

Family of the Year

Entry Form

Council/Jurisdiction: Fr. O'Kelley 3860 / Michigan, District 110

Date: March 1, 2024

INSTRUCTIONS

Local Councils: To enter your Family of the Year into jurisdiction competition, complete this form and forward it to the state deputy. Additional paper may be used if space allocated is not sufficient. Photographs, news clippings, letters of commendation or other special exhibits may be included. **Note: Individual jurisdictions set their own deadlines for state/provincial competitions, so watch for deadline dates or contact the state deputy, state program director, or state family director.**

A. PERSONAL DATA

Member's Name: Michael Salter 03768602
(Membership Number)

Wife's Name: Ellen Salter

Children/Ages:
Lauren / 30

Michael / 28

Shannon / 25

Children/Ages:
Meghan / 21

Home Address: 855 Claremont St., Deaborn, MI 48124

Home Telephone: (313) 724-3359 Business Telephone: (248) 977-8220

Parish: The Church of the Divine Child Pastor: Fr. Bob McCabe

Address: 1055 Silvery Lans, Dearborn, MI 48128 Telephone: (313) 510-0648

B. KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS DATA

Family nominated by Council 3860 in Dearborn, MI
(Number) (Location)

For how many years has husband/father been a member of the Knights of Columbus? 22

Positions (offices/program directorships/chairmanships/committee assignments) held:

Since 2002, Mike Salter has been a Fr. Patrick O'Kelley Knight in good standing. Shortly after becoming an O'Kelley Knight, Mike and his wife Ellen welcomed their fourth child, Meghan into their family. Although Meghan was born completely healthy, within a few months Megan's health quickly deteriorated, and today she is still considered "a medical mystery."

Since Meghan relies on the Salter Family and nurses who provide twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week care, Mike has not held a position within the Council, but instead is the Salter Family Champion. (See attached for more).

continued on back



Explain the entire family's involvement within the Knights of Columbus:

Due to the Family's special circumstances, their Faith in Action is displayed in a more non-traditional way. Despite having difficulties during her third pregnancy, Ellen prayed for a special needs child: She says, "I asked God to give me a baby nobody wants." On October 16, 2002 Meghan Salter was born. Over the past twenty years, the Salter Family has been advocating tirelessly for the Pro-Life Movement. While providing Meghan twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week care, their prayer, Rosaries and scripture help them get through the day. Therefore, when Mike was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in July, 2023 and immediately offered his condition to our Lord's care, he skyrocketed to the top of everyone's Prayer List - right next to Meghan.

C. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Explain the entire family's involvement within the Church:

The Salter Family involvement in the Church is different from most families. Our Brother Mike Champions the Salter's Domestic Church, while Ellen Champions the greater Catholic Church as a member of:

- Catholic Speakers Organization, and is as a featured keynote speaker, defending the dignity of every human being born and unborn, including souls with special needs
- The Salter Family has been featured on an Emmy winning EWTN documentary in which the Knights of Columbus were included.
- They have been interviewed on EWTN, and Ave Maria Radio
- And many other Catholic centered venues defending life at every stage (See attached for more information).

Explain the entire family's involvement within the community:

The Salter Family are well known throughout Michigan, the United States, and even internationally for their involvement in the Pro-Life movement. The Salter Family has been active with the following:

- National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children
- Right to Life of Michigan
- Right to Life Lifespan
- Legatus (See attached for more information).

Explain why this family was chosen as the model family in your jurisdiction. Why does this family deserve the distinction of being named Knights of Columbus Family of the Year?

Since 2002, Mike Salter has been a Fr. Patrick O'Kelley Knight. Shortly after becoming a Knight, Mike and his wife Ellen welcomed their fourth child, Meghan. Although Meghan was born completely healthy, within a few months Megan's health quickly deteriorated, and today she is still considered "a medical mystery." Therefore, the Salter Family has devoted their life to the Pro-Life Movement, and Ellen has become an internationally recognized speaker for the Movement. Moreover, since Mike was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in July, 2023 and immediately offered his condition to our Lord's care, he skyrocketed to the top of everyone's Prayer List - right next to Meghan.

It is the hope of the O'Kelley Council that this exceptional Catholic Family be recognized so their story may be become more widespread, and prayers for Mike and Meghan may flourish.

FOR JURISDICTION USE ONLY:

This family has been chosen Jurisdiction Family of the Year.

Attest: _____
(State Deputy)

If this entry is selected as the Jurisdiction Family of the Year, please submit this winning entry form with the state deputy's signature or e-signature and all collateral material to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Mission along with your SPAW/STSP packet of International Award Winners. It is preferred that these be submitted electronically to fraternalmission@kofc.org. Jurisdiction Family of the Year submissions are due by April 30 for consideration in the International Family of the Year competition.

(Councils should retain a copy of this completed form for their files)

Family of the Year Nominee

The Salter Family



An Extraordinary Right to Life
Catholic Family



**Knights of
Columbus®**

Fr. Patrick O'Kelley Council 3860

Fr. O'Kelley, Grand Knight: Robert Ciavaglia, PFN

Fr. O'Kelley, Program Director: Travis Baker, FDD PGK PFN

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Meghan & Brother Knight, Mike Salter



**Fr. Patrick O'Kelley Council 3860
3965 Merrick Street
Dearborn Heights, MI 48125**

March 1, 2024

Richard Fron - District Deputy 110
Archdiocese of Detroit - Michigan Region

Re: State Council Program Award: Family of the Year

Dear Worthy District Deputy,

Attached, please find our Family of the Year Entry Form and other documentation in support of our desire to have the Salter Family considered for the Family of the Year Award, for the 2023 Fraternal Year.

