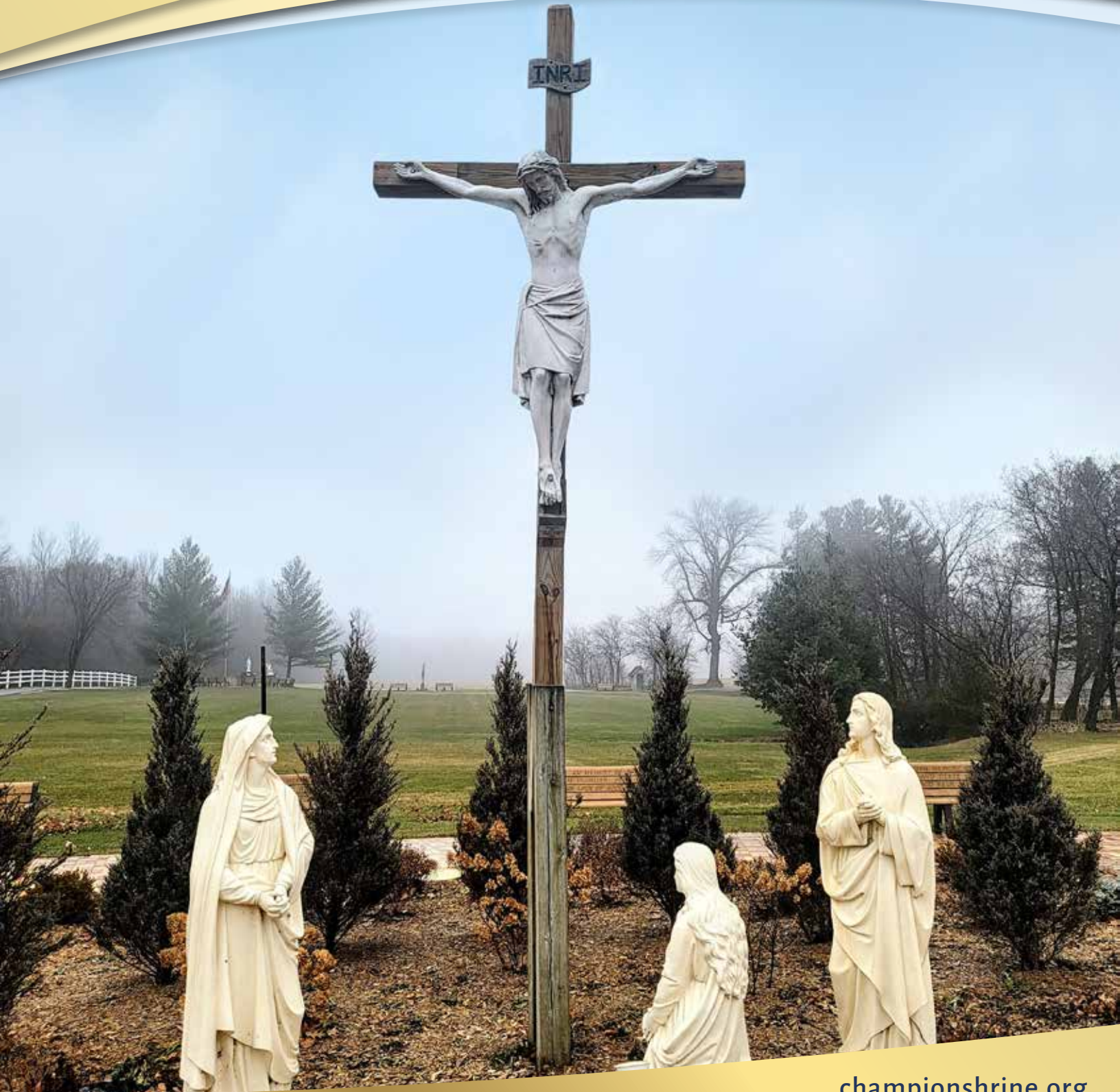


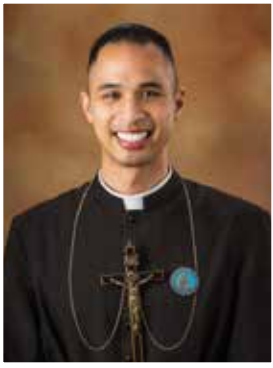


THE GOOD NEWS

News and Events from the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion

Winter 2024 Issue #70





RECTOR'S WINDOW

Fr. Joseph Aytona, C.P.M

A Blessed and Holy New Year to all!

