

At 95, Julius Greb still works hard and prays even harder

written by Katie Zakrzewski |



Julius Greb, a 95-year-old handyman and groundskeeper at the St. Joseph Center in North Little Rock, has worked there for nearly 69 years, dedicating himself to sharing the history and spiritual significance of the site with fellow Catholics.

New Latino Hall of Fame member hails from De Queen

written by Katie Zakrzewski |



Name: Roberto Martinez

Age: 75

Parish: St. Barbara Church in De Queen

City: De Queen

Family: Olivia, wife of nine years; one daughter; and two grandchildren

Why you want to know Roberto: In addition to serving on the Diocesan Pastoral Council and building up Hispanic ministry across the state for four decades, Roberto Martinez was inducted into the Arkansas Latino Hall of Fame Oct. 24 during a ceremony in North Little Rock. He moved to Arkansas from Chicago in 1979. Just seven years later, his family was named the Sevier County Farm Family of the Year. In addition to serving on the board of several local nonprofits and being deeply involved in his parish, he also helps provide resources and knowledge to empower families to own their own farms and get involved in agriculture in Sevier County.

IN HIS OWN WORDS

What feeds you spiritually?

I grew up in a very Catholic family, so my grandparents and the whole family were very close to the Church. Moving here, it was different. But in the beginning, during those years, we didn't have any Mass or any service in Spanish, but we stayed there and kept praying, and we're still here.

How have you seen Hispanic ministry in the state change since you've been involved with it?

When I got involved, there was no Hispanic ministry. Now, the staff of the diocese has the Encuentro; there are events in the community now, and the diocese has most of the things that the community needs. It's in a tremendous stage. One of the biggest groups that has helped Latinos in the state is the Cursillo movement. It was a big thing and still is. When Cursillo got started, serving and being part of the Cursillos was huge. Now, we have encounters with Encuentro and all of these things. It is really satisfying and hard to believe that we got it, but I'm glad that we did. Now, when the seminarians become priests, they need to speak Spanish, which I think is a good idea. We've probably got over 40 Spanish communities in the diocese now, which is great.

How did you find out you were being inducted into the Arkansas Latino Hall of Fame?

It was a big surprise for me. I didn't know anything until someone called and congratulated me, and I said, "For what?" And he said, "You're being inducted into the Latino Hall of Fame." And I didn't know. I started getting some more phone calls, and they told me what they were planning to do, and it was a big deal. ... I was told that there were several candidates, and for whatever reason, I was one of the four picked. I can hardly believe that they picked me, but I'm happy for my community here in De Queen and Texarkana. ... I had the opportunity to meet with some of my old friends from when we were beginning this work around the diocese. It was a good experience.

How has your faith played a role in helping you balance and participate in all of the various things that you're involved in?

My faith has played a great role. In many organizations I'm involved in, I am the only Catholic. I got used to it. I'm not afraid or scared to tell someone that I'm Catholic. It seems like they have accepted me very well. Over those 40 years in De Queen, I've given presentations and had the opportunity to serve in different areas, and I'm still involved. ... At my church, I serve on the finance committee, I'm a Knight of Columbus ... My faith got stronger and stronger, and in every opportunity I had to serve, I served. In the Knights of Columbus, we do several different events in the church and in the community ... We've visited prisoners in the county jail ... and let them know we were with St. Barbara's, so we do things like that, and that helps my faith.

— Katie Zakrzewski

New lay coordinator for English Cursillo from Rogers

written by Katie Zakrzewski |



Name: Nita Moix

Age: 64

Parish: St. Vincent de Paul Church

City: Rogers

Family: Husband of 37 years, Ed; four sons; eight grandchildren

Why you want to know Nita: In addition to being involved in her parish and as a substitute teacher at St. Vincent de Paul School, Moix is the new lay coordinator for the English Cursillo program for the Diocese of Little Rock. Following the retirement of longtime lay coordinator Nancy Christian, Moix began her three-year term in June.

