



ST. DONATUS



ST. ALEXIUS



ST. FRANCIS DE SALES



ST. PETER & PAUL



OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS



ST. PAUL'S



## Giselle Jahner leads in her faith Parishioner spends year in California

For the past 9 months, a young Parishes on the Prairie member has been fulfilling her call to service in Southern California as a part of NET Ministries, a Catholic organization designed to spread the faith across the country.

Giselle Jahner, a St. Alexius parishioner and Alexandria native, first learned about NET Ministries through a mentor from Alexandria.

“She kept trying to convince me to fill out an application, and I kept thinking I wasn’t going to do it,” Jahner said. “Then, one day, I was going through my inbox, saw the application pop up, and decided to fill it out.”

She continued the process and went on a discernment weekend as a part of the application, but still did not think she was going to do it.

Then, on Easter morning of 2023, the Lord lit the path that Giselle was meant to follow.

“I was reading the gospel before Mass and a devotion popped up in my email for me to read,” she said. “I said

‘Lord, if this is what you want me to do, I need to be sure,’ and I just felt this immense amount of peace come over me.”

After that moment, Jahner dove headfirst into the process and spent the last part of the summer being trained as a NET missionary.

“We just got completely reformed in our Catholic faith during training and learned how to have a structured prayer life,” she said.

After training, Jahner was assigned a team with seven other missionaries her age, and they were given their placement for the year – JSerra Catholic High School in San Juan Capistrano, California.

From September 2023 to May 2024, Jahner and her team resided in California, living with host families on a 2-week rotation.

While there, Jahner spent the weekdays at the school, helping with campus ministry, leading retreats, and mentoring students on their faith.





### Jahner from page 1

“(The retreats) were so amazing to see because we got to witness someone’s life be completely transformed,” she said. “They would go from not knowing anything about their faith to wanting to start this commitment to Jesus Christ in their life.”

During the weekend, her team would often have a free day and enjoy the surplus of California activities.

As a mentor for the high school students, Jahner was able to give herself to the Lord and help her students be vulnerable for Him.

“I mentored a girl who was still unsure in her faith and convinced her to come on a retreat that my NET team was putting on,” Jahner said. “During adoration, I prayed over her and gave all of my control to the Lord, and I was able to see her life completely transform. It was so beautiful.” Jahner was able to see the experience touch many of the school’s students, but she also felt the Holy Spirit guide her during the year.

“My faith was completely transformed this year, and I’m just so filled with a fire for it,” she said. “I just know I want to be Catholic for the rest of my life.”



Jahner feels very blessed to have had the opportunity and recognizes the impact it has on her prayer life.

Next year, she plans to attend the University of Mary for nursing while running for the Mauraders.

“I think being there will be the closest to what I felt this past year,” she said. “I’ll have the time and space to get involved with daily Mass and the sacraments.”

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# Jesus - our captain

The golden age of piracy was in the 17-18th centuries. Pirates would ransack cargo ships to loot gold and various resources. The best defense against pirates was to travel in a fleet of ships, especially if it was an armada of warships.

Our Area Catholic Community is a small fleet of spiritual ships. The hostile seas of our culture influenced by the lies of an ancient foe make this world a scary place to raise Christian families. So, we put our hope in the Great Captain, Jesus Christ, who said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:16)

What does Jesus mean by the way? He says in Matthew 16:24, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." In other words, the one who calms the seas sets us on a safe course, but that course means we have to change (deny ourselves), make sacrifice (press through the suffering), and go where he leads us (follow Him).

If each of our parishes are like a

ship and we are called to sail in the same direction, what are the treasures we transport, and where are we bringing them? Simply said, you are the greatest treasure being brought to the shores of heaven. That is, the people of God are the precious cargo of the Church.

Did you know the main section of a church, the part in front of the altar all the way to the balcony, is called the "nave"? In a church the nave is where the people sit. A nave of a ship is the place that holds the treasures being transported. It comes from the Latin word for ship, "navis." Random thought: We named the military branch that protects us by sea as the Navy.

The safest way for our parishes to transport souls to heaven is to sail together in the same direction. As we make the changes, press through the sacrifices, and follow the course set out for us, I am confident we will grow closer to God.