On October 16, 2002, several months after Mike Salter became an O'Kelley Knight, he and his wife Ellen, and their three young children Lauren, Michael, and Shannon welcomed into their family Meghan Marie Salter – a completely healthy baby girl.

Within a few months, Meghan's health began to quickly deteriorate. She suffered multiple seizures and physical collapses requiring several Survival Flights to the University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital. Soon Meghan could not physically move, eat or breathe on her own. At five months old, she was given a tracheostomy and placed on a ventilator that allowed her to breathe. By six months old, a feeding tube was surgically placed into Meghan's stomach to provide daily nourishment. After a full week of testing at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, the doctors declared Meghan "a medical mystery." She is totally dependent upon her loving family and the grace of God for her very life. Meghan remains undiagnosed and lives at home in Dearborn, Michigan where she and her family are active members at the Church of the Divine Child.

The Salter Family and nurses provide twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week care for Meghan. Therefore, our Brother Mike has not held any positions within the Council. However, he heroically Champions his family while Ellen advocates locally, nationally and even internationally for the Pro-Life and Right to Life Movements.

Therefore, when Mike was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in July, 2023 and immediately offered his condition to our Lord's care, he skyrocketed to the top of everyone's Prayer List – right next to Meghan.

It is the hope of the O'Kelley Council that this exceptional Catholic Family be recognized so their story may be become even more widespread, and prayers for Mike and Meghan may flourish.

Vivat Jesus,


Claude J. Bergeron
Deputy Grand Knight

Eligibility

Since 2002, Mike Salter has been a Fr. Patrick O'Kelley Knight in good standing. Shortly after becoming an O'Kelley Knight, Mike and his wife Ellen welcomed their fourth child, Meghan into the world, adding to their three other children: Lauren, Michael, and Shannon. Although Meghan was born completely healthy, within a few months Megan's health quickly deteriorated, and today she is still considered "a medical mystery."

Since Meghan relies on the Salter Family and nurses who provide twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week care, Mike has not held a position within the Council, but instead is the Salter Family Champion.

When Mike and Ellen's daughter, Lauren, was thirteen she wrote an essay discussing why Ellen should receive a Mother of the Year Award from *Lifespan*, she wrote, in part:

During the countless months that Meghan was in the hospital, my mom and dad took turns, one being home with us, the other taking a vigil by Meghan's hospital bedside. Although it was very difficult on them, they tried very hard to ensure life was as normal as possible for Michael, Shannon and me. They made sure we got to school on time, played with us, took us to our scheduled activities and helped with our homework each night. They did all this while one of them remained constantly at Meghan's bedside.



Meghan & Mike Salter

Catholic Faith

When Mike and Ellen's daughter, Lauren, was thirteen she wrote an essay discussing why Ellen should receive a Mother of the Year Award from *Lifespan*, she wrote, in part:

While attending college, [my parents] were introduced to each other by a priest while on the way to a retreat.

Clearly, Mike and Ellen were deeply grounded in their Catholic faith well before they even met. Their passion for Jesus, life, and family has been lived out in the most dramatic way.

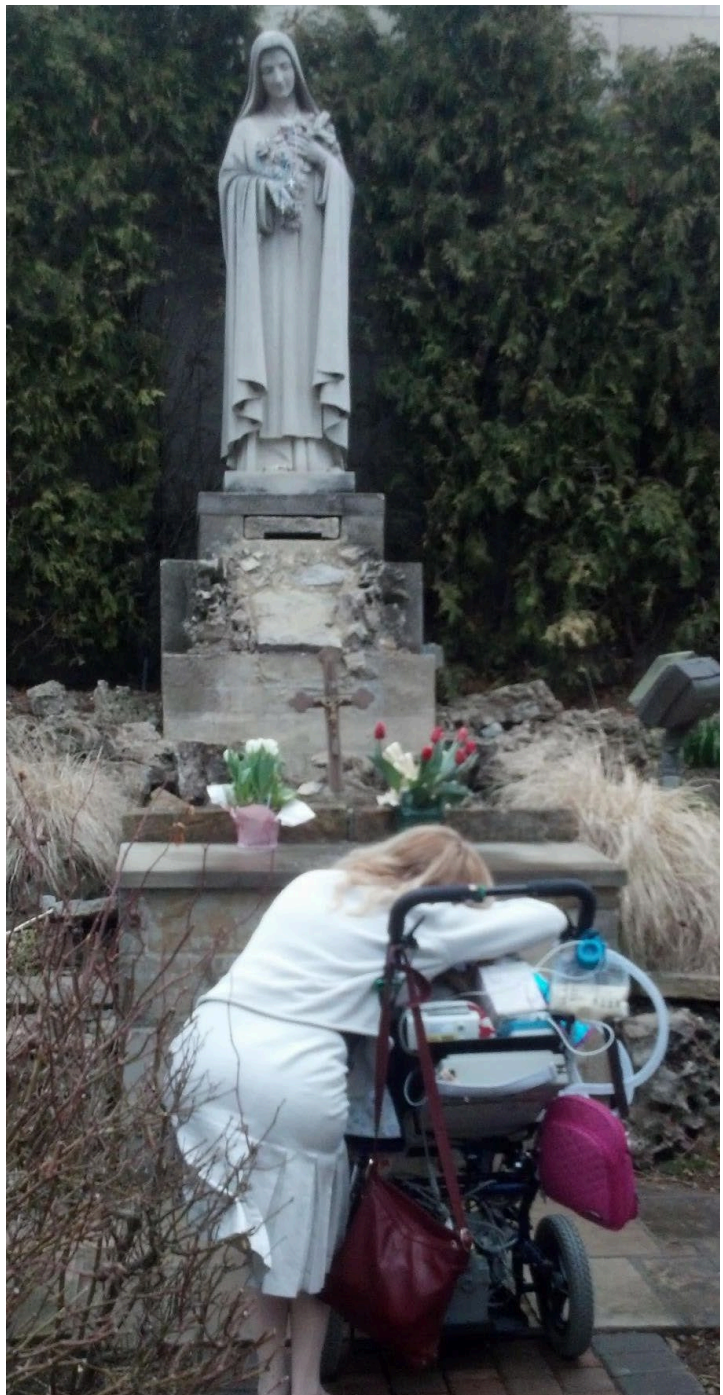
Despite having difficulties during her third pregnancy, Ellen prayed for a special needs child:

