



# 2025 Evangelization Supplement

## A summer road trip: College students lead teens and children on a journey to Christ

By John Shaughnessy

There's no doubt that many of the children who will return for the weeklong, faith-filled Totus Tuus summer vacation program will miss one of its fun-filled rituals this year.

In the past few years on a Friday afternoon, a water truck from a local fire station approached the hill by St. Mark Church in Perry County in southern Indiana, where the children waited in anticipation. And when the firefighters unleashed the water onto a slip-and-slide, the children took turns giddily heading down the hill with huge smiles.

That ritual will end this year. But the change is also an indication of how what seems like bad news is actually good news in more important ways for the archdiocese's Totus Tuus program—a program that's designed to bring children and teenagers closer to Jesus, the Blessed Mother and the Church.

Participation in the program in the Tell City Deanery is growing so much that it's being moved to St. Paul Parish in Tell City, where more classroom space is available for the estimated 90-95 young people who plan to attend the program from June 15-20.

Besides, there's good news on the water front, too. The program-ending water balloon battle will continue again this year, with Tell City mayor Chris Cail planning to participate.

While the number of children and teens participating in Totus Tuus—Latin for “Totally Yours”—is growing, it's the growth that she sees in the participants that most excites Megan Rust, the catechetical leader of St. Paul Parish in Tell City.

### ‘They had so much fun’

In her seven years of leading the program, Rust has seen more involvement from participants in Mass during



Maggie McBride, left, Katie Alley and Gabby Bickford show the joy that marked their involvement in the archdiocese's Totus Tuus program in the Tell City Deanery during summer vacation of 2024. (Submitted photo)

the week of the program, which has also led to more attendance at Mass throughout the year.

“I think Totus Tuus is a great jumping point,” she says. “For our youth group program, it lights these kids on fire. They're excited. They had so much fun at Totus Tuus, they're ready for the next thing. We've seen our numbers increase in the youth group, especially from kids who attended Totus Tuus.

“We had one young man who was on the fence about coming into the Church.

He attended Totus Tuus last summer, and we just

baptized and confirmed him at the Easter Vigil.”

Jennifer Beyer has seen Totus Tuus have a similar impact on the children and teens who have participated in the program at St. Michael Parish in Greenfield.

“I had a parent come tell me, ‘Thank you,’ at the end of one of our Totus Tuus weeks,” says Beyer, the parish's religious education coordinator. “She shared with me that during the past week when she would go to check on her son going to bed, he would have his rosary out praying—completely on his own initiative.

See TOTUS TUUS, page 15

## Encounter: Who are you meeting unexpectedly these days?

By Anita Bardo

Who are you meeting unexpectedly these days? In the store, at the market, at a sports game or at coffee and donuts after



Mass, there are those times of encountering others. And in those moments, we may not know the impact we have on others or the impact they could have on us.

The Samaritan woman's life was transformed when she had the encounter with Jesus at the well. Jesus said, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again” (Jn 4:14). When we see someone else's encounter with God or hear about their encounter, it should motivate us to have that same encounter with him, too. Have you had an opportunity to encounter others?

I was out one Friday afternoon with my mom, and I needed to stop by the

bank. I was depositing a check and the name on the check prompted the teller—a young man—to tell me his story.

He said, “You don't know me, and I don't know you, but can I share something with you?” It was about the birth of his son, and the name he gave him. Within that conversation, faith came up and he said, “I am not religious, but I am spiritual.” He began to share with me. He said, “We are all called to share the good news of Jesus,” and I smiled.

The young man continued, and at the end of our conversation, he asked if he could pray for me. “Whatever you are going through in your life right now, any challenges that you are facing, know that God is with you, and he will give you answers to your prayers in time, and tomorrow will be a better day,” he prayed.

At that moment I had tears flowing from my eyes, and I felt the Holy Spirit within me. The power of the Holy Spirit was present, and I could hardly contain myself getting back in the car to share this with my mom.