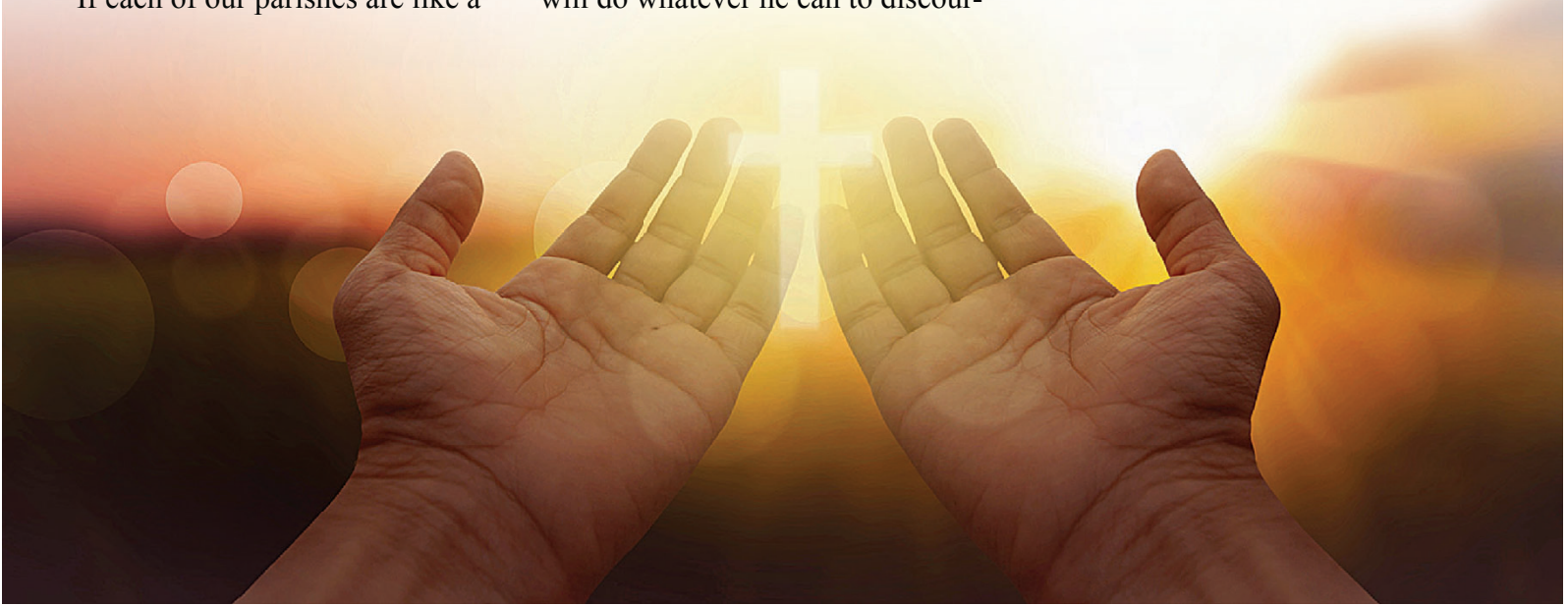
The pirates of our modern world want to loot our faith in Christ. He will do whatever he can to discour-



age and divide us. That is why I am so grateful for all the people of our parishes who are starting to work together. As our sails catch the breeze of the Holy Spirit and we turn our parishes towards common goals, we will become more holy and ready for heaven.

In our Father's hands,  
😊 Fr. Greg

Ps. We are glad to partner up with our local newspaper office, Star Publications. They have agreed to take over the writing, printing, and mailing of our monthly newsletter. They bring a fresh look, in-house writers, and local Catholic insight to our small publication. We thank them for this first newsletter.





# The Grubers' journey as parents and parishioners



Logan, Finn, Lucy, Etta and Jen Gruber are members of Our Lady of the Angels parish and have been married for 10 years.

## The importance of staying active in the church community while leading children to God

When discussing acts of stewardship, the topics of time and talent often come up. These are ways that we, as God's children, are able to give back to the church, and what better way to do that than by staying active in the Faith.

Jen and Logan Gruber know all about keeping an active church life, and while having three young children may make it difficult at times, they understand the importance of keeping a household that is tied to the Lord.

"We pray with our kids, and it's

always a constant discussion," Jen said. "We do daily affirmations in the morning that we have created together, and they seem to really like that."

The Grubers – along with their children Lucy, Finn, and Etta – are members of Our Lady of the Angels parish and have been married for 10 years. Throughout their 6 years as a family in Sauk Centre, they have noticed the importance of having a strong faith community.

"We've put our kids in catholic school and have tried to grow more in the community, and because of that, we've gotten to know so many more people in both the church and the community," Jen said. "We like being involved and we like stuff like that, so it just makes sense to be a part of that as well."

They try to stay active by being involved in both church and community organizations. Jen enjoys going to adoration once a week and being involved in Martha's Meals. The couple also recognizes the importance of bringing their kids to Mass on the weekends.

"We try to sit up front more so that they can see everything going on," Logan said. "We also try to get snack and bathroom breaks done before Mass so they are able to be present."

Jen and Logan also have found their children's behaviors have improved since they no longer bring toys and books to Mass.