She says, *"I asked God to give me a baby nobody wants."*

On October 16, 2002 Meghan Salter was born.

Over the past twenty years, the Salter Family has been advocating tirelessly for the Pro-Life Movement. While providing Meghan twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week care, their prayer, Rosaries and scripture help them get through the day.

The Salter's are well known at the Church of the Divine Child in Dearborn, and throughout the greater Catholic, and non-Catholic community as they are held up in daily prayer.



Ellen Praying with Meghan

Traditional Catholic Values

In July, 2023 when Mike was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer he was thrust into an even more challenging role with the Salter Family. Nonetheless, Mike has taken the attitude of Jesus when Jesus was told:

'Master, the one you love is ill.' And Jesus replied, 'This illness... is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' JHN 11:3-4

Blessed Solanus Casey's quote:

"Blessed be God in all His designs."

and Padre Pio's prayer for healing are what help get our Brother Mike through the day.



Mike uplifting Meghan, and
Championing the Salter Family

Heavenly Father, I thank you for loving me.
I thank you for sending your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, to the world to save and to set me free.

I trust in your power and grace that sustain and restore me.

Loving Father,
touch me now with your healing hands,
for I believe that your will is for me to be well in mind, body, soul and spirit.

Cover me with the most precious blood of your Son,
our Lord, Jesus Christ from the top of my head to the soles of my feet.

Cast anything that should not be in me.
Root out any unhealthy and abnormal cells.
Open any blocked arteries or veins and rebuild and replenish any damaged areas.

Remove all inflammation and cleanse any infection
by the power of Jesus' precious blood.

Let the fire of your healing love pass through my entire body
to heal and make new any diseased areas
so that my body will function the way you created it to function.
Touch also my mind and my emotion,
even the deepest recesses of my heart.

Saturate my entire being with your presence,
love, joy and peace and draw me ever closer to you every
moment of my life.

And Father, fill me with your Holy Spirit
and empower me to do your works
so that my life will bring glory and honour to your holy name.
I ask this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

The Salter's are the ultimate defenders of life, beginning with her own daughter Meghan who cannot speak or even breathe on her own. Although Meghan has been on life support for nearly her whole life, she has touched thousands who attribute conversions and even miracles to her.

"Everyone has a gift," Ellen Salter tells audiences as a highly sought after Catholic Speaker. *"Meghan's gift is saving souls."*

While others look on in wonder and some question the value of Meghan's life, Ellen reveals what a gift the disabled, weak, and vulnerable are to us. She transfixes audiences by sharing God's revelation to her before Meghan was even born and how joining the difficulties to the cross of Christ has brought their family comfort and joy.

"Meghan cannot hold a doll, she will never go to school. Though she can't move her body, this does not mean Meghan is less of a human being. She has a soul," Salter says. *"Souls can never be destroyed."*

Salter, who has a college degree, decided to be a stay-at-home mom for her first three children and is the main caregiver for her youngest daughter, though everyone in their family shares in the care. Her favorite part of the day is holding and rocking Meghan. Her daughter may not be able to speak, but Salter said Meghan is able to communicate, including smacking her lips when she wants a kiss.

Praising Right to Life, Salter said the organization gave her family guidance and support, not legal options as some in the medical profession had done. She urged the gathering to raise their voices in support of the sanctity of human life.

"She knows how to love. Meghan has a heart of gold. She is a pure joy for us," Salter said.

"She may not look perfect to you or to anyone else, but she is not disposable. She has tremendous value, as witnessed to all who lay their eyes on her."



Fr. John Riccardo Baptizing Meghan

Calling her family a “*Right to Life family*,” Salter said they are a very loving, close-knit group that believes in miracles.

“You never know who God is going to put in your path. I thank God every day for Meghan,” she said. “This precious gift is very humbling.”



