

Q3

JUL-SEP 2026

THE VILLAGE DRUM

SUMMER 2026



Office of Black Catholic Ministries
Sr. Jane Nesmith, Director



Catholic Diocese
of Cleveland



@BlkCatholicsCLE

Joshua Live on Stage

Travel to Lancaster, PA with Holy Spirit and St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima!

Wednesday - Thursday, October 7-8, 2026

Overnight stay at Courtyard by Marriott Lancaster

- \$299 pp (double occupancy)
- \$384 pp (single occupancy)
- \$274 pp (triple occupancy)

To register contact Ashley Horak at 216-581-0981, ext 1 or office@holyspiritcleveland.org



EVANGELIZING SISTERS OF MARY CELEBRATE JUBILEE

BY SR. JANE NESMITH, SBS

What a blessing it was to have celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the Missionary Congregation of the Evangelizing Sisters of Mary at Our Lady of Peace Church on Sunday, June 14. The 4pm Vespers Service, officiated by Bishop Michael Woost and Fr. Gary Chmura, included Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, scripture, hymns, prayers, petitions, an inspiring homily, and the Magnificat, sung in Swahili by the Sisters.

The Knights and the Ladies Auxiliary of Peter Claver turned out in full regalia, as did many people from the various churches and communities in which they serve throughout the Diocese.

Bishop Woost gave a heartfelt homily expressing gratitude. "Sisters, you are one of the great works of the Lord. Each of you individually and all of you as a missionary congregation are one of God's greatest works...We must give praise and thanks to God for you...By witness of their lives and the work of their hands, the Sisters uphold the human dignity of each person whom they meet and to whom they minister. For 50 years, the Sisters have fulfilled their mission faithfully, joyfully and lovingly...Sisters, with all our hearts, we thank God...for your holy mission, your selfless ministry, your faithful witness, and your joyful presence among us."

Following the Vespers service, the Sisters greeted the people in the densely populated parish hall for a delicious dinner reception where, they presented a special song of gratitude and special gifts to Bishop Woost and Fr. Gary.

It was indeed a joyful occasion filled with much praise, many songs, and contagious laughter about the wonders of our God through the works of their hands! Sisters, may you continue to celebrate with joy! We love you!



GAVIN SMEDLEY, ON THE MOVE!

BY SR. JANE NESMITH, SBS

The Diocesan Offices of Black Catholic Ministries and Youth Ministry welcome Gavin Smedley to advisory committee membership!!

Gavin is an actively engaged member of the faith community of St. Agnes+ Our Lady of Fatima Church, under the pastoral leadership of Fr. Paul Dressler, OFM, Cap. Besides serving as an altar server, usher and lector, Gavin participates in the parish Youth Group and assists with the Men's Group. He is currently a sophomore at St. Edward High School, where he initiated a chess group of his peers. He is also involved in athletics as a member of both the basketball and volleyball teams. Because he is fully engaged and passionate about equity and inclusion, Gavin is an active member of the school's Multi-Cultural Group.

Thank you for your service, Mr. Smedley, and continue to let your light shine. You have been blessed by The Best! Thank you for sharing it with the rest!

JULY

July 13, 7-8:30pm

Theology of the Rocks
West - Angels in the Bible
Westside Irish American
Club, Olmsted Twp
For adults over 40

July 17-18, 2026

Lay Ecclesial Ministry
Retreat: Walking with God in
the Steps of the Saints
Center for Pastoral
Leadership, Wickliffe



JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

BY LORNA ASKEW

More than 500 parishioners, families, and community members gathered for the 2026 Juneteenth Celebration on June 19th, hosted by St. Dominic Church to commemorate freedom, faith, and unity.

The event began with a warm welcome from Reverend Thomas Fanta, followed by an inspiring homily from Reverend Sydney Speaks of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, who encouraged hope, reconciliation, and justice. The spirit-filled liturgy was beautifully enriched by the Diocesan Gospel Choir and a sacred dance reflection from the Diocesan Youth Praise Dancers.

Following Mass, attendees enjoyed a picnic meal, music from a local DJ, dancing, and activities for all ages. Highlights included a Freedom March, freedom songs, sign-making, Juneteenth documentaries, bingo, a game truck, and presentations by an African American storyteller and quilt maker. Eight community organizations also shared vital resources with families.

The celebration was a joyful expression of heritage and community. Deep gratitude goes out to everyone who volunteered and attended to make this meaningful event a tremendous success.

OPERATION GOOD NEWS SPONSORS WEEKEND RETREAT

BY SHAWN KENNEDY



Operation Good News (OGN) welcomed 25 attendees, including 11 first-time participants, to its Spring 2026 retreat beginning May 29. Centered on the theme **Navigating Life With God's Perfect Vision**, the three-day gathering offered prayer, reflection, fellowship, and renewal for all who attended.