Dear Friends in Christ,

A common Marian theme that we try to emphasize here at the Shrine of Our Lady of Champion is: "True devotion to Mary always leads us to Jesus, especially His Real Presence in the Eucharist." So, as we lead up to the National Eucharistic Congress in July 2024, we will have ample opportunities here at the Shrine to increase our devotion to the Most Blessed Sacrament. On the week of March 10, we will display Blessed Carlo Acutis' "Eucharistic Miracles," and I will also be preaching a Lenten Mission on the Eucharist entitled: "Heaven on Earth: Divine Intimacy in the Eucharist." *See Sidebar

On June 16, the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage will make a stop at Champion Shrine to celebrate Mass and a Eucharistic Procession. The same Blessed Sacrament that is processed on the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage will eventually be brought to Indianapolis for the National Eucharistic Congress starting July 17..

Lastly, we will continue to have Eucharistic Adoration daily, hoping more faithful will sign up for a weekly holy hour at the Shrine. Please check our website or social media pages for the exact times of these events.

In the meantime, please be assured of our prayers as we continue this grace-filled year!

Sincerely in Jesus through Mary,

Fr. Joseph Aytona, CPM

Fr. Joseph Aytona, CPM
Rector of the National Shrine
of Our Lady of Champion

Eucharistic Mission Talk Titles:

- Talk 1: *The Holy Eucharist: Source of Miracles*
- Talk 2: *Being a Living Tabernacle (through Holy Communion)*
- Talk 3: *Eucharistic Adoration: Conversion and Transformation*
- Talk 4: *Mary, Mother of the Most Blessed Sacrament*



SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and the Brown Scapular

By Fr. Joseph Aytona, C.P.M

The Church, in her wisdom, approves certain sacramentals to aid us in our relationship with God. From St. Benedict's medal to the Chastity Cord of St. Thomas Aquinas, there are many sacramentals we can choose from. But when we think about one that is attached to the devotion of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I am reminded of the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. At times, Catholics are enrolled in the Brown Scapular during their first communion but completely forget about our Lady's maternal care. Yet, ever since the founding of the Carmelite Order, the Brown Scapular has been an external sign of the Blessed Virgin Mary's protection for her children.



Pietro Novelli - Our Lady of Carmel and Saints

With the many attacks on the Church today (especially toward the family and priests), it is necessary to enliven our devotion to the Mother of God by honoring her in wearing her Scapular. St. Therese of Lisieux said this about the Brown Scapular: "I am so happy you are wearing the holy Scapular! It is a sure sign of predestination, and over and above that, it unites you more intimately with your Sisters in Carmel." Also, St. John Paul II mentioned this about the sacramental: "I too have worn the Scapular of Carmel over my heart for a long time! ...The most genuine form of devotion to the Blessed Virgin, expressed by the humble sign of the Scapular, is consecration to her Immaculate Heart."

I would like to recommend not only enrolling in and wearing the Brown Scapular, but to kiss it (often) as a sign of devotion. In addition, honor Our Lady by praying the Rosary often. Personally, when I wake up and pray my Morning Offering, when the name of Mary is mentioned, I kiss my Brown Scapular, to show affection and love toward our Mother. Knowing that I offer everything to Jesus through her, a certain peace is present throughout the day.

As we continue to pray for families and the Church, especially her priests and bishops, may the maternal care of Mary be manifested more and more in the world, especially through her sacramentals, such as the Brown Scapular!



MAY 17-18, 2024

MARY,
VIRGIN MOST POWERFUL

Join hundreds of pilgrims around the country for The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion's third-annual Marian Conference. Focused on Mary as Virgin Most Powerful, attendees will be able to develop a deeper understanding of spiritual warfare through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother.

SPEAKERS



Fr. Bill Casey,
CPM



Fr. Don Calloway,
MIC

...AND MORE!

REGISTER TODAY!