In the same way, in his 2013 apostolic exhortation “*Evangelii Gaudium*” (“The Joy of the Gospel”), Pope Francis says, “Jesus' whole life, his way of dealing with the poor, his actions, his integrity, his simple daily acts of generosity, and finally his complete self-giving, is precious. ... Whenever we encounter this anew, we become convinced that it is exactly what others need, even though they may not recognize it” (#265). I could have said no to the young man and went on my way, but the Spirit said otherwise. I felt that little moment made a difference in my life.

My encounter with this young man was a moment I needed and didn't know it. God provides when we need it most. When we encounter others or we have our own encounter, we let go of the shield we have put up and let God be in control.

At a recent workshop I was leading, a phrase was shared about being a “front porch”—being available for others to share their stories or to give an open invitation to join you for Mass or an event. One participant spoke to me afterward

and said, “Anita, you provide that ‘front porch’ for us. You offer opportunities for us to learn more about evangelization, simple approaches, and you inspire and empower us to know more.”

The work we do in the vineyard is built on love, strong relationships and encounters. It is not only about growing grapes; it is about connecting with each other and sometimes unexpectedly with God.

God desires for you to experience him on a personal level not just through stories or teachings. To truly know him is to understand his heartbeat, which reflects his love and purpose for our lives. This deep connection enriches our journey and helps us grow spiritually, just like the vines in the vineyard.

Who are you meeting unexpectedly these days?

(Anita Bardo is the archdiocesan Coordinator of Evangelization and Discipleship. She can be reached at [abardo@archindy.org](mailto:abardo@archindy.org) or 317-236-1466.) †





# Parish evangelization teams work to help Catholics share their faith

By Sean Gallagher

There may be some 1.4 billion Catholics throughout the world today, but the Church began 2,000 years ago with a small number of disciples led by the 12 Apostles.

It was they who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, went forth from Jerusalem to proclaim the Gospel to all nations, inspiring others to place their faith in the risen Christ and bringing growth to the Church.

In a similar way, there are small groups of people in parishes across central and southern Indiana who have a passion to draw others to Christ and the Church and want to have more people join them in this effort.

This is happening in faith communities as diverse as St. Jude Parish and its more than 1,500 households on the southside of Indianapolis and St. Patrick Parish with about 100 households in Salem in rural southern Indiana in the New Albany Deanery.

In both instances, those involved in evangelization efforts are following the model of the Apostles who gathered in prayer with the Blessed Virgin Mary before setting off as missionaries (Acts 1:14).

Tammy Stewart, St. Jude’s recently retired director of evangelization, outreach and campus ministry, said that her parish’s evangelization team spent several months in 2024 in discernment and prayer before launching initiatives last December.

Both its “Mission Possible” workshop held late last year and its “Rescue Project” initiative held earlier this year have met with a good response from St. Jude parishioners. About 100 people attended each of the eight weekly sessions of the latter program,

which ended in April on Palm Sunday.

“Honestly, I think it’s prayer,” Stewart said. “We’re just going to give credit to the Holy Spirit on this.”

For the evangelization team at St. Jude, this time of prayer flowed into the nine team members sharing their faith in conversation. Stewart said that, at first, some were uncomfortable, believing they

were’n’t good representatives of the faith because of the many struggles they had experienced in their lives.

Nonsense, Stewart said, noting that such people are the “perfect example” of showing how Christ can change people’s lives for the better.

“We’re all broken, and we need to hear that you were broken, too,” she said. “Now you have Christ in your life. Look at your life. We have to hear those stories. That’s our main message here.”

Learning to listen well to other people’s stories was an important lesson for team member Mary Ball.

“It taught me to stop and to listen to people,” Ball said. “The number one thing I learned from our discernment is that we have to meet people where they are.”

At the same time, Ball also learned how to share her faith in concise ways that can be well-received by others.

And being willing to speak directly about the role faith plays in one’s life is a key skill the evangelization team at St. Jude wants to pass on to their fellow parishioners.