Church Involvement

The Salter Family is well known at the Church of the Divine Child in Dearborn, Michigan. Their involvement in the Church, however, is very different from most families. Our Brother Mike Champions the Salter's Domestic Church, while Ellen Champions the greater Catholic Church as a member of:

- Catholic Speakers Organization, and is as a featured keynote speaker, defending the dignity of every human being born and unborn, including souls with special needs
- The Salter Family has been featured on an Emmy winning EWTN documentary in which the Knights of Columbus were included
- She has been interviewed on EWTN
- Ave Maria Radio
- And many other Catholic centered venues defending life at every stage

Ellen has spoken to a wide range of audiences including Pro-Life conferences, a Legatus Chapter dinners, Catholic medical conferences, marriage conferences, as well Catholic parishes, colleges, high schools, middle schools and elementary schools, on radio programs, and was featured on Fox News.

She has been recognized by many organizations. Her awards include the Right to Life of Michigan's *Life Achievement Award* and the *Mother of the Year Award* from Right to Life-Lifespan. Their family has received the *Family of the Year Award* from the Knights of Columbus in Dearborn, Michigan and the *Patron of Life Award* from Mary's Mantle; a Michigan residence for pregnant, homeless women.



Fr. Jim Bilot and the Salter Family at the Church of the Divine Child

Emmy Award Winning Documentary


The story of Meghan's life was made into an **Emmy Award-winning documentary: *Stories of Faith – Meghan's Miracle*** and shown worldwide on EWTN television. The film was promoted as a story where:

You will fall in love with Ellen's gentle demeanor and heroic determination as she shares intimate conversations with Jesus, beginning with His request during Eucharist Adoration, "Will you accept a special-needs child?"

Emmy for 'Meghan's Miracle'

Inspiring Show Airs on EWTN



 Catholic producer Audrey Sommers and the inspiring Meghan Salter with the Emmy, which Sommers won for her show about Meghan's life. (photo: Courtesy of Sommers and the Salter Family)



NATIONAL CATHOLIC
REGISTER

Joseph Pronechen Blogs August 2, 2012

And in the "Religion Category," the winner of the Emmy is ... Audrey Sommers for *Stories of Faith: Meghan's Miracle!*

Applause, applause, as the Emmy Awards got something really right a few weeks ago at the 34th National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences Michigan Chapter ceremonies. The academy gave the Emmy to Sommers for her moving film of family love, courage, prayer and conversion. *Stories of Faith: Meghan's Miracle* aired on EWTN on Aug. 15, 2011. It was also shown on the Archdiocese of Detroit's cable station, CTND.

The truly touching and inspiring story of the Salter Family and their 8-year-old daughter Meghan, who can't speak and who needs 24-hour care, but who has brought countless souls back to prayer and to Jesus, appeared [here](#) before the film aired.

So when a story like this gets a major award, there's a light shining on what television could be and should be.

Sommers knows because she has worked not only behind the camera, but in front of it, too. She was once a news anchor at a Detroit TV station. During that time, she was nominated several times for an Emmy for her work on crime stories.

"After 20-some years in secular media, I had submitted so many entries, crime stories, for Emmy nominations while at a Fox affiliate," Sommers told me while talking about this Emmy win. But she never won. Until now.

Because God had other plans for her talents.

"It wasn't until I got into Catholic media that I started winning the awards," she emphasized. Sommers joined the staff of the *Michigan Catholic* newspaper, then the archdiocesan Catholic TV station in Michigan.

Sure enough, she picked up a couple of Telly Awards, plus another professional society award for a TV special called *Angels in the Caribbean*. It presented the work of Food for the Poor.

The Telly Awards, which receives many thousands of entries from 50 states and five continents, is a premier award for outstanding film and video productions.

Then Sommers shot a TV show in Rome for World Youth Day 2000 that was another award winner.

As producer/writer/host of her own Sommers Productions, she then filmed *Meghan's Miracle*. This time, the Emmy nomination itself was a surprise. She recalls being in the library when she spotted online that she was nominated.

“I was crying; tears were coming down my eyes — for such a beautiful story like *Meghan’s Miracle*,” she said.

With a little speech in mind, just in case, she attended the red-carpet event in Detroit.

“When they announced the title of my show, I jumped up, forgot grace and poise, went jumping up the steps, and put my whole speech aside,” she said.

Beaming, she held the Emmy high.

“The first thing I blurted out was, ‘Thank You, God! This one’s for you!’”

Sommers made sure to add that she sees this as an honor for Catholic television.

And Meghan shares in the Emmy, too.

Detroit’s Catholic network did a two-week rerun of the program after the announcement. And, best of all, Meghan’s story is reaching more people again. Watch it directly [here](#) on at [Meghan’s Miracles website](#), where you can learn more about Meghan and see many photos.

“Meghan brings people to the faith, and she brings people to prayer,” Sommers says.

Sommers hopes this show will lead to a series of like-minded spiritual stories focusing on Catholics’ faith through trials and tribulations.

She wants each show to confirm how God is working in the lives of people and families in their times of need and how their faith sustains them and even grows in these trials.

To film similar quality Catholic-themed programs, she needs to get the necessary sponsor or sponsors to help her ([email her](#)) in the work.

In the wings, there just might be another Emmy, along with all the inspiration.