The retreat began Friday evening with a focus on spiritual peace and community. Participants were invited to write their burdens on dissolvable paper and place them in water, watching them disappear as a meaningful reminder of releasing worries to God. Creative activities and conversation helped everyone connect and set a welcoming tone for the weekend.

Saturday's sessions invited participants to reflect on renewal, scripture, spirituality, mercy, and healing. Witness talks shared powerful stories of God's presence in times of uncertainty, reminding attendees that God continues to guide, strengthen, and renew His people.

A morning activity inspired by **The God Who Sees** highlighted how God heard the cries of Hagar, Ruth, David and all of us. Later, through Ignatian contemplation on the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) participants prayerfully imagined walking with Christ and recognizing His presence along the way. The day concluded with penance services, reflection on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and a prayer and healing service.

Sunday focused on God's unending love and the call to go forth as disciples. Witnesses reflected on Our Father's Loving Care as small "love notes" that become part of a larger letter of faith, and on how personal gifts can prepare each person to share the Good News in everyday life.

Following Mass, first-time participants received a Blessed Cross and a Holy Spirit pin. Attendees departed renewed in faith, strengthened by fellowship and encouraged to continue navigating life with God's perfect vision.

AUGUST

August 2-7, 2026

Damascus Summer Camp,
Columbus, OH

August 15, 12pm-10pm

The Fest 2026
Forefront Field, Avon

August 22, 10am-12:30pm

Extraordinary Ministers of
Holy Communion
Formation Session
Cathedral of St. John the
Evangelist, Cleveland
*Please contact your parish
pastor if you are
interested.*

August 27, 3:30-6pm

Extraordinary Ministers of
Holy Communion
Formation Session for
High School Students
St. Ignatius High School,
Cleveland
*Please contact your parish
pastor if you are
interested.*

August 30, 11am

Alumni Mass & Gathering
St. Adalbert / OLBS,
Cleveland
Reception to Follow

Visit our website to learn
more about these events:

dioceseofcleveland.org/events



ST. ALOYSIUS 125TH ANNIVERSARY

BY WALTER MORRIS, III ST. ALOYSIUS / ST. AGATHA PARISH



On Sunday, June 21, the St. Aloysius Parish family gathered for a joyful and grace-filled moment: the closing Mass of our 125th Anniversary year. We were honored to welcome Bishop Edward Malesic and Deacon Mike Puhalla of Holy Trinity Parish, whose presence reminded us that our story is woven into the larger life of the Diocese of Cleveland. Fr. Dan Schlegel, Presbyteral Moderator, of St. Aloysius, served as concelebrant. Their prayerful leadership helped us bring this milestone year to a fitting and hope-filled close.

The vast culture of St. Aloysius was on full display throughout the Mass. The Mass opened with a liturgical dance ensemble who embodied the spirit, beauty and grace of Black Catholic tradition. As the liturgy concluded, parishioners were reminded to pray with and reflect on Bishop Malesic's pastoral letter, "**A Flourishing Apostolic Church**," which encourages us to be a people who pray daily, commit to the sacraments, encounter God in communion with one another, and reflect on and share our personal story of faith. As the Mass ended, the church was filled with the resonant sound of bagpipers leading the procession connecting the parish's Irish roots.

The history of St. Aloysius is like a quilt, lovingly pieced together over 125 years. Each patch represents the people who built, sustained, and renewed this parish: the early Irish immigrants who laid its foundation; the Black Catholic families whose faith, leadership, and stewardship carried it forward; and the countless parishioners, clergy, religious, teachers and neighbors who added their own colors and textures to its fabric. Though each piece is distinct, all share the same purpose: to offer warmth, welcome, and belonging to anyone who draws it around their shoulders. Like our Catholic faith itself, this quilt bears no sign restricting its use. It simply waits for those willing to take the first step, open the closet door, and allow themselves to be wrapped in its care.

LEARN MORE AT [DIOCESEOFCLEVELAND.ORG/BLKCATHOLICSCLE](https://dioceseofcleveland.org/blkCatholicSCLE)

SEPTEMBER

September 6, 10:30am
St. Peter Claver Day
St. Agnes/Our Lady of
Fatima, Cleveland

September 12, 9-11am
Cycle Prep Workshop
St. Mary of the
Immaculate Conception
Parish, Avon
For girls ages 9-13 and a
parent/guardian
Cost: \$35 per family

September 26, 8am-4pm
Marriage Enrichment
Seminar
St. Agnes/Our Lady of
Fatima, Cleveland
Guest Speakers: Andrew
& Terri Lyke, Archdiocese
of Chicago

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