THE MAGAZINE OF THE DIOCESE OF PHOENIX
CATHOLICSUN.ORG
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2026

The Catholic Sun

Page 6
PARENTING SMARTS
Everyday mercy

Page 8
ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE
The Good News with Father John

Page 14
FEATURE STORY
Feeding our neighbors together: Parishes partner with St. Vincent de Paul to help those in need



Sacred stories

Eucharistic devotion guides spiritual director's ministry

INSIDE
October/November

4 From Bishop Dolan
Extravagant love

5 Together in Mission
Come as you are

6 Parenting Smarts
Everyday mercy

8 Encountering Scripture
The Good News with Father John: Reflecting weekly on the ups and downs of life through Scripture, discovering how Jesus meets us right where we are

14 Feature Story
Feeding our neighbors together: Parishes partner with St. Vincent de Paul to help those in need

20 Cover Story
Sacred stories:
Eucharistic devotion guides spiritual director's ministry

24 Local News

26 TILMA
Bishop Dolan's historic, seven-year pastoral plan on evangelization

27 Things to Do

EN ESPAÑOL

S2 De Parte Del Obispo Dolan
Un amor desbordante

S3 Juntos En La Misión
Ven tal y como eres

S4 Parenting Smarts
Misericordia en lo cotidiano

S6 Artículo Destacado
Alimentando a nuestros vecinos juntos: Comunidades parroquiales se unen a San Vicente de Paúl para ayudar a los más necesitados

S10 Artículo de Portada
Historias sagradas; La devoción eucarística guía el ministerio de dirección espiritual

The Catholic Sun

THE MAGAZINE OF THE DIOCESE OF PHOENIX

COPYRIGHT 2026

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2026
VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1

PUBLISHER
Most Rev. John P. Dolan
Bishop of Phoenix

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
Brett Meister

CONTENT AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER
Jennifer Ellis

OFFICE OF MISSION ADVANCEMENT
Debbie DiCarlo, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Martha Gamez, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF ENGAGEMENT AND LEGACY GIVING
Sara Mitchell, SENIOR MANAGER DIOCESAN APPEALS

CONTRIBUTORS
Dulce Aguirre
Joyce Coronel
Cassidy Durland
Jonathan Fuentes
Julian Garoz
Jeff Grant
MaryRuth Hackett, PhD
Niko Hafley
Father John Muir
Catherine Mulhern
Gabe Salcido

PHOTOGRAPHY
Alyssa Greif
Brett Meister

CONTACT US: catholicsun.org
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, X, YOUTUBE AND LINKEDIN: @phoenixdiocese

faith CATHOLIC 25 YEARS **FaithCatholic.com**

ART DIRECTOR/GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Rachel Squibbs

The Catholic Sun is distributed six times per year to those who have engaged in the mission of the Diocese of Phoenix. The magazine is sent to the homes of those who have participated in discipleship and evangelization efforts at the diocesan level, including the Together Let Us Go Forth ~ Juntos Sigamos Adelante campaign, the Charity & Development Appeal, the TV Mass, Catholic School Support 365, and through supporting our seminarians and Nazareth Seminary. If you would like to receive the magazine at your home, we invite you to support the mission by participating in one of these efforts: dphx.org/donate. You may also call our donor services team at 602.354.2235 to receive future issues or provide one of our team members with an updated address.

The Catholic Sun (USPS 25675) is published bimonthly (October/November, December/January, February/March, April/May, June/July, August/September) by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix, 400 E. Monroe St., Phoenix, AZ 85004. Periodicals postage paid at Phoenix, AZ and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Catholic Sun*, 400 E. Monroe St., Phoenix, AZ 85004

Join Leaders like GCU that Redirect their AZ Corporate Tax Liability to Educate Underserved, Disabled, and Foster Students!

Nancy Padberg, MBA,
President and CEO, Catholic Education Arizona

Greg Harman, VP,
Grand Canyon Education



- **99%** Graduation Rate
- **96%** Matriculate to Higher Education, Trade School, or Military Service
- **1000s** of Service Hours Provided to the Community

Three Ways You Can Change a Life

Through Arizona Tax Credits and traditional donations, underserved families can access quality education that best meets the unique needs of their children.

1. AZ Individual Tax Credits

Redirect your AZ tax liability to CEA and receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit! Tax Credit contributions are used exclusively for tuition scholarships at K-12 Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Schools.

Contribute any amount up to:	
Single Filer for 2026	$1,571
Joint Filer for 2026	$3,131
Contribute By	4/15/2027

2. AZ Corporate Tax Credits

Arizona S & C Corporations, and Insurance Companies that pay Arizona premium tax may direct 100% of their Arizona liability through the Low Income and Disabled/Displaced dollar-for-dollar tax credits! Join hundreds of corporate contributors investing in future leaders!

3. Changing Lives With Legacy Traditional Donations

We accept cash donations, gifts of stocks and bonds, Donor Advised Fund grants, IRA charitable rollover, bequests, charitable gift annuities, and more.

It's Easy. Call Us Today!

602-218-6542

WWW.CEAZ.ORG

30 YEARS

Catholic Education
ARIZONA

Changing lives one scholarship at a time.



FROM BISHOP DOLAN

Extravagant love



BISHOP JOHN P. DOLAN
is the fifth bishop of the Diocese of Phoenix.

@PhoenixDiocese
@PhoenixDiocese
@PhoenixDiocese

One of the most well-known stories in Scripture is the Good Samaritan.

In the Gospel of Luke, we hear about a man who is beaten, robbed and left for dead. Religious men of high standing intentionally pass by him on the other side of the road. But then comes the Samaritan — who would have been his enemy in scriptural times — who treats the man with extravagant love.

He cleans and bandages the man's wounds, takes him to an inn, cares for him through the night, pays the innkeeper, instructing him to care for the man and expresses his plan to return.

We're familiar with the story. But there's a detail we often miss: the Good Samaritan came prepared. He had oil and bandages packed, extra coins ready in his bag. It's as if he were intending to meet someone along the way.

He was living his day with intentional love.

It had me thinking, how do we prepare our spiritual bags? How do we make our hearts ready to encounter others with such intentional love throughout our day?

I believe the answer is Christ truly present in the Eucharist. The Incarnate God who not only is with us always, but as we receive our Lord's Body and Blood is truly *within us*.

Receiving Christ in the Eucharist at Mass and adoring his true presence in Eucharistic adoration prepare our hearts in several ways. First, it puts God where God needs to be at the center of our heart, soul and mind. Second, we become what — or rather Who — we receive. And third, by disposing ourselves to God's truth and love, Christ teaches us that we are wonderfully made in His image. Despite our faults and failings, He comes to us not in a generic sense, but personally.

