

YOU WELCOMED ME

2025

BUILDING SAINTS
FOR THE
KINGDOM OF GOD

IMPACT REPORT

St. John Catholic Student Center

“Evangelization, dear brothers and sisters, is not our attempt to conquer the world, but the infinite grace that radiates from lives transformed by the Kingdom of God.”

Pope Leo XIV

Homily for the Vigil of Pentecost, 2025

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BUILDING SAINTS for the Kingdom of God



“ When most people graduate from high school and go to a big college, they are leaving their friends behind. Or, the friends they arrive at college with are not always the friends they keep for the rest of their lives.

The beauty of St. John is the friendships that are made at this church. If you walk down the list of most recent grads, and you ask, “Who are your best three friends, and where did you meet them?”, they will answer without hesitation, “I met my best friends at St. John.”

Yes, we are in the mission of Building Saints, and Saints aren't built alone. We are also helping in a new pandemic, which is people's lack of friends. People need people who see them, know them, love them, and last longer than a semester. They need a lifetime of true friendships.

At St. John, students are helping each other on the journey to the Kingdom of God. They are friends here on earth, and will be friends as Saints in heaven.

Fr. Kerry Wakulich, *Pastor*



OUR MISSION IN ACTION



St. John shaped my faith through all the opportunities the Church brings, between daily Mass, Confession, FOCUS Bible studies, and having the Church open to go pray at any time of the day.

CUTTER SHEETS, 2026



It's a constant reminder of His presence in my life and the incredible community He has placed around me. I am so appreciative of the Student Center—not just for the space itself, but for the friendships I've built through it.

ALIVIA ANTINETTI, 2025



After a year of being here, I can fully attest that 'Building Saints' is what St. John truly does. We build up incredible young men and women, and build up friendships that truly become family. I thank God every day for getting me to Stillwater and St. John.

GRIFFIN FLETCHER, 2027



'Building Saints' looks like the many weddings and seminarians I've seen come out of St. John in the short year I've been here. It's rare to find a college campus ministry that so excellently prepares students for that greater love, which is to lay down one's life for one's friends.

KYLE DOUD, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

THE SACRAMENTS

We are made for a relationship with God. In His infinite love for us, God gave us the seven Sacraments, uniting us with Him in our bodies and souls. Knowing this truth, our goal at St. John is to provide students with the chance to encounter Christ and His Church through a communal and Sacramental way of life.



“MAN SHOULD TREMBLE, THE WORLD SHOULD QUAKE, ALL HEAVEN SHOULD BE DEEPLY MOVED WHEN THE SON OF GOD APPEARS ON THE ALTAR IN THE HANDS OF THE PRIEST.”

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

“ It is so easy to grow in your faith here. There is daily Mass, Confession, and Adoration all the time. Everyone is so involved in their faith that it makes it easy for you to join them. And, it's not like everyone is standing around watching; they're all growing together.

Elyse Sardegna, 2027

FAITH FORMATION

Bible Studies

Many students gather together every week to study scripture and discuss Church teaching. Along with this form of personal formation, they create lifelong friendships with one another that carry on past their time at St. John and OSU.

55%

more students in Bible studies since 2021

26

student-led Bible studies this year

Discipleship

Discipleship is an in-depth formational program directed by FOCUS missionaries for all students desiring to be leaders. Students dive deeper into their faith journeys and are taught how to lead Bible studies, lead other students through their own discipleship group, and share the joy of the Gospel with all those they encounter.

“

As a missionary at St. John, it is such a privilege to be given a front row seat to God working in the souls of many women here on campus at OSU. Through living life together, going on walks, attending sporting events, and playing game nights, I get to grow in relationship, trust, and friendship with these students. Then, in meeting up for weekly Bible study and spiritual formation, we get to dive into how to actually live out our faith together! It is so fun to see a friendship turn into something much deeper— a friendship that leads someone to a space of encounter with Jesus Christ.

Naomi Chernowski, FOCUS Missionary 2024-2025



FOCUS TEAM 2024-2025

This team of dedicated FOCUS missionaries impacted the lives of hundreds of students during the school year and shared the Gospel message daily. Thank you all for your witness to the love of Jesus and for saying 'yes' to the call to be a missionary with us!