[ChampionShrine.org/
Marian-Conference](http://ChampionShrine.org/Marian-Conference)



COMMUNICATIONS CORNER

By Chelsey Hare, Director of Communications

This past January, I was honored to represent the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion at SEEK24. Hosted by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS), SEEK is an annual Catholic conference for young people - and the young at heart - to gather and encounter Jesus through prayer, talks, and friendship.

This year, over 20,000 people gathered in St. Louis for the four-day conference, including many Catholic orders and apostolates from around the country. These organizations had the opportunity to sponsor the conference and share their mission with attendees. The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion was one of them!

We talked to hundreds of people individually to share the story of Our Lady and her apparition in Champion, Wisconsin. We saw an incredible response. Here are seven sweet stories that came from our SEEK24 booth.

1. The Shrine set up a life-size cut out of Our Lady of Champion and encouraged those passing to take a picture with Mary. We placed signs next to Our Lady so people could use them in their pictures. Throughout the conference, people stopped to take a picture with her, holding up signs such as, “I <3 our Lady,” “Mamma’s Boy,” and “Go & Fear

Nothing, I Will Help You.” My favorite was seeing little children come up to the cut-out of Mary, touch it, and exclaim, “Mamma!”

2. Many students we talked to were familiar with Our Lady of Champion and said how the Shrine was on their travel bucket list, or that they share it all the time with people on their college campus. Often we would hear, **“Oh, that’s where Mary appeared in Wisconsin, right? I want to go there so badly!”**

3. We had a man come up to the table and share the story of how he proposed to his now-wife at Champion Shrine. He said he couldn’t think of a better place to ask the question.

4. One young person walked over to our booth to tell us that he is in the RCIA program and attributes his faith conversion to a stop at the Shrine while on a work trip in Wisconsin. **“I just feel like she spoke to me there,”** he said.

5. On one of the last days, a woman stopped by our booth, pulled out her necklace, and showed us her medal of Our Lady of Champion. **“The Shrine is so close to my heart,”** she said. She continued to tell us a touching story of how the Champion medal was with her when her sister passed away from Cancer. **“I have no idea how, but the medal of Our Lady dropped from my necklace to the ground. As I picked it up, my sister passed away. And I just knew Our Lady was with her in those final moments.”**

6. I spoke with a couple from Colorado and mentioned that the Shrine was recently in Denver for a Marian Conference, enrolling the attendees in the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary. I shared that the Shrine’s Rector, Fr. Joseph Aytona, blessed roses upon the enrollment for all those who joined that day and that there is a tradition for the petals to be handed out to those who need extra graces. The woman I was speaking to instantly perked up and said, **“I have goosebumps right now - Around that same time, I was given a rose petal from a person at my local church after we prayed the rosary together. They mentioned they got it at a nearby conference and that it was blessed. I never knew where it came from or why I got it... now I do!”**

7. While a lot of people recognized Our Lady of Champion, we encountered many who were unfamiliar and felt drawn to visit our booth to learn more. It was wonderful to see how each person’s eyes would light up with wonder upon hearing that Our Blessed Mother visited a little town in Wisconsin. Each time it would be met with responses like, **“Wow, I never knew,”** or **“That’s incredible,”** or even, **“No way! I need to share this with my friends.”** When people hear about Our Lady of Champion, they will never forget it.

Overall, it was such a joy to be present at SEEK24 and share the gift of Our Lady of Champion with our young people. Our Church is truly alive in their hearts.

As the Shrine continues to be at these conferences, please hold us in prayer! If you’d like to learn how you can support the communications efforts of the Shrine at conferences such as SEEK, please email media@championshrine.org or call 920-866-2571 ext. 111.



PILGRIMAGE CORNER

Planning a Pilgrimage is as Easy as 1, 2, 3!

by Kathy Ciha, Pilgrimage Coordinator

In an abundance of blessings from Our Lord, The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion welcomed 230 groups representing 20 different states in 2023. Praise God!

We are preparing for a record number of pilgrim groups in 2024. Now is the time to start planning for a group from your church, school, or private group to visit Champion Shrine.