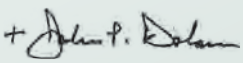
But I think the most profound impact is the more we receive Him and the more we adore, the more we come to see the truth that we are the beaten man left for dead, and He is our Good Samaritan. Healing our wounds, accompanying us, caring for our needs in a magnificent way. Through the Eucharist we receive His gaze and we come to know His intentional and extravagant love for us.

And as we do, we pack our bags. He is making our hearts ready.

By encountering Christ in the Eucharist, we are changed and drawn to bring this same gaze, this same love, to everyone we encounter along the way.

I invite you to ponder what invitation Christ is extending to you today. Perhaps you feel drawn to make a weekly visit to Him in a nearby adoration chapel, even if it's for just a short time. Or maybe you have a stirring in your heart to attend an additional morning or noon Mass this week.

However He is speaking to you, know that the Lord desires to draw you nearer, to tend to your wounds, to heal your heart with His extravagant love. And ultimately, He is preparing each one of us to echo with our own lives the words He spoke in the Gospel of Luke after sharing the beloved parable of the Good Samaritan: "Go and do likewise." ✝



+ John P. Dolan
Bishop of Phoenix

Getty Images/TonyBaggett



TOGETHER IN MISSION

COME AS YOU ARE

Each of us longs for a place where we are fully known, fully loved and continually invited to begin again. I have found that place in the Eucharist.

I have known this truth since childhood, though its meaning has deepened with each passing year.

When I was in third grade at Most Holy Trinity School in Phoenix, I prepared for first Communion under the loving guidance of Sister Rita. Years later, my parents shared that they quietly wondered whether I would be able to receive the Eucharist because I had been baptized in my Methodist grandparents' church and had only recently enrolled at Most Holy Trinity.

I remember none of their concerns.

I remember Sister Rita.

I remember the joy on her face whenever she spoke about the Body and Blood of Christ. She made me feel welcomed into something far greater than myself. I never questioned whether I belonged. I simply knew Christ had invited me to the table.

That invitation has never changed.

Like all of us, in moments I have ignored God's promptings, chosen my own path and missed opportunities to let grace transform my heart. Yet Christ has never stopped calling me back. Every time I receive the Eucharist, I encounter the living Jesus, whose love does not depend on my perfection. The Eucharist nourishes, forgives, strengthens and patiently shapes us into the people God created us to become.

At every Mass, Christ gathers us as one family. We acknowledge our brokenness, listen to the Word and come to the altar, where Christ gives the Bread of Life. The Eucharist is not simply something we receive; it is an encounter with the living Christ. There we find healing, strength, mercy and the grace to become Christ's presence in the world.

That same spirit of belonging shapes the work of the diocesan Office of Mission Advancement. Whether we thank volunteers, celebrate faithful donors, welcome new Angels of Hope members or honor those who have remembered the Church through a legacy gift, we always begin with the Eucharist. More than a cherished tradition, it reminds us that every act of generosity begins with God's generosity toward us. We belong not simply to an organization but to one another as the Body of Christ.

That is why the dismissal at Mass has become one of my favorite moments. "Go forth" is not the conclusion of worship but the beginning of mission. Christ sends each of us into our homes, parishes, workplaces and communities to become living witnesses of hope. The effect of Eucharist continues wherever we offer mercy, speak words of encouragement, make sacrifices in love or welcome another person with dignity.

Perhaps that is Christ's invitation to each of us today: Come to the table. Come as you are. Come to the place where you are fully known, fully loved and always invited to begin again. Allow the Bread of Life to nourish your soul and transform your heart, one day at a time.

My prayer is simple: *Lord Jesus, thank You for inviting us to the table through the gift of the Eucharist. Continue to shape our hearts, strengthen our faith and send us into the world so that others may encounter Your love. Amen.* ✝



DEBBIE DICARLO
serves as the executive director for the Office of Mission Advancement for the Diocese of Phoenix.

EVERYDAY *mercy*

I once heard a religious brother suggest that most of us don't need to seek out mortification because daily life already provides enough of it. We simply need to change the orientation of our hearts. That simple insight dramatically changed my outlook on sacrifice, penance and the simple works of mercy involved in motherhood.

Anyone raising children knows that family life is hard. But we don't usually imagine sanctity coming through interrupted sleep, cold coffee, endless laundry or one more disagreement over homework. We tend to picture heroic sacrifices or dramatic acts of charity, yet holiness often comes dressed as an ordinary Tuesday.

The days of waking in the middle of the night to feed a baby are long behind me, but the daily opportunities to die to myself have hardly disappeared. Every stage of parenting presents new invitations to practice generosity, patience, humility and self-giving love. Offered with hearts turned toward Christ, these daily sacrifices become a path to holiness.

The Church provides a framework for recognizing these ordinary opportunities through the corporal works of mercy — feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked. Sitting up with a feverish child through the night, taking a smaller portion so your growing teen can have double and clearing your schedule to care for them are all opportunities to live out mercy. I often need the reminder that these ordinary acts of parenting can become holy simply by uniting them to Christ in prayer.

When we respond in love to our family out of love for God, our actions surpass mere duty. They become offerings.

The spiritual works of mercy are equally familiar to anyone raising children — instructing the ignorant, forgiving offenses, bearing wrongs patiently, praying for the living and the dead. The list reads almost like a job description for Catholic parenting: we instruct, counsel, correct, forgive, comfort and pray for our children. This looks like listening attentively to a story you've heard dozens of times, having hard corrective conversations or reassuring an anxious child.

These small acts are opportunities to love.

Everyday mercy looks like explaining difficult truths, answering impossible questions, modeling forgiveness in our own failures and quietly placing our children before the Lord in prayer long after they have fallen asleep. Christ invites us to love Him in the people before us. He tells us in scripture, "Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of Mine, you did for Me." (Mt 25:40) For parents, those "least brothers" often have sticky fingers, endless questions and an uncanny ability to need something the moment we finally sit down.

There can be a temptation to believe that becoming a mother or father means putting our own spiritual life on hold. But God has entrusted us with a mission field within our own homes. We are called to love the children He has placed in our care and to raise them in the faith with love, mercy and joy.

Research consistently shows that children's lifelong faith depends less on what they're taught than on how faith and love are lived within their home. They learn mercy by receiving mercy. We don't have to leave home to practice the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. For many of us, God has already placed the people most in need of our love around our own dinner table. ✝



MARYRUTH HACKETT, PHD,
is a mom of four with a doctorate in educational psychology. She hosts the podcast *Parenting Smarts* and is the author of two books: *Daughter by Design* and *Discernment of Spirits for Beginners*.

