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Helping others enter pro-life conversations

BY RACHEL KOEPKE | FOR THE COMPASS

NEENAH — Emily Albrecht never thought she would be front and center in the pro-life movement. The Xavier High School graduate found her calling at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., when she joined the pro-life club.

After discovering Equal Rights Institute, an education-based resource for the pro-life movement, she developed a deep passion for educating the public on how to defend pro-life teachings.

Albrecht was in the Fox Valley in October to talk to both youth and adults about educating themselves on the pro-life movement. She spoke at St. John the Baptist Church in Menasha on Oct. 3 and on Oct. 5 at Kaukauna's St. Ignatius Catholic High School and Middle School students.

"I had always been pro-life, it was something that had always been really important to my parents (Bill and Kathleen Albrecht of Neenah), but I never really got involved in being pro-life actively," Albrecht said. "My freshman year, the (pro-life) club tried really hard to engage with our campus, but everything we did resulted in insane amounts



SUBMITTED PHOTO BY CASSIDY SCHOOLTZ OF PROTECT LIFE MICHIGAN | SPECIAL TO THE COMPASS

Emily Albrecht (left) at the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization Decision Day Rally at the Michigan Supreme Court in Lansing, Mich., on June 24, 2022.

of vandalism and protests and hatred towards us, to the point that we really struggled to get other students involved because it was such a hostile experience."

During the summer between her freshman and sophomore year of college, she became the president of the pro-life club and was contacted by a local pregnancy resource center. In what she calls "the email that changed her life,"

Albrecht learned about Equal Rights Institute, an organization that teaches people how to debate the points of the pro-life movement in an engaging and respectful manner.

The mission of Equal Rights Institute is to train pro-life advocates on how to think clearly, reason honestly and debate persuasively.

Our full story appears in the Oct. 7 Respect Life section.

FRANKLY, FRANCIS



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We now consider the importance of interpreting, in the light of God's provident care, our own life story. Through prayer and spiritual insight, we can learn to discern the thread of God's grace running through our lives. Taking stock of our personal history this way can make us aware of negative attitudes harmful for our spiritual growth, but also open our eyes to the often hidden events that quietly reveal the Lord's loving plan for our eternal happiness.

The lives of the saints also shed light on our personal path to holiness. In Confessions, St. Augustine shared his gradual understanding of how God mysteriously led him to discover and embrace the truth that alone satisfies the deepest desires of our hearts. St. Ignatius Loyola drew upon his own journey of conversion in order to teach us how to discern God's voice speaking within us, guiding our steps and calling us to ever deeper union with himself.

+ Pope Francis, Oct. 19, 2022

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Follow Him On



Bishop David Ricken issues pastoral letter on worship

SPECIAL TO THE COMPASS

GREEN BAY — On Aug. 28, the feast of St. Augustine, Bishop David Ricken issued his fourth pastoral letter, "Encountering Jesus in the Eucharist: Disciples Called To Worship."

In his letter, the bishop calls people of the diocese to a deeper appreciation of Jesus in the Eucharist and to participate fully in the Mass.

"This pastoral letter calls on each one of us to learn to know and cherish the treasure that is the Mass by focusing on the presence of Christ in Word and Sacrament," Bishop Ricken told The Compass. "There's an old saying which goes, 'Nemo dat quod non habet.' It means you cannot give what you do not have. All of us, myself included, can benefit from a deeper understanding and encounter with Jesus Christ

each time we are present for Mass."

In 2014, under Bishop Ricken's initiative, the diocese embarked on a four-part journey of discipleship. For each of the parts — Discover Jesus, Follow Jesus, Worship Jesus and Share Jesus — people have become engaged in the process of learning to be missionary disciples.

Our full story appears in the Oct. 21 issue.

5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Who've gone before us

BY PATRICIA KASTEN | THE COMPASS

1 This month, the church honors those who have gone before us. Nov. 1 is the Solemnity of All Saints. Nov. 2 marks the Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed (All Souls Day).

2 In November, the church asks Catholics to pray more often for the souls of the dead and also to visit cemeteries.

3 All Souls Day dates to at least the fifth century, when a day of prayer for the dead was held on the Monday after Pentecost. St. Odilo (962-1049) gets credit for moving the feast to Nov. 2.

4 Praying for the dead helps them move on from purgatory to heaven.

5 An example of praying for souls can be found in the Second Book of Maccabees: 12:42-49.

'A still more excellent way'

Dear friends and followers of Jesus:

In one of the Bible's most famous passages, St. Paul preaches that any action we take without love is empty, like a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. He introduces his exhortation to love by writing, "I shall show you a still more excellent way." These words have come to my mind as I am thinking about the upcoming election.



BISHOP'S CORNER

Bishop David Ricken

In today's world, politics and love do not seem to fit together. When we think of politics, we are more likely to think of mudslinging, manipulation, lies and half-truths. As our political discussions have become so uninspiring, our political responsibilities feel less like a privilege and more like a burden.

For Catholics, the current political landscape can feel a bit like a minefield. Everywhere we go, political discussions are sure to follow and, usually in those discussions, we are going to be asked to show our political allegiances. Our politics have become too much of an either/or proposition, whereas the Catholic faith has

always taken a both/and approach. This way of looking at the issues is not easy today when people simply want to use labels, buzzwords and talking points to secure our votes.

So, what are we to do? First of all, although we might feel the temptation to walk away from politics altogether, the church says that we have a responsibility to be politically engaged. Instead, let us approach this election in a still more excellent way.

We can start by remembering that our ultimate home is the Kingdom of God, not an earthly political realm. I believe keeping this in mind gives Catholics a freedom to speak God's truth of love, justice and mercy into our political realities.

To do this, we must vote according to the dictates of our conscience. The Catechism of the Catholic Church refers to our conscience as a person's "most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths." It further states that we are to follow our certain judgment of conscience at all times. To ensure that our conscience will lead us to make good decisions, we have a responsibility to form our consciences according to the dictates of Scripture and Tradition.

Read the entire column in the Oct. 21 issue.

Ministry SNAPSHOT

AMANDA LAUER | FOR THE COMPASS

The St. Vincent de Paul thrift store in Appleton is prepared for the fall holidays. Becca Merklein is executive director of the St. Vincent de Paul Appleton District and Conference. She told The Compass that the store supplies funds as well as jobs and volunteer opportunities. All of this also supports the conference's voucher program. The store offers a Christmas area in November and December.



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