From prayerful individual visits with your family to special group pilgrimages with a parish or organization – our pilgrimage coordinators can help you arrange your day. A few key steps go a long way in pilgrimage planning.



To schedule a pilgrimage, please visit championshrine.org/visit

Or contact us at kciha@championshrine.org
920-866-2571 ext 113.

Step 1: Arrange Date and Travel

The first step is contacting one of the shrine pilgrimage coordinators to explore possible dates for a visit. Depending on your preference, you can arrange to come during a large Shrine event or around one of the Shrine's quieter days. The next step is to find a way for transportation – whether it is by coach bus, school bus, or a group of cars. If a hotel is needed, we can help suggest local areas that have lodging.

Step 2: Build an Itinerary for the Pilgrimage

Our pilgrimage coordinators can help you plan your day at the Shrine to include Mass, Confessions, Rosary, lunch (if needed), and just some peaceful, quiet time to pray and reflect. Don't be afraid to ask any question you may have about the day or what you are looking to do!

Step 3: Build Awareness

Especially if organizing a group pilgrimage, the Shrine can help provide promotional materials to help build awareness and foster enthusiasm. This helps spread the news to your parish, friends, and family members potentially interested in joining for a pilgrimage to Champion. Don't forget to ask your priest or deacon to join you! They can concelebrate at the 11:00 daily Mass at the Shrine, or we can work with you to have your own Mass scheduled around the Shrine activities.



SEE OUR UPCOMING EVENTS PAGE IN THIS NEWSLETTER TO PLAN YOUR PILGRIMAGE AROUND CHAMPION SHRINE'S FEATURED 2024 EXPERIENCES!

Looking Back

December 9, 2023 | Rorate Caeli Mass Advent Candlelit Mass and Breakfast

Champion Shrine was happy to host its second-annual Rorate Caeli Candlelit Mass & Breakfast this past December. Over 200 people were able to join for a beautiful morning Mass and hot breakfast. While some attended as individuals, there were many who hosted a table for 10 of their friends. They decorated their table with a theme and began a new Advent tradition for their loved ones. Save the date for this year's Rorate Caeli on December 14, 2024!



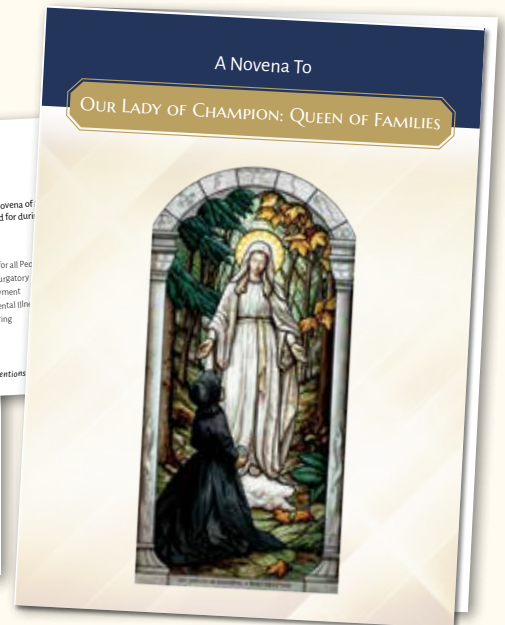
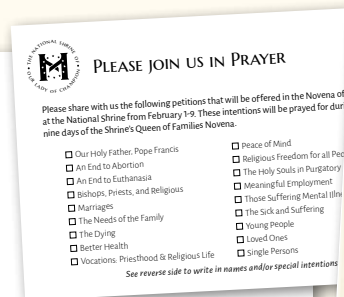
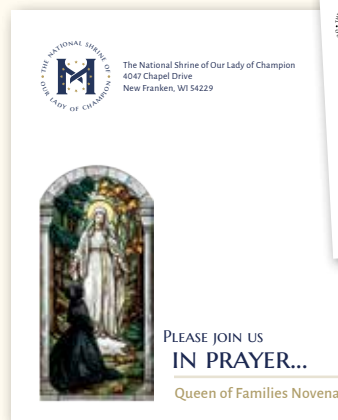
January 2-5, 2024 | SEEK 2024

This year, Champion Shrine was thrilled to return to St. Louis, Missouri, to be a sponsor for SEEK24. Over 20,000 young adult Catholics were in attendance. The Shrine was able to talk to hundreds of individuals about Mary's Apparition in Champion and the Shrine's mission. All Glory to God!