Joseph Pronechen Joseph Pronechen is staff writer with the *National Catholic Register* since 2005 and before that a regular correspondent for the paper. His articles have appeared in a number of national publications including *Columbia* magazine, *Soul, Faith and Family*, *Catholic Digest*, *Catholic Exchange*, and *Marian Helper*. His religion features have also appeared in *Fairfield County Catholic* and in major newspapers. He is the author of *Fruits of Fatima — Century of Signs and Wonders*. He holds a graduate degree and formerly taught English and courses in film study that he developed at a Catholic high school in Connecticut. Joseph and his wife Mary reside on the East Coast.



Community Involvement

The Salter Family are well known throughout Michigan, the United States, and even internationally for their involvement in the Pro-Life movement. The Salter Family has been active with the following:

- National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children
- Right to Life of Michigan
- Right to Life Lifespan
- Legatus


Ellen's Speaking Topics are:

- Why The Vulnerable Have Value and How to Defend Them
- Catholic Teachings on Life-Support, End of Life Issues, and the Gift of Life
- The Beauty of Redemptive Suffering: Entering into the Heart of Christ
- Finding Peace and Joy in the Midst of Suffering
- The Miracle of Meghan: A Medical Mystery of a Beautiful Soul
- Encountering Christ through Unconditional Love and Surrender
- Speaking Without Words: How Meghan Brings Souls to Christ without a Single Word
- The Gift of Every Life from Conception to Natural Death: Speaking Out Against Euthanasia and Infanticide



Mike's Candlelight Prayer Service

In July 2023, Mike was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and was thrust into an even more challenging role with the Salter Family. In December 2023, a beautiful Candlelight Prayer Service was held for Mike. The Prayer Service was an awe-inspiring witness of the Salter Family's Catholic faith as their Dearborn Street was sectioned off by the City, and people of various Christian and Muslim backgrounds converged onto the Salter front yard to lift Mike up in prayer. The evening was an incredible witness of Catholic prayer to the greater community.



Opening Prayer Fr. Bob McCabe

Hail Mary Song Joe & Chuck Salter

Mike's Special Saints

Blessed Fr. Solanus..... Fr. Dudek
"Blessed be God in all his designs."

Saint Padre Pio Jim Colliton
The Most Powerful Prayer for Healing

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux Steve Duffy

Divine Mercy Bill & Carol Brewis
All respond on the Hail Mary beads:
For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Concluding Doxology (say three times):
Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have Mercy on us and on the whole world.

Candle Lighting

This Little Light of Mine Joe Salter

Ave Maria Jody Bustamante and Will Dunn
Guitar By Jim Bustamante

Rosary Fr. John Kopson
Chuck Salter/Ray Biscaro/Steve Chandler/
Chuck Fox/Bob Salter

Litany of the Saints Joe Salter and
Jody Bustamante

**Blessing of Mike
and of All Gathered**..... Fr. JJ Mech

Closing Thoughts Mike Salter

**Prayer over
Meghan Marie Thérèse**..... Deacon Jerry
Meghan turns 21 years old Oct 16. Happy birthday!

ADDITIONAL

- Fellowship and Unbound Ministry
- Birthday cake
- Hot and cold cider, hot chocolate, coffee and donuts
(courtesy of Tess & Tim Noonan)



Candle Light Prayer Service
for Mike Salter



Candle Light Prayer Service for Mike Salter

O'Kelley Council Hosts Meghan's Miracles

In 2003, the O'Kelley Knights of Columbus held a fundraiser for Meghan. The event brought hundreds of attendees to the event, which raised generous tax-deductible contributions enabling the Salter Family to better care for Meghan. The Salter's are truly an extraordinary Right to Life family, led by our Brother Mike.



Shannon and Meghan Salter



Teresa Tomeo author, syndicated Catholic talk show host, and motivational speaker and Mike



Commendation

What people are saying about Meghan, Ellen and the Salter Family:

" Ellen lives the prolife message in a powerful way. Her journey will touch your heart. She inspires even the most lapsed believer and motivates people to put their pro-life beliefs into action."

Teresa Tomeo

Teresa Tomeo is an author, syndicated Catholic talk show host, and motivational speaker with more than 30 years of experience in TV, radio, and newspaper, 20 of which were as a secular reporter/anchor in the Detroit market. In the year 2000, Teresa left the secular media to start her own speaking and communications company, Teresa Tomeo Communications, LLC. Her weekday morning radio program, *Catholic Connection*, is co-produced by Ave Maria Radio in Ann Arbor, Michigan and the EWTN Global Catholic Radio Network. It is heard on over 500 Catholic radio stations worldwide and on the Sirius Satellite Network.



"I have personally witnessed Ellen's firsthand dedication to her precious daughter whose life was threatened by physicians who recommended ending her treatment. Her witness is one that you will not soon forget—a story of never giving up hope and why caring for our most medically vulnerable is one of our Lord's greatest gifts."

Bobby Schindler

Bobby Schindler is president of the Terri Schiavo Life & Hope Network and associate scholar at the Charlotte Lozier Institute. Bobby advocates for the medically vulnerable in honor of Terri Schiavo, his sister. A full-time advocate, speaker, and writer, Bobby and the Terri Schiavo Life & Hope Network have been instrumental in providing resources and support to more than 4,000 patients and families at risk of euthanasia, assisted suicide, and denial-of-care situations from physicians, hospitals, insurance companies, and others. Bobby's writings have appeared in the Wall Street Journal, Chicago Tribune, TIME, The Linacre Quarterly, National Review, Human Life Review, and The Washington Times. He is also a regular contributor to LifeNews.com.



