



# SSPX



## Regina Coeli Report

Number 313 December 2023 - January 2024 ∴

# First U.S. Mass Center Celebrates 50 Years

In the early 1970s, a group of devoted Catholics in the Detroit area, known as the Committee of Concerned Catholics, sought the assistance of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. These traditionally-minded individuals were driven by a desire to safeguard the Catholic Faith from the encroaching errors of liberalism that had infiltrated the Church since Vatican II.

In the fall of 1972, Archbishop Lefebvre responded to this group and by July 1973 he dispatched Fr. Gregory Post to provide the sacraments to them. This historic move made Detroit the first Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX) Mass Center in the entire United States, and the first to be assigned a dedicated SSPX priest. Later in 1972, the SSPX established its American

seminary and then, in the summer of 1973, the Society purchased a brick farmhouse in Armada, Michigan, to serve as its hosting venue.

Fr. Gregory Post, the first American Priest ordained by the SSPX, served just a few months in 1973 before relocating to Écône, Switzerland to teach theology. He was followed by a dozen other Society priests, who cemented the SSPX foothold in the United States, and continue up to this day to celebrate Mass at St. Anne's Church in the Detroit suburbs.

The momentous 50th anniversary celebration took place on Saturday, December 16th, 2023, commencing with a solemn High Mass at St. Anne's Church celebrated by Fr. Steven McDonald, who was assisted by Frs. William Kimball and Steven Soos.

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# Letter from the District Superior



Dear Friends,

50 years ago, a newly-ordained priest of a newly-founded order of priests received the assignment to celebrate the traditional Mass for a group of Catholics in Detroit. The order of priests, the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX), was practically unknown at the time. The Church was in a state of chaos in the devastating aftermath of Vatican II. Priests and nuns were abandoning their vocations in the thousands; faithful were leaving the Church in the tens of thousands.

It was in that bleak context that the SSPX's U.S. District began its work. Since then, half-a-century has passed. The crisis in the Church has not abated. Many churches, seminaries, and convents have been shuttered. The faithful have not been properly catechized, and they have been subjected to a liturgy that fails to nourish their faith. Many American dioceses are struggling to staff their churches with priests and to fill their pews.

Meanwhile, the SSPX has managed to reverse all the trends in the Church in that same period. The small seed that was planted in Detroit back in 1973 has grown into a thriving apostolate. There are now 124 priests stationed in the United States, providing Mass at 115 chapels for around 30,000 faithful. Many of these chapels have been blessed with a Mass each Sunday for decades.

The source of the SSPX's stability and growth is not a secret. It is Tradition. Our traditional Catholic Faith bears supernatural fruits. Those fruits are not dependent on a historical time or context. They are available to whomever wishes to employ the Church's traditional means of sanctification. That certainly includes "modern man"! The flourishing state of the SSPX in the United States is a testimony to that.

The 50th anniversary of our first U.S. chapel is an occasion of thanksgiving. We must be grateful to Our Lord and Our Lady for the graces that they have bestowed on our apostolate. We must be grateful to Archbishop Lefebvre, who made the difficult choices necessary to be faithful to Tradition and promote its expansion around the world. We must be grateful to the SSPX's priests who give their lives for souls and faithfully fulfill their priestly duties year after year.

May this milestone in the SSPX's history in our country also be an occasion for us to look forward to the future. We desire to continue this great work for the glory of God in difficult times and we hope to grow even stronger and provide the traditional means of sanctification to many more souls in the next 50 years. May God continue to bless our work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John P. Fullerton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Fr. John Fullerton  
US District Superior



While visiting Armada in 1976, Archbishop Lefebvre and Fr. Anthony Ward posed in the seminary library with members of the Michigan Friends of the SSPX corporation.



Current pastor, Fr. William Kimball, processes into St. Anne's Church for the 50th Anniversary Mass followed by former pastors Fr. Steven Soos and Fr. Steven McDonald.



After Mass, the event moved a short distance from the church to the Italian American Club, where more than 170 people gathered for the festivities. Fr. Kimball extended a warm welcome to the attendees and introduced a special video message from SSPX General Superior, Fr. Davide Pagliarani.