IN HER OWN WORDS

What feeds you spiritually?

Definitely the Eucharist and going to Mass. I try to go to daily Mass when I can, as often as I can. Just being around others and sharing my Catholic faith is what I really enjoy doing, and volunteering in roles that will do that through the Church. ... Quiet prayer every day is another — I have just completed the Ignatian spiritual exercises, so that is another huge way that I've been fed spiritually and continue those prayer practices. I also try to see a spiritual director often.

What is it that you love about your parish and school in particular?

I love that our parish has three seminarians right now. ... So I'm happy about that. ...We have a huge Hispanic community, and I have learned so much from their culture and their love of Jesus. And it's just beautiful to see how two of our cultures — we also have Vietnamese and others — but especially the Hispanic community, how we do so many things together and work together for the beauty of our Catholic faith and learn from them.

How did you get involved in the Cursillo movement?

It's been 25 years since I made my Cursillo weekend. In years after that, I was a team member for Cursillo when other women would come to the retreat. That sparked in me way back then how important it was — all I learned and all I experienced over that weekend made me realize how important God needs to be in my everyday life, wherever I am, whatever I'm doing in, with everyday people. That's what Cursillo does. It teaches you to be fully Catholic by being fully Christian. That really stuck with me about how I live.

How did you become the English lay coordinator for Cursillo?

English Cursillo has recently been revived. For about seven or eight years, Cursillo weekends were non-existent. For the last two or three years, it's been being revived, and Nancy Christian had been the lay coordinator. I was asked to be on one of the first teams coming back. We had our first Women's Cursillo and Men's Cursillo at the beginning of this year. I was asked to be on a team because I had been on teams before and had even been rector, which is the leader for the weekend.... Nancy had done it for a long time, and she put in a lot of years for it....

I was asked by several different people, and one thing that comes to my mind, which is a Cursillo saying — sometimes God doesn't call the qualified; he qualifies the called....

But I do what I love. I know that Cursillo affected me, and if I can be a part of that affecting others in such a positive spiritual way, that's what I would want to do. And I felt like God was calling the timing, and everything was right.

-Katie Zakrzewski

K of C state deputy is the newest role for Tim Malloy

written by Katie Zakrzewski |



Name: Tim Malloy

Age: 65

Parish: St. Peter the Fisherman Church

City: Mountain Home

Family: Wife Denise; one son; six daughters; 10 grandchildren

Why you want to know Tim: Tim Malloy became the new state deputy for the Knights of Columbus July 1. He joined the Knights of Columbus in 1981 and has served in nearly every position ever since, including grand knight of his local council five times, district deputy eight times and faithful navigator three times.

IN HIS OWN WORDS

How did you get involved with the Knights of Columbus?

I would've been in my early 20s, working two jobs. One of those jobs was a cook at a pizza parlor. It was owned by two Catholics, Don and Art. They were having a membership drive and they asked me to join, and I said sure — and that was the start of it.

What are some of the various activities you've participated in as a member of the Knights of Columbus?

I've done so many different things. ... A grand knight is in charge of what they call a council level, so like a parish council, and that's degrees one through three. And then the fourth degree is the assembly. That's the patriotic degree. And that's the faithful navigator. I've held just about every position, some of them rather briefly just filling in, but ... let's just say I've been around a long time, and I'm a very experienced knight.

How has being in the Knights of Columbus improved your faith life?

Being in the Knights of Columbus has been a wonderful experience. You can go anywhere in the country, and it's just like dehydrated food — just add water, and you have instant friends. It's a very tight brotherhood, a very tight fraternity. ... In 2012, it just hit me that for all that I'd done or all that I thought I had done, I really wasn't doing what God wanted me to do. ... So I just sort of dedicated myself to service, the parish parishioners, the Knights, just wherever the need was. I have to say that it has been the most rewarding experience of my life.

What are some of the challenges you've encountered during your duration as a knight?