"It has been a joy to know Ellen Salter and her family for more than 20 years now. In my entire life as a priest, I have rarely come across a woman with such a combination of strength, passion, gentleness and kindness. She is a true disciple of Jesus, and a passionate and compassionate voice for the sanctity of all human life. Her story of what God has done in and through all of her children, but especially through her dear daughter, Meghan, is one that needs to be heard!"

Father John Riccardo

Father John Riccardo, missionary and ACTS XXIX Executive Director. He was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit in 1996. In 2019, after 23 years in parish ministry, he founded Acts XXIX to proclaim the gospel in an attractive and compelling way and to equip clergy and lay leaders for the age in which God has chosen us to live. Fr. John is a graduate of the University of Michigan, the Gregorian University, and the Pope John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and the Family.



Ellen speaking on behalf of Right to Life with Ave Maria Radio

Various Media Pieces

NEWS

U.S. mom with child similar to Alfie Evans: 'Courts and hospital killed Alfie'

'They had an agenda to kill Alfie and they were going to see it to completion.'



Ellen Salter with daughter Meghan. Meghan's Miracles / Facebook

Right to Life dinner March 29

| MARCH 14, 2012



Dear Editor:

Right to Life of Sanilac County will be hosting its 11th Annual Focus on Life Benefit Dinner on Thursday, March 29. The dinner will be held in Peck at the St. John's Parish Center located at 5335 S. Sandusky Road. The evening will start with fellowship at 6 p.m. and the dinner will begin at 7 p.m.

The guest speaker for the evening will be Ellen Salter. Ellen and her husband Mike were Right to Life of Michigan's 2011 Life Achievement Award Recipients. Ellen gave birth to Meghan, their fourth child, in October of 2002— another healthy baby girl. Less than two months into Meghan's life, she started developing serious problems. Her limbs grew limp with no explanation. Then one day as Ellen was toweling her off after a bath, Meghan stopped breathing. That day Meghan was flown for the first time to the University of Michigan's Mott's Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor with many more helicopter flights in the years to follow along with regular surgeries on her spine to help her breathing. Meghan's

Life is Love

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Jeremiah 29:11

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE SUNDAY

copyright 2005 Right to Life of Michigan Educational Fund



God gave us a tiny Rosebud,
Meghan's the fragile kind.
She hasn't yet opened her petals,
They're so delicate and fine.

God sent her to a devoted family,
To care for and to love,
His angels look upon her,
From heaven up above.

Now we wait and hope and pray,
For her petals to open wide,
So she will know her own beauty,
Which God has stored inside.

Then she will bloom vividly,
In the colorful garden of Love,
Misting her wonderful fragrance,
Among her family and angels above.

Poem used with permission.

God's Tiny Rosebud

Meghan came into the world on October 16, 2002. She was born without any apparent health problems. For the first three weeks, she ate, grew, slept and did everything a healthy, happy baby would do. Then, without warning in the second week of November, Meghan's health started to change.

After a series of unexplained seizures, Meghan no longer is able to move her arms or legs and is dependent on a

ventilator. When she wakes from a long sleep, she will stretch her back. She also can move her head from side to side. And Meghan's smile lights up the room.

Through all the ups and downs of Meghan's medical challenges, her family continues to hope and pray.

Meghan is a daughter, a granddaughter, a sister, a niece and a friend. Her life

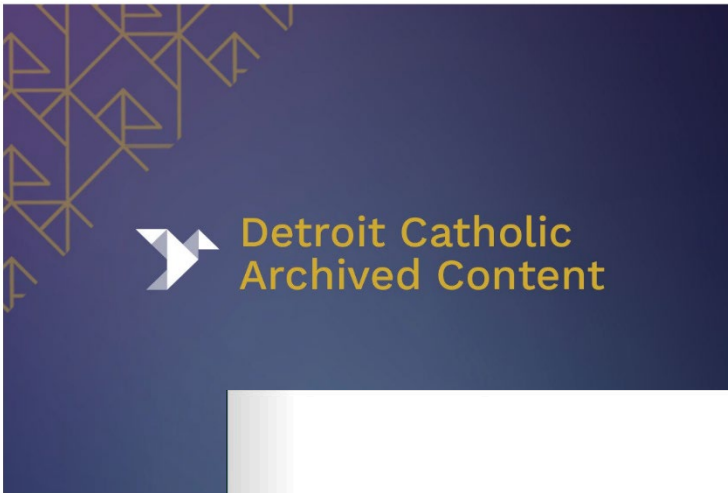
has immeasurable value not only to those around her, but also because she is a precious and irreplaceable individual. Meghan's future is unclear – in reality, everyone's future is uncertain, but as members of the human family we have a responsibility to care for and to love each other. Meghan and her family teach us that life is love.

For updates on Meghan's health, please visit www.babymeghan.org.