February 1-9, 2024 | Our Lady of Champion: Queen of Families Novena

Thank you to all who participated in our February novena to Our Lady of Champion: Queen of Families! **Our next novena will be the Annunciation of Our Lord Novena, starting on March 31, 2024.**

Visit championshrine.org/novenas to sign up for daily reminders with the prayers!



UPCOMING EVENTS

March 9-17, 2024

Eucharistic Miracles Exhibit

Experience the True Presence of Christ this Lent! The National Shrine will display the Eucharistic Miracles of the World for pilgrims and parish groups to draw into a deeper encounter with Christ in the Eucharist. The exhibit includes 160 panels that present photographs and historical descriptions of the Eucharistic Miracles that took place throughout the ages. The exhibit will be available from 8 am - 6 pm in Mother of Mercy Hall.



March 10-13, 2024

Shrine Lenten Mission: Heaven on Earth: Divine intimacy in the Eucharist

In addition to the Eucharistic Miracles Exhibit being displayed, Champion Shrine's Rector, Fr. Joseph Aytona, CPM, will give a series of evening talks from Sunday to Wednesday on the Eucharist. In the four evenings, Fr. Joseph will dive into the theology of the Eucharist and our participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It's a perfect way for parishes to engage in the Eucharistic Revival taking place across the United States! Each evening talk will begin at 6:30 pm.

Now through April

Eucharistic Family Holy Hour with Guided Lectio

To emphasize the Catholic Church's call for Eucharistic Revival, the National Shrine scheduled a Eucharistic Family Holy Hour with Guided Lectio from the Fathers of Mercy. The holy hour will occur after 11 am Mass every Sunday from November through April. This will take the place of the Shrine's outdoor Eucharistic Rosary Procession during the winter.



May 4, 2024

Walk To Mary

The Walk to Mary is a pilgrimage like no other in the world. Beginning at The National Shrine of St. Joseph and ending at The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion this 21-mile pilgrimage has spiritually impacted lives and brought them closer to the Holy Family. Those unable to participate in the full journey can join at other points with shorter distances. Over 5,500 people joined in the walk last year! We hope to see you there! Registration is now open at walktomary.com.

May 17-18, 2024

Champion Shrine Marian Conference Mary, Virgin Most Powerful

Join hundreds of pilgrims from around the country in Champion Shrine's third-annual Marian Conference. Focused on Mary as the Virgin Most Powerful, attendees will be able to develop a deeper understanding of spiritual warfare through the intercession of our Blessed Mother. Speakers include Fr. Donald Calloway



Before making any plans to visit, please check the "Latest News" Section of our website at www.championshrine.org for the most up-to-date schedule and current guidelines.

- MIC, Fr. Bill Casey - CPM, and more!
For more information on the weekend conference, visit championshrine.org/marian-conference.

June 16, 2024

National Eucharistic Pilgrimage Stop at Champion Shrine

Champion Shrine is honored to be a featured stop along the Northern Marian Route of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage taking place in the month leading up to the summer's National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. Mass will be celebrated at 2:00 pm for the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, with a large Eucharistic procession around the Shrine's grounds following. It will be a chance to participate in a moment of history for the US Catholic Church, especially in its season of Eucharistic revival! For more information on the pilgrimage, please visit eucharisticpilgrimage.org.

GIFT SHOP AND CAFÉ

The Importance of Sacramentals in Our Lives

By Andy Herson, Gift Shop and Operations Manager

Sacramentals can be images and items that are physical signs of God's grace in our daily lives. They are something to hold onto, something to touch, or something to look at that reminds us of our faith. Sacramentals can be as simple as holy water, blessed oil, or blessed salt. They can also be as elaborate as relics of saints.

Some of the most recognizable Sacramentals include rosaries and miraculous medals, as signs of our devotion to the Blessed Mother, and St. Benedict medals, worn as a sign of God's protection. Many Catholics hang crosses or icons in their homes to remind them of God's salvific work and the Saints who lived His will on earth.