The Conventual Church of
OUR LADY *of the* ANGELS

FIND YOUR CENTER

MASS TIMES
Saturday 4:00 pm Vigil
Sunday 7:30 am, 9:15 am, 11:00 am
Monday – Friday 8:00 am
Eucharistic Adoration 1st Fridays at 6 pm

GROUNDS FOR RENEWAL
- **25 acres of desert beauty for prayer and contemplation**
- **Private and Sponsored Retreats**

Franciscan Renewal Center
5802 East Lincoln Drive
Scottsdale, AZ 85253
480.948.7460 phone
TheCasaFRC social media
thecasa.org



Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Pray for Us!

Arizona Rosary Celebration

Bring family, friends, and your heartfelt prayer petitions.



GUEST SPEAKERS:

Monsignor James Shea



Most Reverend Artur Bubnevych

October 18, 2026
Sunday, 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Doors open at noon for adoration, confession, exhibits.

Phoenix Convention Center
South Building, 33 S. 3rd St.
Phoenix, AZ 85004

AzRosary.net

Free Admission

Knights of Columbus

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PHOENIX

Let's Pray the Rosary, Arizona!

RESPECT LIFE MONTH

Cherish Life. Protect Dignity. Leave a Legacy.

Every human life is a sacred gift, created in the image and likeness of God and worthy of protection from conception to natural death.

At the Catholic Community Foundation, our commitment to the dignity of every person guides how we serve and steward the gifts entrusted to our care.

Through the *Life Forever Fund*, your generosity helps fund health clinics, pregnancy centers, elder care providers, and more, empowering them to provide services, expand facilities, and bring compassion to those most in need.

GIVE TO THE
Life Forever Fund

Together, we uphold the sacredness of every human life.

Catholic Community Foundation

Connect with us:
(480) - 651 - 8800
info@ccfphx.org
www.ccfphx.org

ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

THE GOOD NEWS WITH FATHER JOHN

Reflecting weekly on the ups and downs of life through Scripture, discovering how Jesus meets us right where we are.

OCTOBER 4, 2026

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Have you ever felt like your attempts at prayer are a waste of time? I have. Early in my priesthood I noticed that my prayer life was weakening. Awe and eager expectancy of contact with God had given way to routine. I gradually spent less and less time praying. Nothing dramatic had happened, but my attitude toward God had changed, and I was losing the desire to pray.

Jesus' parable of the violent vineyard tenants speaks into this kind of experience. He says the landowner "leased it to tenants and went on a journey." (Mt 21:33) The key is that the vineyard does not belong to those who work it. They are entrusted with it. But little by little they view it as their possession and ungrateful entitlement follows. The servants sent by the owner are treated as intruders. Even the owner's son becomes a means to their delusional self-will. The central tragedy is not violence but the forgetfulness that spawns it. The tenants need reminding of how lucky they are to be given so much.

Eventually God sent friends to remind me that my relationship to Him and my prayer time are not my possessions but rather God's tremendous gifts to me. Perhaps you are feeling discouraged for some reason or other these days in your walk with God. Ponder this parable and let it be a gentle reminder that you and I are fortunate stewards and God is the generous giver. This allows us to rediscover the beauty of the vineyards in our lives and to remain energetic in cultivating His gifts.

OCTOBER 11, 2026

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Some friends invited me to one of the most famous and expensive restaurants in the country. I was grateful and eager to go. Every bite and sip was truly memorable and delicious. But my friends' teenage children spent much of the time on their phones, complained about the food and generally ignored the once-in-a-lifetime experience. I wanted to yell, "C'mon you guys! Look what you're missing!"

Main Image: Getty Images/Eric Mischke
Inset 1: Getty Images/Alexander Spatari
Inset 2: Getty Images/bernardbodo

In today's parable, Jesus describes people invited to an amazing wedding feast who respond with inexplicable indifference. He says, "Some ignored the invitation and went away, one to his farm, another to his business." (Mt 22:5) The problem is not that they choose evil but that they allow other desires to distract them from an amazing opportunity. The feast is prepared but their hearts are elsewhere. In Christ Jesus, God offers each of us a wildly extravagant offer: a place at the eternal wedding banquet.

What are your current excuses for delay in engaging Jesus? How are you postponing a deepening of your relationship with Him under the guise of responsibility? The good news is the feast is ready. His invitation remains. Hear the Lord say to us, "C'mon guys, look what you're missing!" Then respond with concrete action.

OCTOBER 18, 2026

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Occasionally, I'll slip into a parish I've never visited before, pick up the bulletin and find one of my Gospel reflections. My heart usually swells with a bit of affection for my creation. I imprint a bit of myself into my little literary labors of love. Anyone who has created something — a piece of writing, a garden, a meal, a child — knows that feeling. We love the things into which we put ourselves. We are happy when they return to us.

With this in mind, listen to Jesus' classic line in this Sunday's Gospel: "Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God." (Mt 22:21) He presents this little riddle to deepen the theme from taxes to human beings. A Roman coin bears Caesar's image, so it belongs to Caesar. Therefore, he has a legitimate claim to it. Fair enough. But what belongs to God? What bears *His* image? Every human being. God has imprinted Himself on every person. Which means everyone — including Caesar — belongs entirely to Him. Jesus, who is God's perfect image, has come to draw everyone back to God.

We can be tempted to imagine that our lives are made up of "things for God" and "things not for God." The good news is that no such division is possible because *everything* in life is a gift from God to us. Therefore, all is meant to be placed at the service of God's kingdom. He loves everything He has created. We have the privilege of giving it all back to Him.

OCTOBER 25, 2026

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time



When I was in seventh grade, like most boys of that age, I was constantly hungry. I could eat at any hour of the day. Then I fell head-over-heels for a classmate named Kristin. One evening lying on my bed, as I pondered her perfection, my mom called me to dinner. For the first time in my adolescent life, I remember thinking, "I'm not hungry." My heart longed for Kristin more than my stomach longed for food. Now, I wouldn't confuse adolescent infatuation with mature love. But it was an experience of the way love can reorder everything in our lives.

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus says, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart." (Mt 22:37) He is not issuing a burden or a moral goal for high achievers. He is naming the deepest orientation of the human heart. We were made for love so great that it gathers every other love into itself. Jesus does not ask us to love less the persons or things that attract us. Rather, He wants our love for God to be so total and intense that we love everything and everyone else because we love Him so much.

Do we believe that such a love is possible for us? Because of the gift of the Holy Spirit, it is! It is readily available to us. Let's repent of our half-hearted love for God and ask Him to fill our hearts to the brim with divine love.