**KOLBE CASHION • KAYLEE MURPHY • LORENA BELTRAN
NAOMI CHERNOWSKI • JULIAN HESSE**

LIVING JOHN 17

Sanctify them in truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world... I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

John 17:17-18, 20-21

Before His Passion, Jesus expressed His great love for us in His prayer to the Father in John 17. He knows the world is tough and there are many trials on the horizon for His beloved, but He strengthens us with the Holy Spirit in Truth, Love, and Hope.

Students of St. John express this knowledge of faith in their daily lives. They understand the challenges given to them are meant to draw them nearer to Jesus, and to not be shaken by fear. They embrace the cross with joy, defend the faith with courage, and encourage one another on the journey to heaven. These students are filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit, and it is this fire that gives a light of hope to the whole world.



**"THE WORLD OFFERS YOU COMFORT, BUT YOU WERE NOT MADE FOR COMFORT.
YOU WERE MADE FOR GREATNESS!"**

POPE BENEDICT XVI

CATHOLICISM 101

Catholicism 101 is how St. John catechizes and teaches college students about what the Catholic Church is and what it means to be Catholic. Students attend classes to simply learn more about the Church, to deepen their understanding of their faith, and to prepare to enter the Catholic Church.

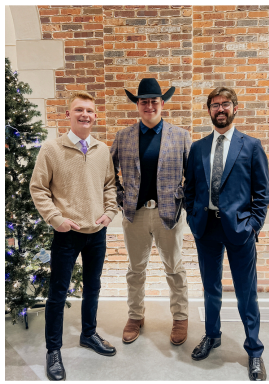


During the 2024-2025 school year alone, **36** students received the Sacraments of Initiation at St. John.



"Our students are willing to sacrifice the longest relationships of their lives, and in some cases risk losing financial support, all for Jesus Christ and His Church; that fact never fails to humble me. It is one of the main reasons we place so much emphasis on building genuine community. St. John is often the first Catholic home and family a student has, and in some cases it is their only home and family. I never want to let them down."

Kimberly Williams, Catholicism 101 Coordinator



BETTER TOGETHER



There is never a dull moment in St. John's student life. Big smiles and lots of laughter radiate through the walls of the Student Center each day, fueled by the joy of holy friendships within the hearts of our students.



STUDENT RETREATS

KOINONIA Greek, noun

1. The Christian fellowship or body of believers
2. Intimate spiritual communion and sharing in a spiritual community



The annual Koinonia retreat has been a major highlight for St. John students since its beginning in 2018. Koinonia is Greek for a deeply rooted spiritual community, which is the foundational purpose of creating this retreat: to strengthen holy friendships between students at St. John. So, for a three-day weekend, students are invited to detach from the busyness of their daily lives and leave their phones, computers, and schoolwork behind to discover the Paschal mysteries of Christ and dive into deeper friendships with those around them.

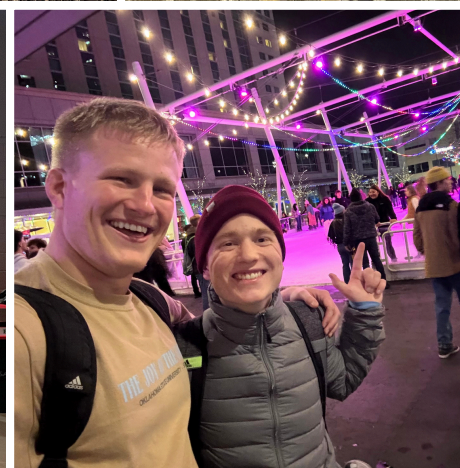
LABOR DAY RETREAT

Each Labor Day weekend, students travel to Conception Abbey in Missouri for a three-day retreat led by Father Paul Sheller, an OSU and St. John alum. By participating in a full day of silent prayer, Liturgy of the Hours with the Benedictine monks, and holy leisure in beautiful nature on campus, students are led through a weekend full of contemplative prayer and incredible fun.





