



St. Michael the Archangel Parish

Meet Justin and Echo Weiss

Father and Daughter Reflect on Joyful Shared Journey into the Catholic Faith



There's a real beauty to being raised in the Catholic Church and continuing to practice the faith from childhood into adulthood. But there's also a beauty in finding the Catholic faith as an adult and going through the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults process, or OCIA.

At this year's Easter Vigil, Justin and Echo Weiss received the Sacraments of Initiation. For Echo, the most memorable part of the day was the joy of her Baptism and the profound meaning of receiving the Eucharist.

"I felt a little bit overwhelmed with how new everything was and being in front of so many people, but also I was

excited to become a true member of the Church alongside my dad," Echo says.

At the Easter Vigil, receiving the Eucharist was the most meaningful part for Justin.

"I immediately felt healing and presence after consuming the Body and Blood for the first time," he says. "I also love encountering the Eucharist through adoration. Spending time with Christ in prayer during adoration makes me feel more present, seen, and connected to Christ than any other time."

Justin feels blessed that his family will always have Jesus with them now. He's so proud of Echo for her dedication to OCIA and feels blessed that

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75-5769 Ali'i Drive,
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
(808) 326-7771
saintmichaelparishkona.org

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The Joy of Stewardship of Treasure: *Giving in Thanksgiving for God's Gifts*

Stewardship is a way of life and foundational concept, encompassing the responsible management of our time, talent, and treasure. When it comes to stewardship of treasure, many Catholics might associate it primarily with supporting the financial needs of the Church. While this is true to some extent, the deeper essence of stewardship lies in giving out of thanksgiving for the abundant gifts God has bestowed upon us. Furthermore, stewardship of treasure, including the practice of tithing, is firmly rooted in Scripture.

GRATITUDE AND GENEROSITY

Stewardship of treasure is not solely about fulfilling a financial obligation to the Church. It is a profound expression of gratitude for the blessings we receive from God. As Catholics, we recognize that all we have, whether it's our income, material possessions, or financial resources, ultimately belongs to God. In gratitude, we share a portion of these blessings as a way of giving back to God.

TITHING AS A SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLE

The practice of tithing, giving a tenth of one's income, has a strong Scriptural foundation. In the Old Testament, tithing was established to support the work of the temple and the needs of the Levites, who served the religious community. In the book of Malachi, we read, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house" (Malachi 3:10).

In the New Testament, Jesus reaffirms the importance of giving. He praises the widow who gave her two small coins, emphasizing that her gift, though small in quantity, was great in significance because it represented her willingness to give everything (Mark 12:41-44).

THE JOY OF GIVING

Stewardship of treasure should be a joyful act. When we give with a cheerful heart, we mirror God's generosity and love for us. St. Paul reminds us of this in 2 Corinthians 9:7: "Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Moreover, our contributions to the Church enable it to carry out its vital mission – from supporting the clergy to funding various ministries, charity work, and community outreach. By participating in stewardship of treasure, we play a direct role in spreading the message of Christ and helping those in need.

CHALLENGES AND GROWTH

For some, stewardship of treasure may be challenging, especially in times of financial strain. However, it's important to remember that it's not about the amount we give, but the disposition of our hearts. Even small offerings, when given with love and thanksgiving, carry great spiritual value.

As Catholics, we are called to embrace stewardship of treasure as a way to grow in our faith and deepen our relationship with God. Giving from our resources reflects our trust in God's providence and our desire to share His love with others.

Stewardship of treasure is a powerful and transformative practice for Catholics. It transcends the idea of meeting financial needs and is fundamentally rooted in gratitude and the Scriptural principle of giving. Through this practice, we express our love for God, support the Church's mission, and find joy in sharing our blessings with others, allowing stewardship to be a cornerstone of our faith journey.

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Celebrating **RESPECT LIFE MONTH:**

Embracing the Sanctity of Life

Respect Life Month, observed throughout October, holds special significance in the Catholic Church. It is a time when Catholics reflect on the teachings of the Church regarding the sanctity of life from conception until natural death and the importance of preserving it.

The Catholic Church has long upheld the truth that human life is sacred from the moment of conception until natural death. This core teaching is rooted in the Church's rich tradition and the conviction that all human beings are created in the image and likeness of God. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) clearly states, "Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception" (2270).

This truth is not a mere theological abstraction but a profound moral imperative that guides the conscience of Catholics. It underscores the Church's commitment to valuing and preserving every life, regardless of its stage of development.

Respect Life Month serves as an opportunity for Catholics to actively engage in pro-life activities and advocacy. Many parishes organize events, discussions, and prayer services dedicated to upholding the sanctity of human life. It is a time to raise awareness about the value of human life and the importance of protecting it at all stages, including conception and at every stage of life until natural death.