NOVEMBER 1, 2026

Solemnity of All Saints



At the end of her short life, my hero, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, found herself in a curious position. Audaciously, she was convinced that she would become a great saint and be loved by many after her death. At the same time, she insisted that she was weak, impatient and ordinary. She became arguably the greatest saint in modern times. How is it possible that an ordinary and imperfect person can also be a great saint? ▶

Inset 1: Getty Images/gorodenkoff
Inset 2: Getty Images/kieferpix
Inset 3: By Unknown - Public Domain

On this All Saints' Day, Jesus overturns our assumptions about holiness. He says, **"**Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:3) The blessed are not the impressive or the self-sufficient, but the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful and the persecuted. These are not heroic traits by normal standards. They are signs of a heart that has learned to rely on God rather than itself. That's what St. Therese, and all saints, are all about.

All Saints' Day is not a celebration of spiritual elites. Rather, it announces what grace can do in our ordinary lives. The saints are not those who avoid weakness or suffering, but those who allow these things to deepen their trust. What good news for us! The smaller and weaker we are, the more qualified we are to be great saints.



NOVEMBER 8, 2026

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time



My first instinct upon waking is to grab my phone and start scrolling. Sometimes, I do it for 20 or 30 minutes, and it makes me feel distracted and agitated. I feel guilty, too, for wasting my first moments of the day. So, I recently committed those minutes to reading a book that would focus my mind on Jesus. I enjoy that I am not scattering my attention as much. I feel more peaceful and focused on God.

In today's Gospel, Jesus speaks about attention. He contrasts wise and foolish virgins, and then sums up the teaching by saying, "Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour." (Mt 25:13) The basic currency of the human heart is *attention*. The foolish bridesmaids are not immoral or malicious; they are unfocused, distracted and unprepared. They assume that borrowed oil will suffice, that someone else's readiness can make up for their own lack. But attention — which is love — cannot be outsourced. Relationship with God requires a personal attentiveness cultivated over time.

This Gospel leaves us with an honest question: What am I giving my attention to each day, and am I forming a heart that is awake, watchful and ready to meet the Lord when He comes? How can I use key moments of my day to focus my attention where I need it to be?

NOVEMBER 15, 2026

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

A friend once took his young adult son to the casino for his birthday. He handed him $100 and said, "Let's have a great time." The son, a graduate student with limited money, quietly pocketed the money and refused to play. "I don't want to lose it," he said. But he missed the point. The money was not really his to pocket, it was his father's invitation to share an experience together.

God sees our gifts a bit like this. In Jesus' parable, a servant buries his master's talent and explains, "Master, I knew you were a demanding person ... so out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground." (Mt 25:24-25) The master condemns him not for failure, but for refusing to risk. The servant's fear distorts his image of the master and leads to a small, loveless response. No love, no risk. No risk, no relationship.

How easily we fall into this trap! We treat God's gifts as fragile possessions rather than invitations. We play it safe, avoid risk and tell ourselves we are wise and God is cruel. But Jesus praises those who trust the master's goodness enough to act boldly. They are not reckless, but confident enough in their master to risk their gifts for him.

So what is my interior story about God right now? Is it marked by generosity, adventure and trust? Or by fear, caution and suspicion? That hidden narrative shapes everything. Because love, by its nature, always takes risks with, and for, the beloved.

Inset 1: Getty Images/Israel Sebastian
Inset 2: Getty Images/Andy Kirby

NOVEMBER 22, 2026

The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe



I remember middle school baseball tryouts. A friend of mine, Robert, was trying to make the team to please his father, but his heart wasn't in it. He was lackadaisical and unenergetic. When the final cut list was announced and his name wasn't on it, he was relieved. He realized the coach was not insulting him, but essentially telling him, "Bobby, this only works if you actually *want* to play ball." I was saddened he'd miss out on the fun, but I knew it was best. Putting Robert onto the team would not have been kindness. It would have made him miserable.

Jesus speaks to us today about His identity as our king and judge. He separates those who inherit the kingdom from those who do not. Jesus, as king, explains, "Whatever you did for one of the least brothers of Mine, you did for Me." (Mt 25:40) His judgment hinges on willingness to participate in love. Heaven is not a prize imposed at the end of life. It is a life freely chosen and engaged. Hell is not a destination prepared for human beings, but a terrible and sad acknowledgement of an opting-out which God never intends for us.

Jesus' role as judge proclaims to us, "Heaven only works if you actually *want* to love." How do we know if we want it? How we serve the hungry, the sick, the imprisoned and the forgotten. These acts of mercy are not arbitrary tests. They are the very shape of divine life. There is no better game to play than this, and we ought to begin playing it right now. Our king will come to judge us.



FATHER JOHN R. MUIR
serves as the vicar general and moderator of the curia for the Diocese of Phoenix.

NOVEMBER 29, 2026

1st Sunday of Advent



A friend once told me, "When I was young, I was so broke I couldn't even pay attention." It's a clever line. Even when your pockets are empty, you can still be attentive. And yet, we often find creative ways to spend our attention on anything but what matters most.

We begin the season of Advent with Jesus' words about how we maintain our attention. He says, "What I say to you, I say to all: 'Watch!'" (Mk 13:37) He describes servants waiting for their master's return. Their task is simple: stay alert. Be ready to open the door, welcome him and serve. That is why they're there. Advent reminds us that this is the purpose of our lives, too. God is coming to us. The question is whether we are awake and ready to receive Him.

How do we train our attention for God? One powerful way is the age-old Christian practice of vigils. Praying in the quiet stillness of night — free from all distraction — focuses the heart and awakens a deeper awareness of God's presence. This Advent, watch for the coming of the Lord by the practice of vigils. Not in theory, but concretely. The Lord is coming. The awake and attentive heart will recognize Him. ✝

Inset 1: Getty Images/Blend Images - Kevin Dodge
Inset 2: Getty Images/Kara Gebhardt



BROPHY
COLLEGE PREPARATORY

As the only Jesuit high school in Arizona, Brophy College Preparatory offers young men a Catholic education where scholarship and spirituality are deeply connected.

Students are challenged by faculty who are personally invested in their formation. They are entrusted with responsibility, invited into leadership and encouraged to take ownership of their growth as *Men for Others*. At Brophy, tradition and innovation, faith and reason, boldness and humility come together in a welcoming environment that empowers students to develop their God-given gifts.

Important Dates:

- Applications for Class of 2031 open for all 8th-grade boys on **October 1.**
- Brophy's Annual Open House will take place on **November 1** from 12-3 p.m. Reserve your spot now!
- HSPT Entrance Exams will be held on **December 5** and **December 12**. The cost is $40 - sign up online!

Visit **brophyprep.org** to start your journey.

WE ARE JESUIT. WE ARE BROPHY.