Every organization is affected by leadership, whether it be good or bad leadership. I have learned that though I don't always wish to lead, I seem to have a knack for it. When you belong to a council at a local level, a lot of times when you move around the country, and you transfer from council to council, some have better leadership than others. Some act more like Men's Clubs than they do Knight of Columbus councils. They drift away from what we're all about. And so I've had the pleasure of inspiring men to get back to our core beliefs.

What are some of the successes you've encountered during your duration as a Knight?

Here in Mountain Home we created a scholarship fund at the end of 2014. I wrote the investment policy. We had sold a building that we owned, and we donated most of the money to the church. We had about \$130,000 left over, and we created a scholarship fund. Today, that account probably has about \$190,000 in it, and we have given away \$57,525 in scholarships to youth. ... The investment policy that I and a couple of other guys wrote keeps the fund viable for many, many years. ... We only give away what interest and dividends we earn in a year, as opposed to giving away capital. But I'm extremely proud about that because if you want to institute positive change in your community, it's got to be through education.

How did you decide to become the state deputy?

Friends ask friends to participate in different things, and it's certainly something you always do to help friends, especially in the Knights. We're such a tight-knit group. So you're asked to fill a position, and you're like, "OK, I'll do it." ... Then, one day, you look up, and you're going, "Wow, how'd I end up here?" ... We've all been trying to teach each other our jobs and make the processes better because, amongst this group of officers, we made a commitment five years ago to make sure that we always left the state in a better position than we found it because it's not about us. It's about what we leave for future generations. ... But being a Knight is truly a wonderful thing. I really believe it's made me a better Catholic, a better father, a better man.

What are some of your duties, responsibilities and goals as the new state deputy?

I'd say the primary duties are growing the jurisdiction and gaining numbers for the Knights of Columbus. Obviously, I represent the supreme knight and the board of directors out of New Haven, Conn. A state deputy safeguards the name and the emblem of the order. He's the public arm. ... Most of the administrative duties are done by your state advocate, your state treasurer and your state secretary. ... But state deputy safeguards the order and promotes the order in the state of Arkansas. ... It really boils down to wanting to leave everything better. But it's not that simple. I want the Knights of Columbus to grow and be stronger, but I'm really more concerned about our faith, putting more people in the pews, helping people realize that God is already here. If you think he's not, he's within you. You just have to reach out and embrace him. ... I just see my job as needing to form men in their faith and provide opportunities and means to keep them faithful and active within the Church. If I can do that then I'll have been successful at the end of the day.

How does the Knights of Columbus help men grow in their faith?

It is extremely easy for a man ... to get frustrated and lose their way in their faith because of outside influences. When you spend all your time with men who have a very strong faith, you help each other walk through these things so the devil's not successful in turning our hearts hard. ... Without that support, it's very possible that a man quits going to church because he's angry ... but when you have the support of fellow Catholics — and our priests in this diocese are unbelievable supporters of the Knights of Columbus — and you get a more intimate relationship with your priest and with your pastors, with your deacons, you're all helping each other keep the faith, grow the faith. Because at the end of the day, aren't we all here to help each other get to heaven? ... It takes a man to stand up and say, "This is not about me. This is about God."

— Katie Zakrzewski



Tim Malloy participates in the Silver Rose Service at St. Peter the Fisherman Church in Mountain Home, in March 2024. (Courtesy of Tim Malloy)



Tim Malloy presents Father Nazarus Maduba with an appreciation plaque for his services as chaplain for the Father Henry J. Chinery Assembly of the Knights of Columbus at St. Peter the Fisherman in Mountain Home Feb. 5, 2022.

New Blaine parishioner connects nature with art project

written by Maryanne Meyerriecks |



Name: Annie Woody

Parish: St. Scholastica Church, New Blaine

Age: 75

Family: Annie and her husband Dewey have a blended family of four children, 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Career: Retired controller for the Hardscrabble Country Club

Why you want to know Annie: She recently painted several murals at “The Holy Place,” a renovated 19th-century barn at Hesychia House of Prayer (see story, page 3). Her husband also has shared his talents. At St. Michael Church in Van Buren, Dewey built two blessing boxes — one for food and one for personal care donations and made handcrafted bowls for St. Scholastica Monastery’s fundraising auctions. Now retired, the two built a home on three acres, where they constructed a prayer garden with the Stations of the Cross and memorial plaques.