In October, Catholics are called to foster a culture of life in society. This means actively promoting respect for life in all its forms, from conception to natural death.

It includes advocating for the protection of the unborn, the elderly, the disabled, and all vulnerable populations. Catholics are encouraged to engage in pro-life activities, volunteer for organizations that support life, and educate themselves and others about the Church's teachings.

Respect Life Month in October is a poignant reminder for Catholics of the Church's teachings. It is a time to honor the lives of saints and departed loved ones, celebrate the gift of adoption, and actively engage in pro-life advocacy. Embracing the teachings of the Catholic Church regarding the sanctity of life at conception is not only a religious duty but a moral imperative. By doing so, Catholics contribute to a culture of life that respects and values every individual, affirming the preciousness of every human life as a gift from God.



Questions and Answers About C

It's time for our Annual Stewardship Renewal. Every year, someone asks, as you may have asked yourself, "Didn't we just have a Stewardship Renewal? Aren't we sufficiently 'renewed' by now?" Yes, we had a Stewardship Renewal last year, and we're going to have one next year, too! This is an annual occurrence – part of the rhythm of parish life at St. Michael the Archangel. Just as the Church proposes a time of spiritual renewal each Lent, we believe in the importance of a yearly examination of commitment. Is the Lord asking you to give more time, talent, or treasure to our parish this year? The following Q&A about our Stewardship Renewal should help you discern your commitments to St. Michael the Archangel this year.

I feel like my life is already too busy with family and work obligations. I barely even have time to relax. How can I possibly share my time and talents with St. Michael the Archangel?


We all have many obligations to our families, jobs, schools, and other endeavors. But we also all have the same number of hours in the day with which to accomplish these things. The issue is not how much time we have, but how we prioritize that time.

Before you fill out your Commitment Card, take some time to reflect on your priorities, and where God fits into your day-to-day life. Remember, living as true stewards of God's gifts involves giving back the first fruits of what He has given to us in thanksgiving, not the "leftovers."

I am happy with my current level of parish participation. Why do I need to keep filling out a Commitment Card every year?

As part of the renewal process, we must consider our current level of participation in parish life at St. Michael the Archangel. Sometimes, the call to stewardship involves the quality of service in addition to its quantity. In looking through the opportunities for ministry available at the parish, you may find yourself drawn to a new ministry you haven't tried before or new ways to share of your time with God to enrich and enlighten your prayer life. So, even though your current level of parish

2025 STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL



Pilgrims of Hope

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH

Pilgrims of Hope



2025 COMMITMENT CARD

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH

First & Last Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Spouse: First & Last Name _____

Spouse: Phone _____

Spouse: Email _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

After completion, please bring this card to Mass on **November 1/2**, or mail using the envelope provided. Thank you and God bless you!

Commitment Weekend is November 1-2. Don't forget to bring your Commitment Card to Mass!



Our Annual Stewardship Renewal

participation might not change drastically, how you participate may evolve as you grow in living the stewardship way of life. Even if you end up continuing to participate in the same ministries as you have in the past, marking and turning in a Commitment Card means you have reviewed your present ministries and recommitted yourself to them.

I'm not very active in the Church and, frankly, feel like it may be too late to get involved. Why should I fill out a Commitment Card?

It's never too late to renew your faith life, and filling out a Commitment Card is a simple step through which you can immediately re-enter the life of the parish. Our parish community is not here to judge you but to welcome and nourish you in your faith journey. Begin by checking the box that says, "Attend weekly Mass and Holy Days of Obligation," and take some time to discern additional ways in which God is calling you from that starting point.

I'm physically unable to attend Mass or be active in parish life at St. Michael the Archangel. Is there any reason for me to submit a Commitment Card?

Of course! Your prayers are just as important to the success of our parish community in carrying out its mission as ministry participation and financial contributions. Take a moment to look over some of the opportunities to spend quiet time with God listed in the "Stewardship of Time" section of the Commitment Card and take a step towards growing in your relationship with Christ and His Church.

I'm reluctant to make a financial pledge for the year in case my circumstances change and I'm unable to fulfill it. Should I?

Your Commitment Card is not a legally binding contract; it is a pledge of intentions. Make your pledge based on what you are setting out to do to give back to God and do your best to fulfill that pledge. If your financial circumstances change, your

gift will likely change, as well, but it is still important to prioritize God first. Nobody is going to send the bill collector to your house if you can't fulfill your pledge due to a change in your financial situation! But we've all got to start somewhere, and we must begin our commitment by writing down our goals for giving back of our gifts to God.