When used properly, Sacramentals can bring us closer to God and remind us of the love, protection, and mercy God promises us. If you do not have sacramentals currently, consider adding them into your prayer life. As you visit the Shrine, be sure to ask the staff at the gift shop to show you the sacramentals available.

✠ SACRAMENTALS ✠ AVAILABLE AT THE SHRINE

Blessed Holy Water

Blessed Candles

Exorcised Salt

Blessed Oil

Rosaries

Miraculous Medals

St. Benedict Medals

Crucifixes

Saint Icons

Prayer Cards

Statues

Scapulars



THE GIFT SHOP AND CAFÉ HOURS

Monday - Saturday
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sundays
12:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Our Volunteers' Devotion to Saints

By Debbie Mercier, Pilgrimage/Volunteer Coordinator

As we look forward to a new year, let us take time to increase and share our faith. Let this be a year to grow closer to our Blessed Mother and her Son. Let this be a year of peace and prayer as we keep in mind that God calls on us all to be saints.

Saints are persons in heaven who lived a courageous and virtuous life and set examples for us all. In this upcoming year, we can reflect on the lives of St Elizabeth of Hungary and St Vincent de Paul - known as patron saints of volunteers.

St Elizabeth of Hungary lived a life full of prayer and service to those in need. Although she had a royal position, she lived a simple life and devoted her time to works of charity.



St Vincent de Paul established the Confraternities of Charity and was well known for his charity and compassion for the poor.

Here at the Shrine, we have many volunteers who routinely offer their time, talent, and devotion to the Blessed Mother and her Son by generously serving others. They appreciate the importance of lending a hand and understand that by serving others as many saints have done, they are putting the teachings of Jesus into action!

When asked if they have a favorite saint or a special devotion to a particular saint? Our volunteers responded:

The Saint I pray to most often, has to be St. Anthony. I can't tell you how many times I have prayed to him, and I found what I had lost. The most recent was when I dropped my cell phone out of my pocket, unknowingly... I went back about 2 hours later, and sure enough, it was hidden under lots of leaves, and I thought that was a miracle. - Diane

It's hard to pick just one saint. I like them all! St. Therese of the Child Jesus is so simple, and humble in her life and prayers as she lived for Jesus! Her book "A Story of a Soul" is a must-read! You will fall in love with Jesus just like she did! - Anne

My favorite devotion is to Our Lady of Sorrows and praying the office of Compline. - Scott

While he has not yet been canonized, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati is known as the "Man of the Beatitudes." He came from a wealthy and politically active family. He was very athletic, often climbing mountains as his favorite sport. He had a strong faith and was charitable, giving of his wealth and time to the poor. - Sandra

My favorite saint is St. Michael the Archangel. My late husband, Julian, and I were married on September 29, 1962, on the feast of St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Rafael. We also named our youngest son, Michael. - Carol

I have so many favorite saints, but, next to the Blessed Mother, Saint Joseph is my favorite saint. He had interceded and helped me in so many things. In my house, you will find many statues of the Holy Family because all the "big three" are there - Jesus, the Blessed Mother, and St. Joseph! - Violeta



Learn how you can support the Shrine and its mission through volunteering at championshrine.org/volunteer

Or contact our Volunteer Coordinator at 920-866-2571x123 or by email at volunteer@championshrine.org

As we begin the new year, we ask you to consider forming a devotion to a saint. Consider sharing your faith and the opportunity to grow closer to our Blessed Mother and her Son. Make this the year to answer the call to serve!

FUND DEVELOPMENT

The Power of a Giving Heart; Understanding Why We Give Donations with Novena Prayer Intentions

By: Kelsey Dorner, Development Director

As we prepare for Champion Shrine's Annunciation Novena, you may have noticed on the prayer intention card the following message: *"Please accept my free-will offering to support the message and mission of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion."* In the spirit of faith and charity, Catholics around the world engage in the beautiful tradition of giving donations alongside their novena prayer intentions. This practice is deeply rooted in the core values of our faith and reflects the understanding that our material blessings can be used to make a positive impact on the lives of others.