1-866-AVE-MARIA AVE MARIA MUTUAL FUNDS avemariafunds.com

This testimonial may not be representative of the experience of other customers. "As a member of the Ave Maria Mutual Funds Catholic Advisory Board, I receive compensation from the Funds of approximately $14,000 per year, which I do not believe affects my objectivity. Such compensation for my time and advice is not payment for this endorsement. I truly believe in the mission of the Ave Maria Mutual Funds." – Michael Knowles. **Past performance does not guarantee future results. Schwartz Investment Counsel, Inc., a registered investment adviser established in 1980, serves as investment adviser for Ave Maria Mutual Funds and invests only in securities that meet the Funds' investment and religious requirements. The returns may be lower or higher than if decisions were based solely on investment considerations.** The method of security selection may or may not be successful and the Funds may underperform or outperform the stock market as a whole. All mutual funds are subject to market risk, including possible loss of principal. **Request a prospectus, which includes investment objectives, risks, fees, charges and expenses and other information that you should read and consider carefully before investing. The prospectus can be obtained by calling 1-866-283-6274 or it can be viewed at www.avemariafunds.com.** Distributed by Ultimus Fund Distributors, LLC.

200-174-011525 | 20241023-3957293



NEW TAX CREDIT LIMITS AS OF 2026

$632 SINGLE FILERS / $1,262 JOINT FILERS

QFCO:10000

GIVE WITH PURPOSE THIS TAX SEASON

Catholic Charities
COMMUNITY SERVICES

info@cc-az.org | 1-855-316-2229

NOTRE DAME™
Preparatory High School
REVERENCE | RESPECT | RESPONSIBILITY

STRENGTHENING MINDS, BODIES AND SOULS.







SCHEDULE A PRIVATE TOUR OR JOIN US FOR OUR
ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE
SUNDAY, NOV. 8 FROM 11 A.M. - 2 P.M.

480.634.8281
ndpsaints.org/admissions
9701 E. Bell Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85260

FEATURE STORY



FEEDING OUR NEIGHBORS TOGETHER

Parishes partner with St. Vincent de Paul to help those in need



CANDE DE LEON REMEMBERS SEEING HUNGRY CHILDREN DRINKING COLD SOUP RIGHT OUT OF A CAN. IT'S AN IMAGE THAT STAYS WITH HIM, AND ONE THAT CONTINUES TO MOTIVATE HIS WORK AS THE CHIEF MISSION ENGAGEMENT OFFICER FOR THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY IN ARIZONA.

JOYCE CORONEL
serves as the manager of evangelization and sacramental life and co-hosts *The Bishop's Hour* podcast and radio program on Relevant Radio 1310 AM.

The Catholic philanthropic organization serves the poor in Arizona by dishing out 2.5 million meals yearly at its charity dining rooms, providing over $8 million in rent and utility assistance and distributing 4.7 million pounds of food through its central food bank, among other services.

Food pantries operated by St. Vincent de Paul conferences, designated groups at local parishes, feed thousands more with food boxes. Vincentians, St. Vincent de Paul volunteers, also bring the love of Christ through their home visits.

A creative program in conjunction with Albertsons-Safeway to beef up stock at local pantries launched last March and has helped feed the hungry across Arizona. De Leon is leading the charge as a new phase of the program now gets underway at parishes to help feed an increased number of hungry families.

Families like the one that reached out to St. Vincent de Paul last February. A single father with six children, including a toddler, was on the streets. Having lost their home and unable to pay for even a modest hotel room due to jacked-up pricing during spring training, they were out begging for money to pay for a place to stay.

"They were without a home and didn't know what to do," de Leon said. "The wife was out of the picture."

De Leon was able to find shelter for them and Jerry Castro, a volunteer from the Sacred Heart Parish St. Vincent de Paul conference in Phoenix, brought the family a food box and can opener.

"And I'm thinking to myself, 'Jerry, like, what are you taking the food box for? They have no stove. How are they going to cook it? What are they going to do?'"

Turns out the volunteer had the right idea. When de Leon came back later, loaded down with buckets of fried chicken and some hefty side orders, he found the kids devouring what was in the food box — including the cold soup.

"It broke my heart. But Jerry knew exactly what he was doing. Where we would take things for granted, like what's in our cupboard or what's in our fridge ... they jumped at it and were eating cold soup because they were starving."

De Leon returned the next morning and he noticed right away that every single scrap of food in the hotel room had been eaten. The two huge family dinners. The food box. Gone.

The powerful vignette is a microcosm of what's going on in the wider community as demand for food assistance has risen substantially. "Our demand could have easily doubled," de Leon said, "but the problem is that we don't have the food to meet that demand.

"We've seen increases of about 20 to 25-percent. In some places, it's up 50-percent." ▶

CREATIVE RESPONSE

So why all the demand? To get to the precipitating causes, you have to go back to the federal budget last fall. Hundreds of thousands of Arizonans lost what are known as SNAP benefits.

SNAP, short for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, helps low-income families with food by issuing EBT cards that work like debit cards at participating stores.

"All the food pantries saw this huge demand because the people who were receiving food benefits, they lost them," de Leon said.

Once the federal budget passed, some of the requirements for receiving SNAP benefits changed. "We have about 450,000 individuals who lost their benefits," de Leon said. Sometimes those individuals represent an elderly couple or a family where there are young children.

But Providence and big-hearted Arizonans saw to the need.

"The timing couldn't have been better because we were able to have a system in place to meet that demand."

That system is Feed Our Neighbors Together — FONT — which entails an agreement with Albertsons-Safeway across Arizona to fight hunger. Those who shop at one of the 132 stores can donate food or cash to the effort.

"We raised about 30,000 pounds of food which is equivalent to an 18-wheeler truck," de Leon said.

Each one of the Albertsons-Safeway stores has a parish partner that is responsible for picking up the food and transporting it to the parish pantry.

"We trained the Vincentians to go meet with their Albertsons-Safeway store manager to talk to them and tell them about the program and then they set it up," de Leon said. "Simultaneously, Albertsons-Safeway told their store managers what was going on."

The next step in the FONT campaign is to partner with the 94 parishes and 24 missions spread throughout the Diocese of Phoenix. Among them are 80 parish St. Vincent de Paul Conferences. Parishioners will be asked to bring non-perishable food items to the church for distribution to the needy in their area.

"October will mark the first time we coordinate a diocesan-wide food drive in alignment with FONT," de Leon said. "Rather than doing the whole state of Arizona this time, we're going to focus on just the Diocese of Phoenix."

For parishes that do not have a St. Vincent de Paul conference or a food pantry, de Leon said they are working to partner with the Knights of Columbus, a fraternal organization committed to service already present in most parishes, to coordinate food drives.



'OUR FRIENDS'

Jerry Castro, 68, grew up at Sacred Heart Parish just south of downtown Phoenix, and has been an active member of the church's St. Vincent de Paul Society for 41 years. He knows that donations of food to stock the pantry at Sacred Heart and at parishes around the Diocese of Phoenix are crucial.

"With the reductions in food stamps, lots of them are getting less food, especially the seniors," Castro said. Visitors to the pantry include families and those experiencing homelessness. On the third Saturday of the month, the pantry at Sacred Heart is open for guests to stop by and receive bags of food.