Stewart bluntly said that the saying attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, that believers are to “preach the Gospel always

and, if necessary, use words,” is often used as “a cop out” by people seeking an excuse for not sharing their faith.

“We have to use words,” Stewart said. “You have to share how Jesus Christ has made a difference in your life. What was your life like before you encountered Jesus Christ? What’s it like now? You have to share those stories.”

The parish’s “Mission Possible” workshop last December helped the team share that message with parishioners. The one-day workshop emphasized the importance of sharing faith and gave participants practical advice and suggestions for doing so.

“So often, Catholics feel like sharing our faith is impossible,” Stewart said. “They can feel intimidated by that. This [workshop] was a way of showing them that this mission is very possible.”

The team then built upon the success of the December workshop by offering the eight-week Rescue Project, which was developed by Father John Riccardo, a priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit, and his Acts XXIX ministry.

The program is centered around videos featuring Father Riccardo and included dinner for the participants and small group discussions.

The discussions allowed those at each table to practice how they can share their own faith with others.

“Catholics don’t talk about their faith enough,” Ball said. “In the Rescue Project, we did just that. It brought people out of their comfort zones to talk about it so that when they go out afterward, they’ll feel more comfortable doing it.”

When the evangelization team was planning the program, which started in February, they hoped that maybe 30 parishioners would take part. They ended up welcoming around 100 at each session.

“It was encouraging,” Stewart said. “For 100 people to come to show that their faith mattered to them and they’re open to going out and sharing their faith gave us so much hope and really energized our committee.”

Terry Thixton of St. Patrick Parish in Salem said that she and a group of fellow parishioners are taking a “prayer first, action later” approach similar to the one adopted at St. Jude.

They face different circumstances than the team at St. Jude, where the Catholic presence on Indianapolis’ southside is fairly strong.

“We don’t have a lot of Catholics here,” Thixton said. “But the Catholics we do have are very active in the community. I just would like us to be able to share the love of God and have more people come [to the parish].”

“We’re a tiny parish. But, you know what? It’s all good. God is good.”

Thixton was moved in part to help get St. Patrick’s evangelization team off the ground by her experience at the National Eucharistic Congress held in Indianapolis last July.

“I was like, ‘I’ve got to share this,’ ” Thixton recalled.

While the team in her parish is still discerning what concrete steps to take next, Thixton and her fellow team members are starting from a place where they know the ultimate goal—making evangelization a part of the everyday life of all Catholics at St. Patrick.

“I don’t think it just ends with our parish,” she said. “I think that it just becomes a way of life.” †



Tammy Stewart



Terry Thixton



Participants in a “Rescue Project” evangelization program at St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis share a dinner during a Feb. 16 session at the Indianapolis South Deanery faith community. (Submitted photo)





# Listen-teach-send approach is dynamic way to evangelize

By Natalie Hoefer

When the resurrected Christ encounters two of his disciples discussing his crucifixion as they walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35), three things happen.

First, Christ asks what they're discussing, then listens to their story.

Next, when they're done speaking, he teaches them all that Scripture revealed about him.

Last, once the disciples recognize Christ in the breaking of the bread, their burning hearts send them out to share the good news.

Listen. Teach. Send.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) adopted this approach in their 2024 document "Listen Teach Send: A National Framework for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults."

The same three words provide "a methodology for evangelization" not just of youth and young adults but for those of all ages, said Paul Jarzembowski.

He shared these thoughts with

*The Criterion* during a USCCB-sponsored

workshop on "Listen Teach Send" at Marian University in Indianapolis on April 7-8. The document was created by the USCCB's Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, for which Jarzembowski serves as associate director for laity.

Each of the three words is a section in the document, and each section has four parts.

"Listening can take place in a sense of encounter, presence, understanding and healing," Jarzembowski explained in the workshop. "Teaching is about proclamation, catechesis, sharing the truth in love and renewing sacramental life," and the person is then sent "to be a bold witness, to work with charity and justice, to discern their vocation

and to be faithful protagonists today."