Fr. Pagliarani, serving as the highest-ranking superior of the Society since 2018, delivered a three-minute video address to uplift and remind the faithful of the SSPX's historical struggles. He emphasized that St. Anne's mirrors the SSPX in its unwavering faith and fortitude throughout its history—a testament to the community's fidelity to Catholicism passed down through the millennia. Fr. Pagliarani expressed gratitude to all attendees, urging them not to forget the predecessors who paved the way for the preservation of the Mass and the sacraments.

Resuming the proceedings, Fr. Kimball briefly introduced the keynote speaker, Fr. McDonald, who expounded on Archbishop Lefebvre's strategic approach in creating a priestly mission whose fraternity of priests could meet the needs of different localities

and bring them to Christ. This strategy, successfully employed by the Archbishop in Africa and other locations, became the cornerstone in Michigan through St. Anne's Church.

The historical overview continued with Fr. Todd Angele, who detailed the impact of SSPX in Michigan for the benefit of souls. He underscored the pivotal role played by the Committee of Concerned Catholics, whose plea to Archbishop Lefebvre came in response to the errors of Vatican II. Fr. Angele shared personal anecdotes, presenting a narrative of the establishment of St. Anne's Church.

Mr. Tom Summers was the final speaker. He delivered a detailed history of the St. Anne's and the many seemingly insurmountable challenges that this early American SSPX community faced, including losing the deed to the Society's chapel on Joy Road and being forced to move into the Ferndale Community Center in 1983, only to retake the deed for the Church in 1989 before opening St. Anne's School in 1990. Tom reminded everyone that the reason we attend

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The priests take time for a photo shortly after the conclusion of the event.

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St. Anne's is not the building, the vestments, or the statues, but the Mass, the sacraments, and the sermons which encourage and enliven us on our journey toward salvation.

In the years following the establishment of the Detroit Mass Center, the SSPX has come to flourish in the United States and now includes 115 chapels, 124 priests, 20 brothers, 10 convents, 21 primary schools, one college, and 30,000 regular attendees. *Deo Gratias!*



Fr. Kimball introduces our keynote speaker Father McDonald.



(From left to right) Fathers Kimball, McDonald and Soos celebrate the Solemn High Mass at St. Anne's Church.



Tom Summers elucidates the riveting and challenging history of St. Anne's.



Monica, Mary, and Catherine Gazdecki sing *Congaudeant Catholici*, an ancient Latin hymn, to celebrate their chapel's anniversary.



Framed correspondence from Archbishop Lefebvre dating back to the time of the foundation of St. Anne's.



St. Anthony of Padua in Caldwell, NJ held a Christmas pageant this year to add to their celebration of the feast.

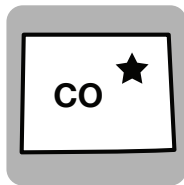


Children from St. Anthony of Padua Church in Caldwell, NJ celebrated All Saints Day by dressing up as their favorite heroes of the Faith.



Blessing of the throats on the feast of St. Blaise at Our Lady of Victory and the National Shrine of St. Philomena in Davie, FL.





In early October, St. Isidore's Church of Watkins, Colorado was very fortunate to host a three day Marian retreat preached by Fr. Alphonsus Maria, C.Ss.R., a traditional Redemptorist missionary affiliated with the SSPX. Following the conferences, a solemn candlelight procession began with a statue of Our Lady on a bier carried on the shoulders of the Christ the King Scouts who were smartly dressed in their uniforms and red berets. They were followed by seven priests, a seminarian, and many faithful.





Our Lady of Good Success is the Patroness of St. Michael's Chapel (DePere, WI). In honor of her feast day (February 2nd), the academy children brought her flowers in a special procession.



St. Michael's Chapel in DePere, WI hosted a live Nativity scene in December 2023. They were blessed with mild weather that weekend and the event was a big success. Many parishioners donated their time and talent—from sewing costumes and building the sets, to acting as the Holy Family, angels, kings, shepherds, townspeople, etc. It was attended by parishioners as well as area residents and friends. They also had live sheep, donkeys, and steers in the stable, replicating as much as possible the cave at Bethlehem.