SEEK CONFERENCE, SALT LAKE CITY, UT



TRAVEL WITH FOCUS



CHRIST IN THE CITY MISSION TRIP, DENVER, CO



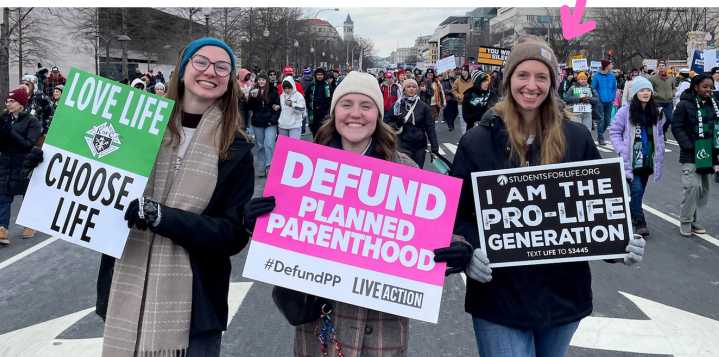
ANNUAL ADVENTURES

Every year, students travel across the United States and the world to participate in pilgrimages and support Catholic teaching. These three events emulate the passionate desire St. John students have to share the gospel, live out their Catholic faith, and grow in holiness alongside one another.

One student in particular attended both the 3 Hearts Pilgrimage and the March for Life:

"The 3 Hearts Pilgrimage is one of the most humbling things I've done. It was difficult, but that's what was so beautiful about it. It allowed me to lean on God and the community around me. I never would have thought something so simple as placing one foot in front of the other could merit so many graces. And, being at the March For Life was an amazing experience! It was so refreshing to march next to thousands of pro-lifers. It puts into perspective just how big the pro-life movement is."

Ellen Schneider, 2026



MARCH FOR LIFE

Since Roe v. Wade was overturned in 2022, St. John students have attended the March for Life on the streets of Washington D.C. to support and celebrate Catholic beliefs on protecting human dignity and defending the lives of the unborn.

3 HEARTS PILGRIMAGE

Each October, St. John students join pilgrims from across the country for a two-day, 35-mile penitential walk to Clear Creek Abbey, offering physical and spiritual sacrifices for the defense of the traditional family and the sanctity of life, while pursuing that which is good, true, and beautiful.



MAY PILGRIMAGE

Each year, Father Kerry takes a handful of students and chaperones on a 10-day excursion to different parts of the world to discover Catholic history and experience different cultures. This year, our pilgrims walked the Camino de Santiago, traveling 100 miles to reach their destination in Santiago, Spain.

VOCATIONS

MATRIMONY

At Old St. John, Fr. Kerry celebrated a total of three weddings. Since the new Church was built in April of 2023, over **40** couples have been married at St. John, and several more weddings are planned for the entire next year.

Outside of the wedding days, Fr. Kerry leads an average of **14** couples in marriage preparation every year. Additionally, St. John hosts a dating workshop led by married couples as they give advice and pointers to all students discerning the call to start dating, get engaged, and get married.

THE PRIESTHOOD

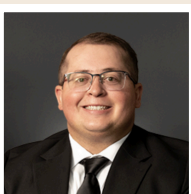
Fr. Duy Nguyen leads a group of men of St. John in discernment groups to contemplate God's call for them in religious life or the priesthood. Recent graduates who have joined the seminary have expressed their sincere gratitude for the community of Catholic men at St. John and carry those holy friendships to the seminary and out into the world.



Fr. Stephen Jones, an OSU graduate, was ordained on June 29th 2024, and is now at St. John the Baptist in Edmond, OK, where he will serve as a parish priest and as the Chaplain for the Broncho Catholic Student Center at the University of Central Oklahoma.



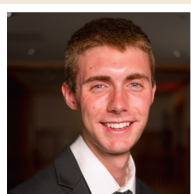
MEET A FEW ST. JOHN SEMINARIANS



Christian Barrientos
Diocese of Wichita



JP Pierce
Archdiocese of Oklahoma City



Noah Drew
Diocese of Tulsa



Luke Tompkins
Diocese of Tulsa



Daniel Albrecht
Diocese of Tulsa

STUDENT STORIES

PARKER & MARAH JOHNSON

Shortly after entering college, Parker Johnson and Marah Martinez began dating at Oklahoma State University as they both studied nutritional science. Following their engagement, questions of truth, faith, and a steady community surfaced. This led Parker and Marah on a year-long path toward the Holy Catholic Church.



Parker: “It began with me being in a pursuit of faith and truth, and I wanted to share that with Marah.”

