



# The MESSAGE

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## St. Maria Goretti Youth Distinction Mass honors 74 young people

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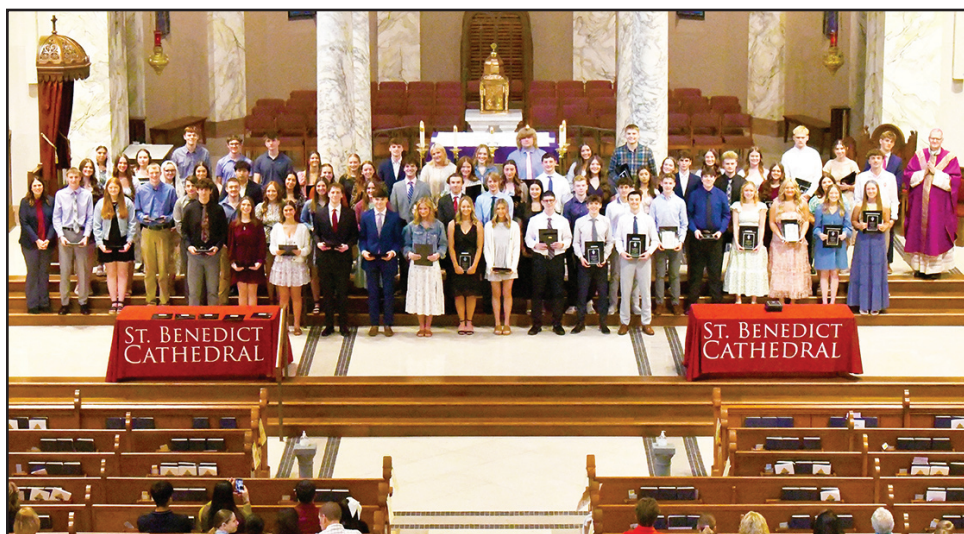
During Bishop Joseph M. Siegel's homily at the March 8 St. Maria Goretti Youth Distinction Mass, he encouraged the 2026 honorees to always look to Maria's examples of courage and faithfulness. As they face struggles in their lives, Bishop Siegel invited them to allow St. Maria Goretti's simple, yet profound, faith inspire them to be strong in their commitment to Christ and the Church, to be a witness to the Lord by their service to others, and to always be grounded in their relationship with Christ by the Eucharist, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and by their own prayer life.

St. Benedict Cathedral in Evansville hosted the 2026 St. Maria Goretti Youth Distinction Mass and awards presentation to honor 74 young people from across the diocese for their outstanding contributions to



The Message photos by Megan Erbacher  
**Bishop Siegel shakes hands with Josie Thomas of Annunciation of the Lord Parish in Evansville during the 2026 awards ceremony.**

the life, mission and ministry they provide to their family, parish, school and community. Bishop Siegel celebrated Mass with nearly 20 priests of



**Bishop Joseph M. Siegel, back row far right, and Diocesan Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry Sherie Cooley, front row far left, stand with recipients of the Diocese of Evansville's 2026 St. Maria Goretti Youth Distinction following the March 8 Mass and awards ceremony at St. Benedict Cathedral in Evansville.**

the Diocese of Evansville.

Diocesan Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry Sherie Cooley thanked diocesan priests, deacons,

parish youth ministers, parish catechetical leaders and parish staff for the role they play in the formation of

See **GORETTI**, page 5

### Bishop Siegel inaugurates new St. Rose Adoration Chapel in Vincennes

On March 9, Bishop Joseph M. Siegel celebrated Mass at the Old Cathedral in Vincennes and then inaugurated the newly renovated St. Rose Adoration Chapel. The chapel was then officially opened for perpetual adoration. *We will have a full story in the March 20 issue of The Message.*

The Message photos by John Rohlf



### Seminarian Dylan Stefanich receives ministry of acolyte

Diocese of Evansville seminarian Dylan Stefanich was one of 33 seminarians to be conferred the ministry of acolyte March 1 in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at the Pontifical North American College in Rome. The ministry was conferred by Archbishop Samuele Sangalli, adjunct secretary of the Dicastery for Evangelization. A son of Holy Cross Parish in Fort Branch, Stefanich is in his second year of formation at North American Pontifical College. He has two years of theological studies remaining before being ordained to the priesthood in the Diocese of Evansville.

Submitted photos