A new chapter of the Braves has been started in Dickinson, TX. The Braves are the junior (ages 7-12) branch of the Catholic Cadets of America, a program founded and run by SSPX priests since 2010. They hope to open the program up to older members next year.

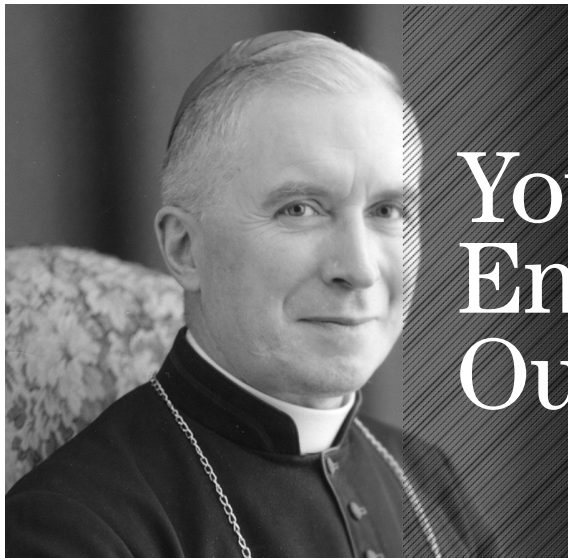


A Mass celebrating the 25th anniversary of St. Therese Church in Nicholville, NY was held on December 27, 2023. The first Mass in the new church was Midnight Mass for Christmas 1998.





A dedicated group of parishioners from St. Joseph's Church in Ray Township, MI spent many hours in muddy winter weather to build a pavilion to provide space for church and school activities. It is the first step of an exciting plan to renovate St. Joseph's.



# Your Generosity Ensures Our Future

Strategic gift planning allows you to derive financial advantages for yourself while ensuring enduring support for the Society of St. Pius X.

Planned Giving includes any gift you have to prepare for. On our new website, we explain:

- How to provide for our priests in your will
- When a trust is advantageous
- How to gift stock, bonds, precious metals, or art
- How to save taxes and help our priests via an IRA or 401k
- And much more!

Please visit our new website and sign up for a free estate planning guide and monthly newsletter: [legacy.sspcx.org](http://legacy.sspcx.org). Thank you for your consideration!



# International Pilgrimages

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## **Holy Land Retreat and Pilgrimage      March 11 - 22, 2024**

Travel to the Holy Land for an unprecedented opportunity to make a spiritual retreat while following in the footsteps of Our Lord! On the retreat days, make morning visits to the sites where Our Lord lived, taught, and suffered, and in the afternoon listen to spiritual talks and have time for meditation. Enjoy the following days visiting the remaining religious sites in the Holy Land. Do not miss this unique opportunity!

## **Marian Shrines of Western Europe      April 15 - 26, 2024**

Join us on this breathtaking journey through Portugal, Spain, and France. Visit the main shrines of Our Lady: Fatima, Lourdes, Zaragoza, and Montserrat. Also visit sites related to St. Teresa of Avila and St. Ignatius of Loyola, the magnificent cathedrals of Salamanca and Burgos, and much more.

## **Youth Pilgrimage to France, including the 3-Day Walk from Chartres to Paris      May 9 - 20, 2024**

Tour the beautiful province of Normandy and render homage to St. Joan of Arc, St. Therese of the Child Jesus, and more. Discover sites related to WWII and visit Mont St. Michel, a favorite tourist attraction in France. Spend two days in Paris and visit the main Catholic sites of the city. In Chartres, admire its magnificent cathedral and begin the 3-day walking pilgrimage to Paris, joining thousands of SSPX pilgrims from around the world. For youth between 18 and 35 years old.

## **Youth Pilgrimage to Portugal & Spain, including a 3-Day Walk to St. James Compostela      June 17 - 28, 2024**

Travel to Portugal and Spain, visiting Fatima (where Our Lady appeared in 1917), Coimbra (St. Elizabeth), Braga (Bon Jesu Shrine), Pontevedra (Apparitions to Sister Lucy), Padron (St. James the Apostle), St. James Compostela, and Finisterre (End of the World). From Pontevedra to Compostela there will be a 3-day walk following the Compostela Portuguese Way. For youth between 18 and 35 years old.