He later shared with *The Criterion* how these concepts also apply to evangelization.

"If you just kind of share your story or proclaim Christ but you don't know how it can fit into that person's life because you haven't listened—you haven't encountered their realities, you haven't heard some of the things that need to be healed—then it could potentially go nowhere," said Jarzembowski.

"But the other part of the methodology is the sending, that it isn't just, 'Well, I'm just going to share this with you and have a nice day,' but that the end goal of evangelization is ultimately that we want a person to take ownership of that faith, to be a protagonist of their faith, to discern where God is calling them. It's not just to get them in the pew, but it's rather to inspire them to lead a life of discipleship."

Rachel Gilman, archdiocesan director of youth ministry, agreed with Jarzembowski that the listen-teach-send approach to youth and young adult ministry is applicable for evangelizing those of any age.

"The section on listening, I think, really gets into the heart of evangelization, of starting at that point of listening to the [person's] stories," she said. "Before we can even teach them about Christ, we have to let them know that we are here and that we listen, and we value their lived experience, and that we give them a place where they can share and ask questions without judgment."

As questions arise, the process flows naturally into teaching, Gilman said.

"It wouldn't necessarily be like, just hunker down and teach the faith," she explained. "It's more about using the experiences they've had but then continually walking with them and leading them to Christ."

"If we look at the road to Emmaus story, Jesus at some point does break open the Scriptures with them. But he doesn't just say, like, 'What are you doing? Let's read Scripture.' He converses with them first, gets to know their story, what they're struggling with, and then says, 'Hey, your answers are here in Scripture. Let me break it open to you.'"

Evangelization isn't complete without sending, Gilman continued.

"If we're listening to them and we're teaching them, but we're not asking them to also engage in evangelization themselves, then we're missing the boat on the whole story of what Christ wants us to do," she said.

"The sending really gets into, like, how do we empower [them] to then be evangelizers themselves, to use all that they have learned in their own accompaniment and then go do that same process with a peer or a family member, maybe who has fallen away from the faith."

Jarzembowski emphasized multiple times during the workshop that youth and young adult ministry is not a program to be conducted by one or a few people. His explanation holds true for evangelization.

"It's also the parents," he said. "It's also the

parishioners. Because it's not a program or a process. It's a journey. It's an experience. It's a walking-with.

"It's accompaniment—and each [person] deserves no less than to be accompanied."

(For more information on the "Listen Teach Send" document or to download or order a copy in English or Spanish, go to [www.usccb.org/listen-teach-send](http://www.usccb.org/listen-teach-send).) †



Participants in a workshop on the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' new "Listen Teach Send: A National Framework for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults" document take time for adoration in Bishop Chartrand Memorial Chapel at Marian University in Indianapolis on April 7. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)



Paul Jarzembowski



Rachel Gilman



Jeff McQueen, right, a volunteer for several ministries at St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, listens to Veronica Castillo-Rogers, left, director of youth faith formation and teen ministries at St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute, on April 8 during a workshop on the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' "Listen Teach Send" document. Written for ministries of youths and young adults, the listen-teach-send method also serves as a dynamic model for evangelization. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)





# TOTUS TUUS

continued from page 12

“Another fun story is I received an e-mail earlier in the year from a parent asking about the dates for Totus Tuus. She apologized for asking for the dates so early, but her child was just chomping at the bit. She said that her kiddo talks about Totus Tuus more than their Disney trip.”

Those stories reflect the overall power that the program has had at St. Michael.

“The program has encouraged students to live authentically as disciples and discern their vocations,” Beyer says. “It deepens their prayer life by emphasizing the importance of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, and Marian devotion. The missionaries bring not only their knowledge and love of the faith, but their excitement and energy. The students are just sponges, soaking it all in.”

That impact brings joy to Anita Bardo, the coordinator of evangelization and discipleship for the archdiocese. She’s excited about the six parishes across central and southern Indiana that will host the Totus Tuus program for a week this summer.