Marah: “We were pretty involved [in other campus ministries at OSU], but we felt like we were just attending and no one would notice if we stopped showing up. When we started coming to St. John, it was very welcoming; we met people right away, got involved immediately, were invited in by the community, and that was really nice.”

Parker: “I did enough research where I knew [Catholicism] was true, and decided I was going to just submit my will. So, I did, and that was my act of faith. Then, as we traveled through different stages of our conversion journeys, I learned that instead of forceful conversation and argumentation, I needed to pray for Marah and trust the Holy Spirit with her conversion.”

Marah: “He learned through books and theology; I needed a mix of faith, logic, and reason. So, I sat through a five-hour class with Fr. Kerry that helped me bridge gaps I discovered along the way.”

After many years of trusting in the Holy Spirit, praying for one another, and going through their personal conversion journeys, Parker and Marah received the Sacraments of Initiation and the Sacrament of Matrimony on April 19th, 2025, at the Easter Vigil.

Marah: “I was never taught that marriage was more than a legal document and a ceremony. Through marriage preparation and the dating workshop at St. John, we learned about living out our faith through our marriage, how to lean into that vocation, how to be good parents, and to open our hearts to the grace that God has bestowed on us.”

ALUMNI GATHERINGS

Though the focus of St. John's mission and ministry is on the students of Oklahoma State, we also take pride in celebrating special days with special people: St. John alumni, parents, and donors. In February, St. John threw the very first Catholic Pokes Alumni Social in Tulsa, OK, by gathering local alumni, families, and supporters with Bishop David Konderla and the St. John staff for a relaxed night with delicious beer and delightful conversations between old friends. In April, St. John celebrated the second anniversary of the Dedication of the new Church by creating an energetic, outdoor event with a bake-off, BBQ, dancing, live music by St. John students, bull riding, and a dunk tank! After Fr. Kerry was dunked into the water too many times to count, our students, alumni, and donors shared an evening of outstanding fun and thanksgiving for the beauty of St. John's mission to Build Saints for the Kingdom of God.



**RED DIRT
ROUNDUP**
**ST. JOHN CATHOLIC
STUDENT CENTER,
STILLWATER, OK**



ALUMNI SOCIAL
**CABIN BOYS BREWERY,
TULSA, OK**



FUNDRAISING & DEVELOPMENT

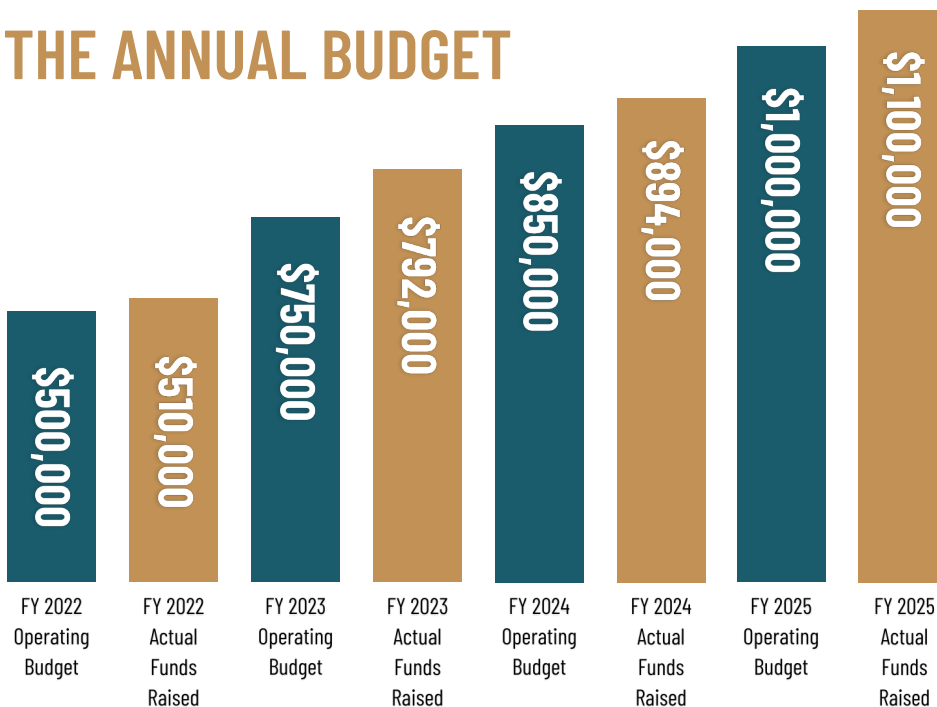
Brett Akins, *Director of Development*

“Because of your generosity, St. John Catholic Student Center is poised to deepen our Catholic mission and form students in the heart of the Church. Together, we will:

