-1500.

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER – Looking for the perfect Christmas gift for your spouse? Would you like to resolve to improve your relationship and communication in 2024? Give the gift of yourself, better communication and more romance. A Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience can be that gift and a weekend to be alone with your spouse to energize your relationship and communication in 2024. The next Marriage Encounter Weekend experience is February 16-18, 2024 at Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Center in Cincinnati. Apply today at https://esharing.org/applyWeekend.php. For questions or more details, contact Andy and Melanie Reinersman at 859-653-8464, application@esharing.org or visit esharing.org.





SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST

Feast Day: December 27 Patron Saint of: Turkey

It is God who calls; human beings answer. The vocation of John and his brother James is stated very simply in the Gospels, along with that of Peter and his brother Andrew: Jesus called them; they followed. For the three former fishermen—Peter, James and John—that faith was to be rewarded by a special friendship with Jesus, but John's friendship was even more special. John's own Gospel refers to him as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (see John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2), the one who reclined next to Jesus at the Last Supper, and the one to whom Jesus gave the exquisite honor of caring for his mother, as John stood beneath the cross. "Woman, behold your son.... Behold, your mother" (John 19:26b, 27b).

On the first Easter, Mary Magdalene "ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, 'They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him'" (John 20:2). John recalls, perhaps with a smile, that he and Peter ran side by side, but then "the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first" (John 20:4b). He did not enter, but waited for Peter and let him go in first. "Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed" (John 20:8).

John was with Peter when the first great miracle after the Resurrection took place—the cure of the man crippled from birth—which led to their spending the night in jail together. The mysterious experience of the Resurrection is perhaps best contained in the words of Acts: "Observing the boldness of Peter and John and perceiving them to be uneducated, ordinary men, they [the questioners] were amazed, and they recognized them as the companions of Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

"The way we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 John 3:16).

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