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Three diocesan Catholics share impact of joining the Church

By JOHN ROHLF
The Message assistant editor

Through the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, the Diocese of Evansville welcomes a group of new Catholics into the Church each year. In the past year alone, the diocese welcomed 261 new Catholics into the Church.

Three of the many Catholics welcomed into the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Evansville over the past several years are Griffin Honeycutt, Sabrina Jones and Mary Whelan. They were welcomed into the church after completing the Order of Christian Initiation for Adults (or the former Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults).

A music teacher at Holy Redeemer School in Evansville, Honeycutt is the most recent of the three to be welcomed into the Catholic Church. A Holy Redeemer parishioner, Honeycutt received Confirmation and First Communion to come into Full Communion with the Catholic Church in 2024.

When Honeycutt joined the Holy Redeemer school staff as a music teacher, he attended school Masses and was in charge of the school choir.

"I was kind of exposed to the Mass there," Honeycutt said. "Kind of learning the steps and the process and things. And just overall, at first kind of just being a little put off by the Mass but then, as the year went on, I got to look forward to it more and more."

Honeycutt said there were two moments that clicked for him in deciding to pursue joining the Catholic Church. He credited a faculty retreat with Diocesan Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry Jeremy Goebel, who spoke to the faculty. Honeycutt said the retreat and time of Adoration with the Lord was powerful.

He also was impacted by a moment during a kindergarten Mass at the end of the school year. During the Mass, Honeycutt was helping when the kindergartners were reading the readings during Mass.



Submitted photo

Griffin Honeycutt was welcomed into the Catholic Church earlier this year.

"I was helping out with that and there was a moment where during the Mass, I was up there kind of making sure they weren't freaking out and stuff," Honeycutt said. "I was on the altar there and

I heard the Lord speak to me through the tabernacle saying to follow me. And from that moment on, I was like, OK, I need to explore this.

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November St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Outstanding Educator is Nicole Cervone-Gish

Special to The Message

On Nov. 26, Nicole Cervone-Gish, a teacher at Annunciation at Holy Spirit School in Evansville, was named the November St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Outstanding Educator by the Diocese of Evansville Catholic Schools Office. Cervone-Gish was surprised by Diocesan Superintendent Michelle Priar, Associate Superintendent Kari Ford and School Support Administrator Lynde Anquillare, who presented her with a certificate and a small gift.

A nominator said Cervone-Gish is "always a positive force with both staff and students. She works hard with our English Language Learner students to help them be successful in all aspects of language. She jumps in and does anything and everything that needs doing in the school, all while holding our students to the highest standards.

The nominator continued and said, Cervone-Gish "has been a tremendous help with my third graders by administering the Heggerty tests and additionally forwarding Heggerty videos that all of the lower elementary teachers could use to help the students with phonics and phonemic awareness."

Each month, deserving teachers are



Submitted photo

Nicole Cervone-Gish is shown pictured, seated holding her certificate, with Priar, left, Ford, Anquillare, Holy Spirit School Principal David Memmer and some of her students. Cervone-Gish is the 11th educator to receive the honor since its inception in 2023. She is in her first year of teaching for the diocese.

nominated by their colleagues, and a committee selects one winner. All

teachers in the diocese are eligible to receive the award.