### ‘They build these friendships’

Besides St. Paul Parish in Tell City and St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, the program is being offered at St. Gabriel Parish in Connersville, a combined effort by Holy Family and Our Lady of Perpetual Help parishes in New Albany, and St. Joan of Arc Parish and St. Michael the Archangel Parish, both in Indianapolis.

Bardo is also excited about the potential impact on the four young adults who will lead the program throughout the summer: Mia Tyler, Ethan Szajko, Stephanie Gonzalez and Nathan Huynh.

“When they say yes to being a Totus Tuus missionary, they’re saying yes to sharing their faith and building upon it,” Bardo says. “It provides an opportunity for the college students to discern what God is calling them to do. They’re also able to share more of their faith journey with the young people they lead during the week.”

There’s also something about the bond between the young adults and the children and teens they teach that makes a deep impression on everyone involved.

“It’s like, ‘Wow!’” Bardo says. “They build these friendships for the whole week. To see the bond from the

first day to the end of the week, they don’t want them to leave.”

For Rust, that bond is the essence of what she calls “relational ministry.”

“When you can put a young person who is not necessarily familiar to those kids but is a shining example of their faith, you are planting seeds in these kids, in these teenagers,” she says.

“They see that faith, that commitment to Jesus that these young people on the team have. Do we see results two days later? Sometimes, but not necessarily. But it’s planting those long-term seeds about the importance of having that relationship with Christ.”

### ‘It’s really a joy’

As one of the young adults who will be a Totus Tuus missionary in the archdiocese this summer, 20-year-old Nathan Huynh has several hopes for his involvement in the program.

“I’m looking forward to teaching the children about our faith,” says Huynh, a student at Marian University in Indianapolis and an archdiocesan seminarian at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. “It’s something I’ll have to do in the future as a priest, and I think this is a good way to get me started on that.”

The member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany also hopes to form lasting friendships with the other three young leaders of the program. At the same time, he wants to help the children and teenagers in the program grow in their relationship with Christ.

“I’ve always wanted to bring people closer to Christ, even if their relationship with God hasn’t been the strongest,” says Huynh, a 2023

graduate of Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville. “There’s always time to turn to him.”

In her third year of leading the program, Bardo will once again strive to be a guide for the Totus Tuus missionaries.

“I get to walk alongside them on their journey to every parish,” she says. “I get to know them. It’s like being a mom. I treat them as my own. It’s really a joy. I tell them I’m here for them if they have any struggles, if they need to talk. I stay connected with them after Totus Tuus, too. I’ve had a couple kids get engaged, and two of my former kids are in seminary.”

Bardo also hopes to expand the program to more parishes in future summers.

Rust vouches for the difference the program makes.

“Totus Tuus is absolutely worth every penny, every act of sweat equity you put into it,” she says. “You see the ways the kids grow through the course of the week. You see both the little kids and the teenagers grow closer to Christ. All because we introduced four unknown college students to them and let them lead them to the Gospel.” †



Anita Bardo, coordinator of evangelization and discipleship for the archdiocese, takes a selfie with the four young adults who formed the Totus Tuus leadership team in the summer of 2024: Jordan Olarewaju, left, Alyssa Wanstrath, Maria Post and Jacob Russell. (Submitted photo)