IN HER OWN WORDS

What feeds you spiritually?

I start each day with the quiet of the early morning, daily readings including the Rule of St. Benedict and coffee. I also spend time in the garden praying the Stations or just sitting and enjoying nature. I am so lucky living in the country where most of the sounds are from nature instead of traffic.

What brings you joy?

We enjoy having large family days where the kids, grandkids, nieces, nephews and friends come to enjoy the day with lots of food, fun and conversation. Last Thanksgiving we had family come from Texas, camping in the yard. Our nephew just bought the property next door so we will have more room for big family gatherings.

How long did it take to build your prayer garden?

I'm not really a gardener, but we cleared out a path in the woods, lining each side with stones. My family brought in the small rocks and spread them out on the pathway. We made plaques with the Station numbers and words and put them on trees along the way. We set up a memorial plaque for loved ones we'd lost, and friends have given us wind chimes and a plaque with a crucifix. We've been working on it for a few years, and it's still a work in progress.

What is your background in art?

I went to trade school for saddlemaking and leather design in my 20s. I've worked with stained glass and have made at least a hundred rosaries. Right now, I make needle felt two-dimensional portraits of pets, working fur into the canvas with a barbed needle where it combines with other fur to form felt.

Tell us about some of your sewing projects.

When I lived in Fort Smith, I made quilts for the Hamilton Center for Child Advocacy. Now I make memory bears for a hospice in Russellville. I use a piece of clothing from the deceased family member to make a teddy bear or clothing for a store-bought teddy bear.

*How did you get involved with *The Holy Place*?*

I help Sister Anita (DeSalvo, RSM) clean the hermitages at Hesychia House of Prayer. When the sisters decided to renovate the old barn to make it into a sacred space, I offered to paint murals on the walls. The barn is made of stone with stucco on the inside. I researched on YouTube, watching different artists, learning the best supplies to use and techniques to employ. I drew some sketches on a canvas board, and they selected the ones they wanted and decided where to put them. I made them look like windows.

How do you get everything done?

We've always been hard workers, but at our age we don't have the energy we used to have. We wake up early, but after an hour or so we're ready to rest. We downsized when we retired, but living in the country as we do, we have the time and leisure to focus on what's important.

A Catholic You Want to Know: John Bui

written by Katie Zakrzewski |



Name: John Tí Anh Bui

Age: 18

Parish: St. Patrick Church

City: North Little Rock

Family: Father, Chuc Bui; mother, Hanh Nguyen; brother, James, 17; and sister, Jenna, 15

Why you want to know John: John Tí Anh Bui is determined to share the light of Christ with everyone he meets while continuing to honor his Vietnamese heritage. A senior at Subiaco Academy, Bui is involved with the executive student council, Blue Arrow, Heard Hall Perfect, Casa Club, Well Being Club, Future Business Leaders of America and religious clubs, in addition to participating in several sports.

Bui frequently makes the two-hour drive to his home parish, St. Patrick Church in North Little Rock, to help with religious education for Vietnamese children and to be a mentor to younger

kids. He plans to study marketing after high school, and once he completes college, he hopes to do mission work in Vietnam or Australia.

IN HIS OWN WORDS

How did you develop a passion for teaching younger kids?

When I was little, I had an illness that impacted my walking. I was very slow. So when I was little, I wanted to be a doctor or physical therapist who worked with younger kids. I have always had a passion for helping kids. In the summers, I work at Camp Subiaco, being a counselor in training for the past two years and doing it again this summer in June. I've always had a passion for showing kids what Subiaco is and what we are about. ... My parents took care of me, and now it's my turn to take care of others. ... Some kids don't get as much affection from their parents. And when you spend time with them, they feel loved by others.