"We give each family anywhere from four to five bags of food, depending on family size," Castro said. One of those bags contains frozen items like hamburger meat or chicken. Another bag holds staple items like macaroni and cheese, rice or tuna.

The conference also gives out hygiene items like toilet paper, soap and toothbrushes.

"One of the biggest things is that we come to see our neighbors as friends. You know, we'll see them at Mass. Everything's confidential, but we'll go up to them and they want to give us a big hug."

Castro remembers visiting the home of a family of eight that was going through hard times. The father lost his job and his vehicle. They were having trouble paying the rent and utilities.

"We were blessed to be able to help them," Castro said. The father is back on his feet now, and the parish St. Vincent de Paul conference was able to assist them with rent and utilities plus a bus pass so the father was able to get to work.

"We just thank God we're able to provide for this family." ✝

FEEDING OUR NEIGHBORS TOGETHER

THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
FEED. CLOTHE. HOUSE. HEAL.

FEEDING OUR NEIGHBORS, TOGETHER!

This October and November, many Catholic Parishes throughout the Diocese of Phoenix will be collecting food to make sure every neighbor has a meal on the table.

$25 FEEDS A FAMILY



Give Food. Give Funds. Give Hope.

Scan to Bless a Family Today









Every day, families across Arizona face impossible choices between rent, utlities, and groceries. This fall, your parish food drive is stepping in to help close that gap — one bag of groceries, one donation, one act of kindness at a time. When you give food or funds through your parish, you're not just filling a pantry shelf. You're helping a neighbor make it through the week.

For more information visit: helpaz.org.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL SUPPORT 365

faith. family. **future.**



What Does It Take for Every Child to Thrive?

Sometimes it's a safer school entrance. Sometimes it's a specialist working alongside a teacher. Catholic School Support 365 provides year-round support to help schools identify and meet the practical needs that are directly shaping a child's ability to learn, belong and grow in faith.



A Place to Feel Safe

St. Matthew Catholic School | Phoenix

St. Matthew, Arizona's only Catholic dual-language elementary school, is strengthening campus security. A new automated gate will control access, improve monitoring, and help protect the students, families, and educators who enter the campus each day.

By creating a safer, calmer environment, St. Matthew gives students the freedom to focus on what matters most — learning, prayer, community and growth. The investment strengthens more than a boundary; **it reinforces the peace, dignity and belonging every child deserves**.

Support from the Very Beginning

St. Timothy Catholic Preschool | Mesa

St. Timothy will bring licensed speech, occupational and behavioral specialists into the everyday rhythm of preschool to identify needs earlier and strengthen language, motor, social and self-regulation skills. The goal: help more children flourish socially, emotionally, physically and academically — ready to thrive in kindergarten and beyond.

"This funding will not simply add services — it will reshape how developmental support is delivered: preventive rather than reactive, embedded rather than separate, inclusive rather than isolating."

— Michelle Rapa, Preschool Director



Support Catholic Schools All Year Long

Catholic School Support 365 provides year-round support that helps our schools respond to real needs and gives students opportunities to learn, grow in faith and reach their God-given potential.

Learn More – Make a Gift

Join Us for Night of Hope

NOVEMBER 5 AT 6 P.M.

Celebrate the lasting impact of Catholic education and help strengthen our schools for the future. All proceeds from Night of Hope directly support Catholic School Support 365.

Watch online at nightofhopephx.com or scan here.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PHOENIX

602-354-2235 | dphx.org/catholic-schools-365





Compassion † Care † Christ

Blessings of a preplanned Catholic funeral:

- Ensures sacred Catholic funeral rites
- Provides comfort to your loved ones
- Handles all the details and paperwork
- Reserves the ceremony & memorialization you want
- Relieves the financial burden to your family
- Guarantees current prices and avoids inflation
- Protects your investment
- Provides peace of mind

Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery & Funeral Home
A Ministry of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix

To learn more about
the gift of preplanning,
call us at **602.392.2348**.



Sacred stories

Eucharistic devotion guides spiritual director's ministry

On the corner of 38th Street and Greenway, amid fast food drive-thrus, automobile repair shops and an elementary school, sits a small yet impactful adoration chapel — the heart of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Northern Phoenix. It's a familiar space to Candida Kirkpatrick, a wife, mother and spiritual director who has spent countless hours there adoring the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

For Kirkpatrick, the Eucharist isn't simply one part of her life; it's everything.

"I have found it to be extremely, incredibly healing in my own journey … being able to go into that space and under His divine gaze. Whether I'm in joy or sorrow, I come as I am," she said.

For years, Kirkpatrick has felt drawn to a deep prayer life and the invitation to abide in the Lord, particularly through the sacraments. She expressed what a blessing it is that God has arranged her life in such a way that she is able to attend daily Mass and make a Holy Hour, a 60-minute time of prayer in the adoration chapel, most days.

"I feel like the Lord has been the source — of course, He always is — of so much healing and very deep healing within."

And while encountering Jesus in the Eucharist has changed Kirkpatrick's life, the One she encounters there pours forth into every aspect of her ministry, particularly in her accompaniment of others through spiritual direction.

"In sitting in Eucharistic adoration and being able to go out to others, my prayer is always that I will bring His divine gaze and holy face to others and really recognize the dignity of each human being," she continued.

"People want to be seen, known, heard and understood, but oftentimes I think they're not experiencing the fullness of it. And so there's a great thirst, and there always has been, to see the face of God." ▶

CATHERINE MULHERN
is the lead staff writer for the Office of Communications and a nationally recognized author for her book, *Sacred Wounds; An Encounter with Jesus on the Holy Ground of Suffering.*



The 'preciousness' of each person

Kirkpatrick didn't always know she wanted to be a spiritual director.

"I always wanted to help people, but I didn't know that spiritual direction even existed," she said. "I thought that I might want to become a counselor or a psychologist, but then suddenly I shifted to international politics and desiring to go into diplomacy, of all things."

After going to college in Washington, D.C., she took her first job working for an immigration lawyer. It was here that she began to encounter people in what she calls their "sacred stories."

"It really gave me a very rich experience in hearing people's stories, sitting with them ... and really accompanying them on the journey. Within that there are many joys and sorrows and traumas. So, people were bringing that to me, and I felt very blessed and honored to be in that space."

Kirkpatrick first witnessed the example of intentional accompaniment through her late mother, Kathleen Torzala, who Kirkpatrick said was always there for family, friends, neighbors and anyone in the community or parish in need.

"She really was a pivotal exemplar for me as she worked with so many different kinds of people, honored their gifts and served as a source of encouragement ... for those who were hurting, in distress or in need."