## CONGRATULATIONS TO CLASS OF 2025 CUM LAUDE GRADUATES

### SUMMA CUM LAUDE

**Oliver Berle**, Mr. Robert and Dr. Sonya Berle, *Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral* | **Gregory Bishop**, Colonel James Bishop and Mrs. Lyudmila Aslanyan, *Joy of All Who Sorrow Orthodox Christian Church* | **Reece Bonhomme**, Drs. Chad and Chris Bonhomme, *St. Joan of Arc Parish* | **Kristen Castellino**, Mr. and Mrs. Dinesh and Cherissa Castellino, *St. Matthew Parish* | **Samuel Everly**, Mr. and Mrs. Trey and Shannon Everly, *St. Matthew Parish* | **Gabrielle Hadad**, Dr. Ivan Hadad and Ms. Angelic Gisclair, *Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish* | **Briar Keehn**, Mr. Alva Keehn and Mrs. Tracey Gillespie, *St. Jude Parish* | **Danica McLinn**, Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey McLinn, *St. Jude Parish* | **Ryan Peterson**, Mr. Tim and Dr. Katie Peterson, *St. Simon Parish* | **Emily Pohl**, Mr. and Mrs. Chris and Candice Pohl, *St. Simon Parish* | **Olivia Uskert**, Mr. and Mrs. Michael and Amanda Uskert, *St. Simon Parish* | **William Wise**, Mr. William Wise and Ms. Erica Wise, *St. Simon Parish* | **Lauren Wright**, Mr. and Mrs. Michael and Sara Wright, *St. Simon Parish*

### MAGNA CUM LAUDE

**Sophia Beeson**, Dr. Jim and Mrs. Karen Beeson, *St. Simon Parish* | **Reina Brooks**, Mr. Jeremy Brooks and Dr. Aarti Brooks, *Northside Baptist Church* | **Emily Cortese**, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick and Terry Cortese, *Christ the King Parish* | **Jill Dorsey**, Mr. and Mrs. Scott and Erin Dorsey, *St. Pius X Parish* | **Elise Elpers**, Mr. John Elpers and the late Mrs. Karey Elpers, *St. Jude Parish* | **Katherine Lade**, Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey and Kristen Lade, *Holy Spirit Geist Parish* | **Isabella Miramonti**, Ms. Julie Miramonti, Drs. Charles Miramonti and Tricia Kreuter, *St. Louis de Montfort Parish* | **Anna Moore**, Mr. and Mrs. David and Nancy Moore, *St. Simon Parish* | **Mary Pastorino**, Mr. and Mrs. Anthony and Katherine Pastorino, *St. Pius X Parish* | **Justin Scott**, Mr. and Mrs. Brian and Ashley Scott, *St. Matthew Parish* | **Joseph Webb**, Lt. Joseph Webb and Mrs. Karen Houk-Webb, *Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish* | **Gideon Zawadzki**, Mr. and Mrs. Brian and Autumn Zawadzki, *Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish*

### CUM LAUDE

**Paul Arthur**, Mr. and Mrs. Eric and Victoria Arthur, *Little Flower Catholic Church* | **John Bradshaw III**, Mr. and Mrs. John and Lizabeth Bradshaw, *St. Joan of Arc Parish* | **Anna Brennan**, Mr. and Mrs. Dan and Carla Brennan, *St. Simon Parish* | **Dominico Busack**, Mr. Anthony Busack and Ms. Kristina Busack, *Holy Spirit Geist Parish* | **Christopher Dravis**, Mr. and Mrs. Bryan and Barbara Dravis, *St. Simon Parish* | **Emma Drewry**, Mr. and Mrs. Chris and Stephanie Drewry, *Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish* | **Kathryn Kirschner**, Mr. and Mrs. David and Kris Kirschner, *St. Jude Parish* | **Alexander Lefebvre**, Dr. Christopher Lefebvre and Mrs. Emily Lefebvre, *Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish* | **Thomas Mariani**, Mr. and Mrs. Tom and Myra Mariani, *Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish* | **Zayra Pallikan**, Mr. and Mrs. Robert and Ana Alfonso Pallikan | **Jacqueline Quadrini**, Mr. and Mrs. Tom and Tamra Quadrini, *St. Pius X Parish* | **Veronica Rondinella**, Mr. and Mrs. Tony and Meg Rondinella, *St. Pius X Parish* | **Jake Shelton**, Mr. and Mrs. Nick and Allison Shelton, *St. Simon Parish* | **Addison Stanley**, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph and Emily Stanley, *Indian Creek Church*