Have there been any unique cultural challenges for you as someone involved in both the Vietnamese and Anglo communities?

My parents always worked very hard for me to be in a private Catholic school ... so I've always been around Americans, and Catholic Americans, so that doesn't have an effect on me going to St. Patrick's. But the Vietnamese have different religions. Vietnamese people who are Buddhist and Baptist have always come to our church for Christmas parties, but Father (Jack Vu, pastor) always welcomes them in, so we don't look at them differently.

St. Patrick's has really helped the Vietnamese community a lot. Back when I was in seventh grade and eighth grade, we did not have that many kids in Vietnamese religious education. And coming back every year, you can see it's grown a lot — so many new kids I've never met before with their parents, which is very good for our parish. I feel like ... having such a big Vietnamese population in my church is pretty good for a state like ours.

Not many people your age are as devoted to the Church and their community as you are. What makes you and keeps you strong in your faith?

I always have my Bible and my prayer book next to my bed. And I always have my rosary nearby. I always go to Mass on Sundays and that helped me a lot — it reminded me that God's always watching me.

I was pretty shy when I was younger, but I think what really changed me was going to Subiaco and being very involved and growing in my Catholic faith. I think that helped me a lot, as well as going back to St. Patrick and showing the kids what I was learning at Subiaco.

My parents taught me a lot, and how to become who I am. They make sure I'm always doing the right thing and keeping me on task. They taught me to do as much as I can before I graduate, and I have to thank them for helping me like that.

-Katie Zakrzewski

A Catholic You Want to Know: Debbie King

written by Katie Zakrzewski |



Name: Debbie King

Age: 73

Parish: St. Patrick Church

City: North Little Rock

Family: One son, Mark; three daughters, Michelle, Denise and Paula; 12 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren

Why you want to know Debbie: Debbie King has been involved in RCIA for 37 years, currently at the Cathedral of St. Andrew in Little Rock, in addition to being on the diaconate formation team and an advocate to the diocesan tribunal, working with English- and Vietnamese-speakers. King worked alongside her late husband, Deacon Butch King, to help members of the Air Force in their faith during Deacon King's time of service and to help Catholics throughout central Arkansas in their faith journey. King continues to honor her husband's memory through her work on the diaconate formation team and volunteering at the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute at the University of Arkansas Medical Center after his death in 2020. At UAMS, King visits with patients, walks with them and brings them snacks, all while supporting them as they navigate their medical journey.

IN HER OWN WORDS

What feeds you spiritually?

Adoration. St. Patrick's has adoration before daily Mass and Sunday Mass. So there's an opportunity for an hour of adoration and Benediction before daily Mass. But adoration has

been a part of my spiritual life even when I was at (Our Lady of) Good Counsel (Church in Little Rock) for 10 years. I'd had an adoration hour for four or five years at (Immaculate Conception) when Butch got sick. So there was a pause and then I've always picked it up. Adoration is my go-to place.

How can Catholics find strength in the face of adversity?

When Butch's disease came to us (in June 2017), we accepted it as God's gift, that God trusted us with his illness, and that he would be faithful to us, whatever the outcome. So we always saw it as a gift. ... And so Butch smiled every day. Nobody ever saw him without a smile. ... And he was like, "We're here. This is what God needs us to do today, to smile and love and thank the people that are helping us." And it's because we both came to that point through our discussions about what was before us, what potentially was before us, and how we were going to get through it and maintain as much of our family unity as we could. Leukemia and transplants pull you away from the public. It's the same with widowhood — it's God's gift. It's God's plan.

Why do you stay active in diaconate formation even after Butch's death?