I've expressed interest in a ministry in the past by filling out a Commitment Card, but nobody from the parish ever followed up with me about it.

While we do our best to consistently follow up with everyone who has shown interest in the opportunities for ministry at St. Michael the Archangel, we are human, and we sometimes fall short in our follow-up. If this has happened to you in the past, we sincerely apologize, and we encourage you to renew your interest in any activities in which you might like to participate by filling out a Commitment Card this year. Every year, we go into the renewal to make sure that everyone who has expressed interest is contacted with more information, and we will do so again this year.

I don't agree with everything that goes on at St. Michael the Archangel. I feel like when I fill out a Commitment Card, it condones the things I disagree with.

In filling out a Commitment Card, you are not making a pledge between yourself and St. Michael the Archangel; you are pledging yourself and God. Disagreements occur in life. This is a part of being human, and we respect the opinions of every member of our parish 'ohana. But it is of utmost importance that each of us fulfills our discipleship of Christ by growing in our relationship with Him and utilizing the gifts He has given us to carry out His mission on Earth, regardless of disagreements or misunderstandings. Beyond helping the parish, filling out a Commitment Card expresses a devotion to spiritual growth and a strong belief in the Catholic faith.



HALLOWEEN and the Catholic Faith: Embracing the Rich Origins of This Beloved Holiday

As the amazing kōlea birds return to our islands all the way from Alaska each autumn, the familiar sights of pumpkins, costumes, and spooky decorations signal the arrival of Halloween in Kona. For many, Halloween is a time of fun, candy, and creative costumes, but few may realize the deep and rich connections between this festive occasion and the Catholic faith. Let's explore the Catholic origins of Halloween and how Catholic families can authentically celebrate this beloved holiday while staying true to their faith.

Contrary to popular belief, Halloween has its roots deeply embedded in Catholic tradition. The word "Halloween" itself is a contraction of "All Hallows' Eve," the vigil celebrated the evening before the Catholic feast of All Saints' Day, that follows on Nov. 1. All Saints' Day is a solemn occasion dedicated to honoring all the saints, known and unknown, who have attained the beatific vision in Heaven.

Halloween's connection to All Saints' Day is more than mere coincidence. The origins of Halloween can be traced back to ancient Christian traditions. In the eighth century, Pope Gregory III established All Saints' Day as a way to honor the saints and martyrs who had dedicated their lives to the Christian faith. The evening before, All Hallows' Eve, became a time for preparation and reflection, laying the foundation for the Halloween we know today.

At the heart of Halloween lies the profound Catholic belief in the Communion of Saints. During this time, Catholics reflect on the spiritual bond between the Church Militant (those on Earth), the Church Suffering (those in Purgatory on their way home to Heaven), and the Church Triumphant (those already in Heaven). Halloween becomes an opportunity to celebrate this common union or interconnectedness of the Church and to remember and honor loved ones who have passed away.

Catholic families can infuse Halloween celebrations with a deeper meaning by incorporating their faith into

the festivities. Here are some ways to celebrate Halloween authentically:

All Saints' Day Costumes: Instead of traditional spooky costumes, encourage children to dress up as their favorite saints. This not only aligns with the theme of All Saints' Day but also educates children about the lives of these holy men and women.

Family Prayers: Take a moment to gather as a family and offer prayers for the departed. Reflect on the lives of saints and loved ones who have passed away, fostering a sense of connection with the Communion of Saints.

Create a Home Altar: Designate a small space in your home as a Halloween altar. Decorate it with images of saints, candles, and symbols of the season, creating a sacred space for reflection and remembrance. Some hispanics from Mexico and even parts of Latin America honor their dead in this way.

Attend All Saints' Day Mass: Participate in the liturgical celebration of All Saints' Day by attending Mass as a family. It's an opportunity to receive spiritual nourishment and reinforce the significance of this feast day.

Share the Faith Through Treats: When handing out treats, consider attaching small cards with brief descriptions of saints or prayers. This not only adds a personal touch to your Halloween treats but also shares the beauty of the Catholic faith with others.

In celebrating Halloween, Catholics have the chance to embrace their rich heritage and deepen their connection to the Communion of Saints. By infusing this festive occasion with the teachings of the Church, families can create traditions that are both fun and spiritually meaningful. Halloween becomes more than just a night for costumes and candy; it becomes a celebration of faith, community, and the enduring bond that unites the living and the departed in the embrace of God's love.



An Inside Look at HODÓS —THE WAY

Understanding Our Human Experience as Christians

The Greek word *hodós* translates to the “way,” “road,” or “path.” It can also refer to a journey, course of conduct, or manner of thinking or acting. In the Gospel of John, we are told that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. The journey brings individuals to conduct themselves in such a way that the mission of Christ can be accomplished through them. The first Christians referred to Christianity as “The Way of Jesus” (*Hodós tou Iēsou*) or just “The Way” (*Hodós*).