"It's just about letting them understand why they're there instead of distracting them so they're quiet," Jen said. "They've learned now that this is what they do on the weekends."

Throughout their lives together as husband and wife, the Grubers have made sure to stay active in the church and while at home with their children.

The Grubers agreed that being a part of Our Lady of the Angels would not be the same without the active community of parishioners who pray beside them.

"We are the church, the people are the church, and we have to actively be a part of it at all times," Jen said. "I can't imagine being in a church and not being active, you just can't separate the two."

Being a part of the Parishes on the Prairie ACC has allowed the Grubers to dive deeper into their faith through active prayer and community involvement. By building their family's foundation in the image and likeness of our Lord, it has been easier to com-



municate with their children about the importance of faith. It has also been easier to praise God's name during Sunday Mass while being surrounded by other active parishioners.

"I wouldn't want to be a part of a parish or ACC that wasn't full of active people," Logan said. "To stay active, you have to be the person that you would want to interact with."





# UPCOMING EVENTS

# Welcome to Mass

## Sts. Peter and Paul ushers talk about their involvement

If the entrance to church is the gate to heaven, then the ushers are the angels welcoming people inside. At the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Elrosa, ushers are there to greet parishioners and visitors, show people to their seats, take up the collection, and assist whoever is in need, wherever they can.

Butch Roelike has been a parishioner at Sts. Peter and Paul for as long as he can remember; his parents, Werner and Bertha Roelike, were also parishioners. His family always went to church, and Roelike became an usher about 10 years ago out of a desire to be involved beyond sitting in the pew.

“We never did the readings or anything like that, and I just thought I could do (ushering),” he said. “I observed what was going on and how others did it and picked it up pretty fast.”

For fellow ushers Roger Lyon and Art Marthaler, their service journey began at St. Anthony’s Church in Padua, now the Our Lady Queen of Peace House of Prayer.

Lyon moved to Padua in 1978, and his involvement started soon after.

“Fr. Vincent Santo asked me after church if I would help usher,” he said.

Marthaler had been an altar server at St. Anthony’s Church from third through 12th grade; the pastor even had him remain a server for about half of a year so he could help with the Feast of Corpus Christi. Marthaler decided to continue his service by becoming an usher, and when St. Anthony’s Church closed, he transferred to Sts. Peter and Paul and continued ushering there.



Roger Lyon (from left), Art Marthaler and Butch Roelike are ushers at Sts. Peter and Paul in Elrosa.

“I was going to volunteer as a Mass server for funerals, but I thought, with my age, maybe I shouldn’t,” Marthaler said.

Lyon also transferred to Elrosa after St. Anthony’s Church closed. John Illies, who was the head of the usher group at the time, approached him about ushering at Sts. Peter and Paul, and Lyon agreed.

Between the three of them, Lyon, Marthaler and Roelike have not seen much change in their ushering duties over their years of service.

“It’s pretty much consistent, year in and year out,” Lyon said. “The only major change was the offertory does not go up until the collection is done now. For quite a few years, the offertory went up right away, and then we took up the collection, but now it all goes up together.”

Of course, the trio do not mind the consistency.

“Your obligation is also to be the greeter in our church,” Roelike said. “I greet them and say good morning, and it’s always nice to see the responses from the people. ... It is rewarding, as far as personal satisfaction.”

For anyone interested in ushering, the Sts. Peter and Paul ushers encourage them to give it a try — or, if someone knows someone else who would make a good usher, they could extend the invitation themselves.

“If people are not invited, sometimes, they might feel left out,” Lyon said. “When you do usher and you’re at the back of the church, welcoming people coming into the church, it’s a good feeling.”





Parish Office: 304 Sinclair Lewis Ave.  
Sauk Centre, MN 56378  
(320) 352-2196  
parishesontheprairie.org

### Weekend Mass Schedules

#### Saturday

- 4:00 pm St. Paul's, Sauk Centre
- 6:00 pm Our Lady of the Angels  
Sauk Centre
- 8:00 pm Sts. Peter & Paul, Elrosa

#### Sunday

- 8:00 am Our Lady of the Angels  
Sauk Centre
- 8:15 am St. Alexius, West Union
- 10:30 am St. Francis de Sales,  
Belgrade
- 10:30 am St. Paul's, Sauk Centre

See our website for a full listing  
of daily mass & confession times.

### Jahner from page 2

Jahner was able to be reformed in her Catholic faith through the experience, and we are grateful the Lord blessed her on her journey in California. Jahner would like to thank the ACC for all of the support and prayers she received while away.

“I learned to fall in love with my authentic self and who I am,” Jahner said. “After the experience, being able to say I have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is just so cool.”