Butch was ordained Nov. 23, 2012, and he wanted to give back. God had given him a great gift through his ordination, and he had said if there was another class, would I consider coming with him, that we together could be asked to be team members. Well, as it turned out, we received a call from Father Erik (Pohlmeier) one day (in 2016) asking if we would be team members in an upcoming class. Butch already knew the answer. ... He died in 2020, so he didn't complete that class. I did. I had asked Bishop Taylor in one of our meetings with him, if (Butch) did not survive the disease, would I be allowed to stay on the team? And so the bishop honored that at the time of (Butch's) death, that I could stay on the team. When this new class, the one we've just started, got underway, I stayed on. ... The bishop said yes, that I could remain on the team. I do a lot of the logistics stuff. ... I make all the lists, keep up with all the attendance, all the homework. I lead small groups. ... I work with the chefs that we have that cook all our meals, because I have a food service background and maintain all the supplies.

— Katie Zakrzewski

Did you know? Debbie King was named UAMS' Volunteer of the Year in 2021? You can read more about the volunteer work that King did in UAMS' annual magazine [here](#).

Wendy Saer makes her mark on the next generation

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |



**Learn more on the
Safety Town website**

Name: Wendy Saer

Parish: Our Lady of the Holy Souls

City: Little Rock

Age: 69

Family: Husband, Ted; six children; and 12 grandchildren

Why you want to know Wendy: Wendy founded a program called Safety Town back in 1984, and over the years, she has taught thousands of kids in central Arkansas how to stay safe on streets, sidewalks and at home. Every summer she hosts a one-week program for students entering kindergarten or first grade. Since moving to Little Rock in 1981, Wendy has been an

active member at Our Lady of the Holy Souls Parish, serving as a Eucharistic minister and RCIA assistant in addition to helping her husband, Ted, who is a deacon at Holy Souls. Growing up in New Orleans, Wendy was surrounded by a vibrant Catholic community, and it helped form her into a devout Catholic.

IN HER OWN WORDS

What feeds you spiritually?

It's a lot of things. I've got certain readings I do in the morning before I even get my day started. I need that. Sometimes just taking the time to go sit in adoration; I love doing that. Attending Mass, and even just family time can be a very spiritual thing for me. When you've got a family and you've got everybody together and everybody's getting along, let me tell you, that doesn't happen all the time in families, so that can be a very spiritual thing. I just do things to try to keep Christ forefront in my life.

Why did you feel the need to start this program?

The topics we teach at Safety Town is information every child needs to know, but a lot of parents just don't take the time to teach it to them. It's basic things like what side of the street to walk on and how to cross the street. One of our newest topics is dog bite prevention and what to do when strange dogs come running up to you. We even teach things such as fire safety and smoke alarms. One time, we had five grandchildren sleeping in our house and seven smoke alarms going off at night. It was a battery issue, but seven smoke alarms were going off, and not one child woke up. So now, every so often, we turn them on so they can hear it and know what it's going to sound like.

What's something you've learned after years of running Safety Town that you didn't realize when you began?

That 5-year-olds can handle a lot more than the parents think they can. At the end of the week, I'm always amazed at how much information these children not only have learned but have retained. One of the biggest things we use is music. We have songs that go with a lot of our lessons. Brian Kinder, who's a songwriter and musician here in Little Rock, wrote all my songs for me years ago. To me, it's how much a 5 year old can learn and retain in just a five-day class, and their parents will reinforce it. Then they never forget it.

What's something that motivates you to continue leading Safety Town?

It's something I feel like I'm really called to do. I still remember the day I felt like this was something I was supposed to start in Little Rock, and I never thought I'd still be doing it this long after, but I love it. I love teaching children. It's the excitement of watching those little eyes just light up and soak in all this information.

Do you think your Catholic faith influenced your decision to start Safety Town?

I think it did in the sense that I enjoy doing things for other people... When I founded Safety Town, I was in church when I felt like this is something I'm supposed to start and do. I love doing things for other people, it's a service in the community, and I think it definitely goes hand in hand.

Volunteering a top priority for justice of the peace

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |



Youngest JP ever elected in Garland County enjoys showing community what Catholics do

Mary Hunt turned worry into action through Pax Christi

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |



Pax Christi president Mary Hunt confronts social injustices with Jesus' examples