During these nine days of prayer, we bring

our intentions to Our Blessed Mother and seek the guidance, healing, and blessings her loving intercession may provide us. By making a humble act of charity, we give of ourselves, show appreciation for her intercession, and acknowledge the blessings we may receive. At the same time, we actively participate in the mission of the Shrine. Donations collected through each novena help fund the printing and mailing cost for the six novenas the Shrine mails out each year.

The combination of prayer and donations during novenas stands as a testament to the profound connection between our faith and charity. It is a practice that not

only enriches the spiritual journey of those praying the novenas but also provides vital support to the Shrine to ensure we can meet the needs of the pilgrims who travel here from all over the world to seek Our Blessed Mother's assistance. Thank you to all who donate during our novenas throughout the year; your support touches the lives of so many.

As we approach Champion Shrine's Annunciation Novena, let us be reminded of the words of St. Paul: "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).



*May our prayers
and contributions
continue to be
a source of hope,
healing, and love
for all.*



Adele's Wish List

Adele Brise was a visionary who had an unwavering faith in Jesus to help her carry out the mission entrusted to her by the Queen of Heaven here at Champion.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the countless stories of miraculous last-minute wishes for help and assistance granted to Adele. Be it food for the orphaned children, money to keep the school open for classes or to ensure the Chapel could be kept open and running, Adele would express her wish in the form of a prayer and put her faith in Jesus and His Mother to enlist foot soldiers in faith here on earth to provide.

In the spirit of that faith and trust, we humbly put forward "Adele's Wish List" for those items most needed by the Shrine at this time. To sponsor an item through a donation, simply send your check to our mailing address or go to our website and click "Make a Gift". If you would like to donate anonymously, please call (920) 866-2571 ext. 125.

Thank you and may God bless you!

Items Needed

- Sacred Heart Image for Confessionals (\$40)
- Immaculate Heart Image for Confessionals (\$40)
- Liturgical Items for Mass (\$100)
- Chasuble with Inner Stole (\$160)
- Salt for Walkways and Parking Lot (\$500)
- Art Partnership with National Eucharistic Congress (\$8,500)
- Chapel and Schoolhouse Brick Restoration (\$16,640)
- Emergency Generators for the Shrine Grounds (\$100,000)

All donations made to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion are tax deductible, as permitted by law. Donations will be used, at the discretion of the organization, to further the purpose indicated by the donor.



DONATION FORM

Please fill out the following form and mail along with your check to:

The Shrine of Our Lady of Champion
4047 Chapel Drive
New Franken, WI 54229

Name

Street Address

City

State

Zip

Phone Number

Email

Donation Amount \$ _____

General Donation

Adele's Wish List

Please contact me about including
The Shrine in my will or estate plan,
listing the Shrine as a life insurance
beneficiary or the sale of stock

How do you want to be acknowledged?

The Shrine of Our Lady of Champion, Inc.
4047 Chapel Drive, New Franken, WI 54229

This newsletter is published by the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion to provide updates and news on the Shrine, continue the mission given to Adele by Our Lady, and share the Catholic faith!

HOURS FOR SHRINE SPIRITUAL LIFE, GIFT SHOP, CAFE AND GROUNDS

920-866-2571
www.championshrine.org

Apparition Chapel, Apparition Oratory, and the Shrine Grounds

Daily 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Mass

Daily & Sunday 11:00 a.m.

Tuesday & Saturday 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday 5:45 p.m.

Sunday (May-Oct) 8:30 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Daily 10:00 a.m., 12:00 and 2:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:15 a.m.

Devotional Prayer

Rosary Daily 10:30 a.m.

Chaplet of Divine Mercy Daily 3:00 p.m.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Daily Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Fatima Devotions First Saturday after 8:30 a.m. Mass

Healing Service with Anointing of the Sick Last Saturday after 11:00 a.m. Mass

Outdoor Rosary Procession Sundays (May-Oct.) 12:00 p.m.

Family Holy Hour with Guided Lectio Divina .. Sundays (Nov.-Apr.) 12:00 p.m.

Adele Brise Day - Ninth of Each Month

Anointing of the Sick Immediately after 11:00 a.m. Mass

Gift Shop and Schoolhouse Café

Phone: 920-866-2571 ext 101

Monday – Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sunday 12:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Welcome Center

May – October 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

November – April 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.