As her own sacred story unfolded, Kirkpatrick continued to accompany others in a variety of roles: as a wife, a mother of two now-grown children, a member of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites (OCDS) and eventually as a spiritual director.

But she always looks back to that first job where a particular thread of grace seemed to begin in her life.

"I see the hand of God, of course, in every moment, but especially in gifting that to me as kind of my first job out of college because I think that's where I really experienced the preciousness of each individual person and their sacred story."

Tenderness, sharing and community

Kirkpatrick describes spiritual direction as a sacred space where the Holy Spirit, who is "the Divine Director," moves. She emphasized that the environment fostered must be free, permeated with prayer and reverencing the story of the directee, the individual being accompanied.

"Amidst our weakness, our unworthiness, our humanity, God recognizes and provides the gifts to be in that space and to, in a sense, break bread with the other," said Kirkpatrick. "It's really a space of tenderness, of sharing, of community."

Having received spiritual direction training through the Centre for Applied Carmelite Spirituality (CACS), she now serves as the North American coordinator for CACS's spiritual direction formation program.

At the beginning of every spiritual direction session, Kirkpatrick prays with the directee, listens to their struggles, joys and challenges and guides the directee in discerning how the Lord is working through these very ups and downs of life. She also helps individuals grow in self-knowledge, delving into areas such as temperaments, charisms, natural abilities, strengths and weaknesses.

"Spiritual directors witness to the movement of the Holy Spirit ... accompanying the directee in recognizing how the Holy Spirit is working, is forming, is molding, is speaking or whispering in their sacred journey, in the mysteries that are unfolding in their lives," said Kirkpatrick.

She described her own disposition as a spiritual director as sitting in a posture of "encouragement, wonder, amazement" as directees have breakthroughs, "a-ha" moments and epiphanies that weren't making sense before.

"It's being able to really be comfortable with the Holy Spirit, who is the Divine Architect and Artisan ... He's always going to go way beyond the boxes or limitations [we put on Him in our humanity.]"

Between sessions, Kirkpatrick can be found in front of the Eucharist, contemplating the divine gaze of God as she prays for her directees and their prayer intentions.

Kirkpatrick is profoundly humbled by the opportunity to accompany others on their journey. And along the way she has learned that God can take any situation, any pilgrimage toward Him, with a variety of complexities and backgrounds, and make it beautiful.

"There is no person that is exempt from these graces — from His love, from His touch — and who is not fearfully and wonderfully made. And that's not just a pious platitude. I mean, it is the truth." ✝



"In sitting in Eucharistic adoration and being able to go out to others, my prayer is always that I will bring His divine gaze and holy face to others and really recognize the dignity of each human being."



Diocese hosts listening sessions on the sacraments

On Dec. 9, 1531, Juan Diego was walking to catechism class in what would become Mexico City when an encounter with the Blessed Virgin Mary on Tepeyac Hill changed his life — and the lives of millions of others — forever.

Such encounters that lead to authentic transformation are at the heart of Bishop John Dolan's historic seven-year pastoral plan on evangelization, TILMA — *Testifica, oh Iglesia, a la Luz del Misterio del Amor* (Testify, O Church, to the Light of the Mystery of Love).

This year, the pastoral plan emphasizes the sacred journey of life and the transformative encounters with Christ that take place within the sacramental life of the Church. To understand the faithful's experiences of approaching the sacraments — both positive and negative — and to make sacramental encounters with Christ as approachable as possible, the diocese is hosting a series of listening sessions on the sacraments throughout the diocese Aug. 21-Nov.12.

Father Chuck Kieffer, vicar for Synodality and Planning, and Pat Markey, director of Mission Integration and Leadership Development, are spearheading the process. The 10 listening sessions invite participation from those who have received the sacraments, are preparing for sacraments or have accompanied someone in the sacramental preparation process.

Father Kieffer emphasized Bishop Dolan's desire to reach out to all members of the diocesan community, sharing, "The bishop wants to find out how [people] understand the sacraments changing them personally and empowering them to go out and transform the world and evangelize.

"One of the key questions we want to determine from people is how they felt welcomed, or not welcomed, when they approached the Church for sacraments."

Trained facilitators will lead the listening sessions using a model of group discernment called "conversation in the Spirit." Facilitators and note-takers will compile the insights from the listening sessions and send them to the diocese for review and discernment.

"It's a prayer-based conversation. Every session begins in prayer, invoking the Holy Spirit," said Markey. "There's a lot of focus on silence before anybody says anything, followed by deep and profound listening.

"The bishop really wants to know what people are experiencing when they go to receive the sacraments and what that's doing in their lives," Markey added.

Insights, experiences and suggestions gathered during the listening sessions will be assessed and discerned to help shape sacramental formation processes and renew the diocese's approach to accompaniment.

Scan the QR code for more information on the sacramental listening sessions, including what to expect, where the sessions will take place and how to find a listening session near you.

A historic day at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico City

Bishop John Dolan celebrated his first-ever Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City in July. The basilica is the most-visited Catholic pilgrimage site in the world, welcoming over 20 million pilgrims annually. It is also where the miraculous image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of the Phoenix Diocese, resides.

Daniel Carlisi, a Diocese of Phoenix seminarian from Sacred Heart Parish in Prescott, Ariz., served at the Mass alongside the bishop. He just completed his Spanish immersion opportunity in Mexico City, which is part of his seminary formation. Martha Gamez, the senior director of Engagement and Legacy Giving for the Office of Mission Advancement, read the first reading.

The historic Mass took place during year two of Bishop Dolan's seven-year pastoral plan on evangelization called TILMA — *Testifica, oh Iglesia, a la Luz del Misterio del Amor* (Testify, O Church, to the Light of the Mystery of Love). His plan, inspired by Our Lady of Guadalupe, was developed to foster a renewed culture of evangelization in the diocese leading up to the 500th anniversary of her apparitions in 2031.

Scan the QR Code to listen to the bishop's message from the basilica.



Diocese of Phoenix creates action plan to implement *Laudato Si'*

The Diocese of Phoenix is one of 19 dioceses taking part in the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishop's inaugural *Laudato Si'* Leadership Cohort. Inspired by Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si' (Praise be to you),* on caring for creation, the national cohort provides tools, expertise and accompaniment to help diocesan leaders create achievable action plans to implement the teachings of the late pope with the hope of transforming communities.

The Diocese of Phoenix's action plan, which is set to be implemented in 2027, will be released on Oct. 4, 2026, the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, who is the patron saint of ecology, or the study of the relationship between living things and their environment. The release date also holds significance as it falls in the Jubilee Year of St. Francis,

which Pope Leo XIV declared in honor of the 800th anniversary of the saint's death.

The action plan focuses on seven goals: response to the cry of the earth, ecological economics, adoption of sustainable lifestyles, ecological education, ecological spirituality, community resilience and empowerment and response to the cry of the poor.