Right to Life of Michigan Educational Fund • P.O. Box 901 • Grand Rapids, MI 49509-0901 • www.rtl.org

Girl's survival, family's fidelity make inspiring story

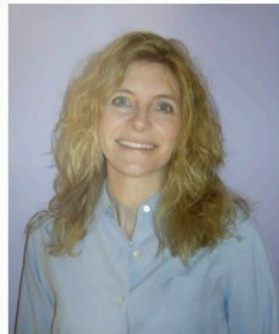
ROBERT DELANEY Jan 12, 2011 Local



Art Contest Winners
pp. 4-5

Lifespan *news*

Volume 36 Number 4 Presenting the Pro-Life Message in Southeastern Michigan Since 1970 June 2007



Congratulations, Ellen Salter!

Mother of the Year 2007

In conjunction with our Mother's Day Dinner, we are honoring our Mother of the Year 2007, Ellen Salter, of Dearborn. Ellen was nominated by her 13-year-old daughter, Lauren. Printed below is the nomination letter which her daughter wrote.

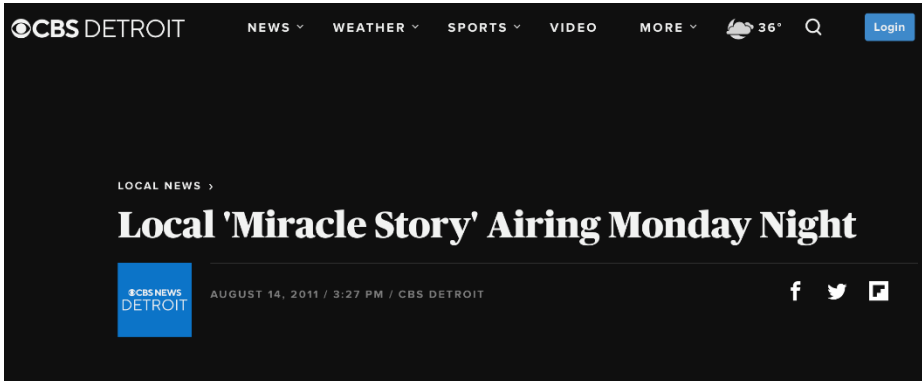
My name is Lauren Salter. I am 13 years old and the oldest of four children. I am nominating my mom for the 2007 Right to Life - LIFESPAN Mother of the Year award on behalf of myself, my brother, Michael, and my sisters, Shannon and Meghan.

My mom, Ellen Salter, is an amazing mother and deserves the title of "Mother of the Year." Before I tell you *why* she deserves this title, I'd like to tell you how and when my mom and dad met. Their marriage was truly made in heaven. While attending college, they were introduced to each other by a priest while on the way to a retreat! They dated for about a year before getting engaged. They got married on April 24, 1992. My mom and dad quickly answered God's call to have children and I was born in August of 1993—a little over a year after my mom and dad were married. For two years, I had my mom and dad all to myself—until September 1995 when my younger brother, Michael, was born. Then, in August 1998, Shannon was born. We were a very happy family and did everything together, but my mother had more love to share—more love to give.

My mom loved children so much, she prayed for yet another baby. We found out recently that my mom wanted a fourth child so badly that she prayed that if God would grant her another baby, she would fully accept and love a baby that someone else might not want—a baby that might be aborted by someone else. It took four years, but her prayers were finally answered, and beautiful Meghan Marie came into this world on October 16, 2002. The *unconditional love* that my mother shows for Meghan, as well as her pro-life activism, is why I am nominating my amazing mom for the 2007 Right to Life - LIFESPAN Mother of the Year. Let me explain...

Meghan was born completely healthy, but within a few months, she got critically sick. She was getting progressively weaker and weaker. By the time she was four months old, she had stopped breathing and collapsed several different times in my mom's arms. Each time, my dad frantically called 9-1-1, and Meghan was taken by ambulance to the local hospital, then airlifted to U of M Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor. It was very scary since we had no notice when these "collapses" would occur and none of the doctors could tell us why these incidents happened in the first place. Poor Meghan was hospitalized for most of 2003. She went through an enormous amount of testing to find out the cause of her illness, but to this day remains undiagnosed. During this time in the hospital, Meghan was given a tracheotomy and was put on a ventilator to help her breathe. A feeding tube was also placed into her stomach, allowing Meghan to receive the nourishment she needs.

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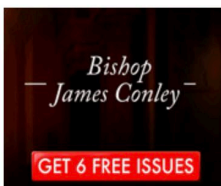
DEARBORN (WWJ) - One Dearborn family's story is airing globally on the EWTN Network on Monday thanks to a new documentary from award winning local Broadcast Producer Audrey Sommers.

It's a story that will tug on your heart-strings, the miracle of how a Dearborn girl suffering from seizures was saved from the torture when a priest sprinkles holy water.

Meghan Salter, now 8, was a few months old when she began suffering from seizures, but when her parish priest sprinkled holy water on her, the seizures stopped.

'Meghan's Miracle' Inspires Many

Chronically ill 8-year-old's faith featured on EWTN.