Deacon Sándor Hernández Morales has a mission to bring a holistic approach to formation that emphasizes how almost everything we take for granted in Western civilization has its roots in Christendom. From popular culture, magnificent art works, architecture, and musical compositions, to social and civic institutions such as hospitals, universities, fine arts, humanities, sciences, modern genetics, diverse medical advances, cosmology such as the big bang theory, and even the scientific method, and so many other things we associate with the secular world, all owe their existence and/or development to the Catholic Church’s vision and patronage. This formation will be conducted in a new format of a group at St. Michael the Archangel, known as *Hodós — The Way*.

“There are all these ideas in the world of what it means to be a human being, but really we want to understand what the Church has to say about the human experience because no one else in the world speaks of the dignity of every human person like we do,” Deacon Sándor says. “I want people to understand what the Church says and does and the profound effect it has had in our civilization, be proud of it, defend it, and it will all undoubtedly lead them to a closer relationship with God.”

Hodós is open to anyone 18 and older who is seeking to continue learning. The goal is to meet either in person and/or over Zoom once or twice a month so that those who cannot meet in person can still join in the formation. Even those living outside Hawai’i can join the Zoom.

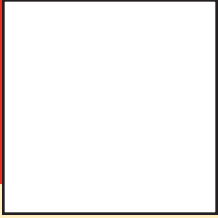
“I think many times what we are missing in the Church in terms of formation is not just catechesis, but that people don’t understand that a lot of Western civilization is owed to Christendom,” Deacon Sándor says. “It is intended for people who have just received their sacraments or for any others just wanting to receive ongoing formation.”

Many audio and visual aids will be used, as certain resources allow virtual tours through the catacombs and sites in the ancient cities around the world and in the Holy Land. Discussions will also include Scripture and liturgical celebrations throughout the church year all around the world in different cultures, the use of music and the arts, and how particular feasts have developed and are currently celebrated in the Latin and Eastern churches that form the Catholic Church.

“The Stewardship spirituality we embrace is understanding that every aspect of our life is a gift from God, and we give back to God in gratitude by spreading the faith and evangelizing,” Deacon Sándor says, “for that to be effective, we must be knowledgeable and proud of who we are and from where we come.”

Formation is never-ending in our lives, and the gift of our time to continue to learn how to pursue the kingdom of God only draws others into wanting to join the journey. God doesn’t call those who are qualified but calls those who are faithful and qualifies them for His mission.

Those interested in joining a Hodos session may contact the parish office at 808-326-7771 for more information or to sign up.



St. Michael the Archangel Parish

75-5769 Alii Drive
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740



Meet Justin and Echo Weiss *continued from front cover*

they got to do this together. He knows that his whole family is home now. His wife, Helena, was baptized as a baby but had never been confirmed. She received Confirmation the weekend after the Easter Vigil. Their daughter, Willow, was baptized on Easter. This means they became a fully Catholic family this Easter season, to the glory of God.

“Bringing my family into the Church alongside me is the greatest moment I have had,” Justin says.

Justin started looking around at churches because he knew he needed healing and structure in his spiritual life. He eventually found St. Michael’s and contacted the Men of Faith group.

“I was welcomed with open arms and embraced by the community,” Justin says. “I was most of all struck by the Mass, adoration, and what I experienced reading the New Testament and praying at the foot of the cross. I encountered Christ, and knew I had to enter His Church.”

As Justin learned more, he was drawn to the Catholic

Church’s rich and beautiful traditions.

“No Christian denomination on earth explains God as fully and beautifully as the Catholic Church,” he says.

Justin and Echo found their OCIA experiences to be deeply meaningful. Echo especially appreciated the patience of her teachers and how they were always available to answer her questions.

Now, Justin has some advice for those thinking about becoming Catholic.

“Read the New Testament, attend Mass, and ask Christ in prayer if He is real and if His Church is real too,” he says. “Listen honestly with an open heart, and our Lord will reveal Himself and His will to you.”

Echo has seen her prayer life flourish since becoming Catholic.

“I became much happier, and I pray more throughout the day,” she says. “I can count on God to help me through everything.”

Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 4 p.m. • Sunday: 7 a.m., 9 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. (English), 11:30 a.m. (Spanish) • Confessions: Saturday 9 a.m.
Daily: Mon-Sat 7 a.m. (St. Michael) • Mon-Tues-Thurs-Fri 5 p.m. (Immaculate Conception) • Wed 6 p.m. (Immaculate Conception in Spanish)
Adoration: Wednesdays 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.