- **Strengthen faith formation:** expand Bible studies, retreats, and Catholic leadership development for students
- **Advance outreach and evangelization on campus:** invite more students—especially those not yet rooted in the Church—into an authentic relationship with Christ and His Church
- **Enrich the sacramental life:** foster reverent liturgies, expand opportunities for Eucharistic adoration, and ensure access to the Sacraments
- **Accompany students through vocational discernment:** guide young men and women as they listen for God’s call to priesthood, religious life, marriage, or faithful service in the world
- **Ensure access to life-shaping encounters with Christ:** provide financial assistance for SEEK, mission trips, and pilgrimages

With your continued support, we are forming the next generation of Saints for the Kingdom of God.”

THE ANNUAL BUDGET



YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES AN IMPACT:

- Campus Evangelization
- National SEEK Conference
- Catholicism 101 Classes
- Student Bible Studies
- May Pilgrimage
- Campus Ministry Internships
- FOCUS Mission Trip
- Books and Sacramentals
- and so much more

THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

On April 21st, 2025, the world mourned the death of Pope Francis as he was laid to rest. For days, the world scrambled to determine what might happen next and questioned who the next successor of Peter would be. Much like the surprising announcement of Karol Wojtyła as Pope John Paul II in 1978, Cardinal Robert Prevost humbly accepted the papal office on May 8th, 2025, and took the name of Pope Leo XIV.

“ The moment white smoke was detected at the Vatican, a great number of students flooded into the Hoforium at St. John and waited over an hour for the reveal of our next Holy Father. When Cardinal Robert Prevost was announced, many of us were confused, as he was not a name we had heard before. But the moment we heard ‘Chicago’ and ‘United States of America’, the room was immediately electric. Students screamed with excitement and cried for joy as we witnessed a historical moment for our country and our Church. We had a Spiritual Father once again, and one who already carried a special place in our hearts. What a beautiful day that was.
Ana Cleary, 2025

Carrying on the joy and hope of the Year of Jubilee, Pope Leo XIV answered the question of a young lady during the *Prayer Vigil with the Young People* on August 2nd, 2025, saying:

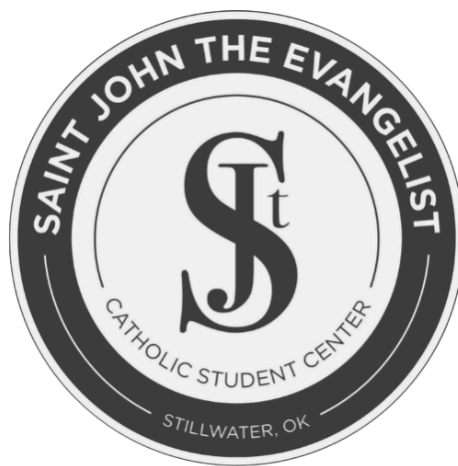
“ Saint Augustine wrote: “You stir us to take pleasure in praising you, because you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you... Lord, I would seek you... and calling upon you is an act of believing in you” (Confessions, I, 1). Following those words of Augustine, and in response to your questions, I would like to invite each of you, dear young people, to say to the Lord: **“Thank you, Jesus, for calling me. My desire is to remain as one of your friends, so that, embracing you, I may also be a companion on the journey for anyone I meet. Grant, O Lord, that those who meet me may encounter you, even through my limitations and frailties.”** Through praying these words, our dialogue will continue each time we look at the crucified Lord, for our hearts will be united in him. Each time we adore Christ in the Eucharist, our hearts will be united in him. Finally, my prayer for you is that you may persevere in faith, with joy and courage! And we can say, **“Thank you, Jesus, for loving us.”** Stay with us, Lord.





HOILY HOILY HOILY LORD GOD OF HOSTS
HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY





St. John Catholic Student Center

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www.catholicpokes.com