"The plan is also inspired by the theme 'Animated by Christ,' the topic of TILMA year three," said Abigail Poole, coordinator of Catholic Social Teaching for the diocese and the Diocese of Phoenix representative in the national cohort. She was referring to Bishop John Dolan's seven-year pastoral plan on evangelization. "We are excited to provide opportunities for the diocese and parishioners to be animated in their call to stewardship for all creation."

The Diocese of Phoenix's action plan will be published on the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform, which is sponsored by the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. The *Laudato Si'* Leadership Cohort will be joining more than 5,000 institutions across 150 countries on the platform.

"We are grateful to Bishop Dolan," continued Poole. "He is making a commitment to intentionally be part of an environmental impact in the nearly 44,000 square miles entrusted to his care." ✝

Read the full stories on *The Catholic Sun* website.



*Subject to credit approval. Cardmembers may earn 1% back on any non-PIN purchase made with an ELEVATE debit or credit card. Rewards will be automatically donated to the specified nonprofit of the cardmember's choice. Cardmember will be notified if nonprofit does not qualify to receive rewards. Rewards are earned on purchases only; returns will be deducted from the calculation. If your account is closed, voluntarily or involuntarily, past due or over limit, you will forfeit all rewards. Insured by NCUA

XAVIER COLLEGE PREPARATORY

MADE FOR MORE

Faith. Learning. Leadership. Opportunity.



All are welcome!

Xavier College Preparatory is a Catholic community that strives to prepare young women of faith with knowledge, skills, and integrity to meet the challenges of a changing global society in a positive and productive manner celebrating unity.

8th Grade Day | Friday, Oct. 23, 2026
9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Open House | Sunday, Oct. 25, 2026
12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Admission/Placement Exam
Saturday, Dec. 5, 2026 or
Saturday, Dec. 12, 2026 at 7:30 a.m.

Affording a Xavier Education Financial Aid Workshops:
Thursday, Nov. 5, 2026 and
Saturday, Dec. 5, 2026

Visit xcp.org for more information.

TILMA

Testify, O Church, to the Light of the Mystery of Love

Bishop Dolan's historic, seven-year pastoral plan on evangelization

Inspired by Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bishop Dolan launched his seven-year pastoral plan on evangelization in January 2025 entitled *TILMA - Testifica, oh Iglesia, a la Luz del Misterio del Amor (Testify, O Church, to the Light of the Mystery of Love).*

Each year of the pastoral plan has a bold and engaging theme, leading the Diocese of Phoenix on a journey of personal, parish and diocesan-level growth, counting down to the 500th anniversary of Our Lady of Guadalupe's appearance to St. Juan Diego in 2031. *El Camino Real* is the theme for 2026.

Getty Images/hanakaz

HAVE YOU READ BISHOP DOLAN'S PASTORAL LETTER FOR 2026?

Scan the QR code to hear from our shepherd himself as he reads his letter aloud, sharing his heart about TILMA and Our Lady of Guadalupe. You can also find the letter in written form, as well as his pastoral plan for 2026.

DID YOU KNOW BISHOP DOLAN HAS A PODCAST ALL ABOUT TILMA?

He'd love for you to tune in! This monthly podcast delves into all aspects of his seven-year pastoral plan on evangelization — from exciting community events around the diocese to a deep dive into the themes of *El Camino Real*. Scan the QR code to catch up on past episodes and tune in to future conversations.

THE COUNTDOWN HAS BEGUN!

December 2031 marks the 500th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Join the diocese in anticipation of a massive celebration Bishop Dolan is planning to honor the patroness of the Diocese of Phoenix. Current countdown: 1,900 days

VISIT DPHX.ORG/TILMA FOR MORE INFORMATION

This site serves as a one-stop shop for all information on Bishop Dolan's seven-year pastoral plan on evangelization in English and Spanish. Check it out for FAQs, engaging videos, a history of Our Lady of Guadalupe and so much more. ✝

THINGS TO DO

Sacramental Listening Sessions

The Diocese of Phoenix is hosting a series of listening sessions on the sacraments from August – November 2026. Whether you just entered the Church at Easter or you've been a practicing Catholic for 85 years, Bishop John Dolan invites you to take part. Your experiences are of value to the Church. All are invited to come and share honest experiences on topics such as being welcomed (or not welcomed) in parishes when you approach the sacraments and how the sacraments serve as a moment of encounter with Christ, who sends us forth to bring Him to others.

Respect Life Mass

The Catholic Church in the United States celebrates Respect Life Month in October and the first Sunday is designated as Respect Life Sunday. Join fellow Catholics to celebrate Mass in honor of the dignity of every person. ***Oct. 4 at 9 a.m. at Ss. Simon and Jude Cathedral, Phoenix***

Arizona Rosary Celebration

Join thousands of Catholics at the 51st annual Arizona Rosary Celebration. This year, the Blessed Mother will be honored under her title of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. The day includes speakers, adoration and praying the rosary together. Let's pray the rosary, Arizona! ***Oct. 18 at 2 p.m. at the Phoenix Convention Center, South Building***

All Saints' Day

The Solemnity of All Saints' is a day dedicated to all the saints of the Church in heaven — both those who have been canonized and those who have not. The feast day was formally started by Pope Boniface IV in 609 AD and is a holy day of obligation. Visit dphx.org/parishes to find Mass times. ***Nov. 1***

All Souls' Day

The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed is a day set aside to honor those who have died. Praying for the dead is a spiritual work of mercy and the faithful are encouraged to gain a plenary indulgence for the souls in purgatory each day from Nov. 1-8. ***Nov. 2***

Night of Hope

Night of Hope is a virtual event where you'll meet students, teachers and principals throughout the diocese and join in the mission to support Catholic education. ***Nov. 5 at 6p.m.*** †

Scan the QR code to see all events catholicsun.org/events

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PHOENIX

FOR LOCAL CATHOLIC NEWS, ENGAGEMENT AND INSPIRATION Join us, we have something for everyone!

WEEKLY VIDEO SERIES

Word & Art:
An exciting and insightful series where Bishop Dolan, who has a Master of Arts degree in Liturgy/Church Art, connects a Sunday Mass reading with a famous work of art.

Mental Health Minute:
A space where we explore the vital topic of mental and emotional well-being, opening the conversation and journeying together towards a healthier, happier you.

Christ in Our Neighborhood:
Co-hosts Joyce Coronel and Jennifer Ellis are joined by a special guest to help us dive into the Word of God together.

Now You Know: A weekly series where Diocese of Phoenix priests answer common Catholic questions, like why we strike our chest during Mass or pray to Mary. Each short episode explores Church history with engaging insights, offering "ah-ha" moments and deepening your faith.