## **Shrines of Italy, Austria, and Germany      Sept. 9 - 20, 2024**

A wonderful opportunity to visit northern Italy, eastern Austria, and Bavaria. Visit Venice, Padua (St. Anthony), Verona the city of Romeo & Juliet (St. Peter of Verona), Trento (Council), Seefeld (Eucharistic Miracle), Innsbruck, Salzburg (Mozart), Lakes Wolfgang & Hallstatt (St. Wolfgang), Passau, Regensburg, Eichstatt (St. Walburga), Munich, and Altötting (Our Lady's Shrine). Enjoy spectacular scenery while visiting magnificent historic churches of Christendom.

## **Shrines of France      October 14 - 25, 2024**

A classical pilgrimage to France including Lourdes, Aix-en-Provence, Carcassonne, La Salette, Ars, Paray-le-Monial, and Nevers. Render homage to Our Lady of La Salette, St. Mary Magdalene, St. John Vianney, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, St. Bernadette Soubirous, and many more. End the trip in Paris, where we will visit the main Catholic sites of this beautiful city.

## **Our Lady of Guadalupe Pilgrimage to Mexico City      November, 2024**

Render homage to Our Lady of Guadalupe by visiting her Basilica on Tepeyac Hill and praying before her miraculous image. Tour Mexico City's historic downtown and the ancient Mesoamerican city of Teotihuacan. Honor the Cristeros by visiting the relics of Blessed Father Miguel Pro and Maria de la Luz Camacho. Enjoy the safety and ease of group travel with fellow Catholics in beautiful, historic Mexico City.

For more information, please contact: Regina Pilgrimages  
info@reginapilgrimages.com | www.reginapilgrimages.com

## SSPX Podcasts

As part of its apostolate to support the Society of Saint Pius X's mission, Angelus Press produces a multitude of original podcast series covering such topics as apologetics, sacraments, vocations, and the crisis in the Catholic Church.

Additional educational and edifying recordings, including interviews, retreats, and sermons by Society clergy, are also available.

Recent episodes include:

"How to Make a Good Lent"

"How Does Technology Affect Us?"

"Why Should I Become Catholic?"

"Our Adversary the Devil"

Please visit <http://www.sspxpodcast.com/> for more information or subscribe wherever you receive your podcasts.

## Upcoming Retreats

### Men:

Dec 11-16	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Dec 11-16	Ignatian	Phoenix, AZ
Dec 13-16	3-day Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
Jan 15 – 20	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Feb 12 – 17	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
Mar 11 – 16	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Apr 15 – 20	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
May 13 – 18	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Jun 17 – 22	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
Oct 7 – 12	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
Dec 16 – 21	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT

### Women:

Feb 19 – 24	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Mar 4 – 9	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
Apr 8 – 13	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
May 6 – 11	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
Jun 3 – 8	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Sep 16 – 21	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
Oct 14 – 19	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Nov 11 – 16	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA

Dates subject to change. For more information please contact:  
816-733-2500 | [www.sspx.org](http://www.sspx.org)

## In Our Next Issue:

The Society of Saint Pius X is embarking on a monumental initiative: the Pompeii Rising Restoration Project in Jacksonville, FL. Old Holy Rosary Church, now under the ownership of the SSPX, is being meticulously restored to its former glory. Find out more on our website and in the next issue of the Regina Coeli Report.



# Pompeii Rising

Restoring Old Holy Rosary

For more information, visit the website: [pompeiirising.org](http://pompeiirising.org)

## Eucharistic Crusade

### Monthly Intentions

**December:** For all our benefactors

*Reward, O Lord, with eternal life all those who do us good for thy name's sake. Amen.*

**January:** For the future of the Society of Saint Pius X

*Defend, O Lord, we beseech Thee, us thy servants, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, from all infirmity both of body and soul; and mercifully protect from the snares of enemies those who, with their whole heart, prostrate themselves before Thee. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



**February:** For priestly and religious vocations

*St. Joseph, model and patron of those who love the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us.*

E-mail: [eucharistic-crusade@sspx.org](mailto:eucharistic-crusade@sspx.org)

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