Family of the Year Nominee



The Salter Family

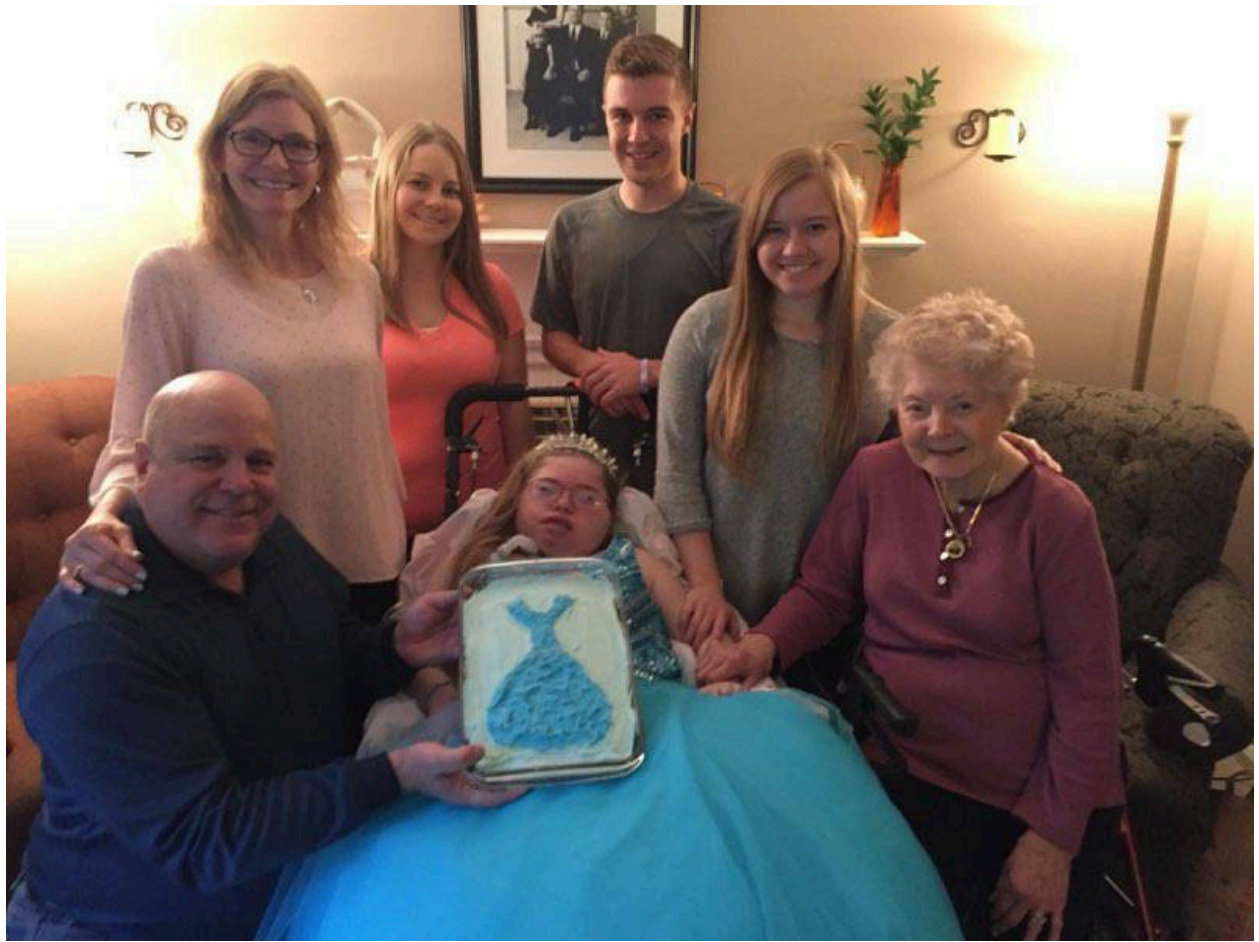
Shannon, Mike, Ellen, Lauren, Michael and Meghan





The Salter Family – Easter at Church of the Divine Child Child







This slideshow, which was displayed at the Meghan's Miracles II Benefit Event, highlights Meghan's journey.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BS_CRAJDW-c&t=7s



On February 6, 2006, Meghan received the Sacrament of Confirmation. She chose the name of Thérèse to be her Confirmation Saint. It snowed on the day of her Confirmation, and a fresh rose was found within the snow outside of the Church. Thank you, Saint Thérèse!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GFD-5PYZlc&t=3s>



Interview with Dr. Ray Guarendi - Living Right with Dr. Ray Show. Ellen speak about "God in Hardships"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAGkj2sy9n4&t=1s>



Emmy Award-Winning Video "Stories of Faith: Meghan's Miracle" by Audrey Sommers featuring Bishop John Quinn and Father John Riccardo. This program frequently airs internationally on EWTN.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHgDeiuWwLA&t=16s>



Ellen's interview with Vanessa Denha-Garmo on Invitation to Sisterhood regarding Meghan's Miracles.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAGkj2sy9n4>



Ellen Salter (Pro-Life Speaker) Promotional Video. To inquire with Ellen regarding giving a talk, *click this link to contact Catholic Speakers Organization.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHgDeiuWwLA&t=16s>



Ellen speaks at Assumption Grotto for the “National Day of Remembrance” for aborted children. A proper burial was given to the aborted babies. This funeral was organized by Citizens for a Pro-Life Society under Dr. Monica Miller.

Click the link to view the locations of the “56 known gravesites of aborted children” as well as a list of upcoming events.

Link: *National Day of Remembrance*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6a-3zcyTj9E&t=1s>



Ellen interviews for InspireWord with Catholic Speakers Organization.

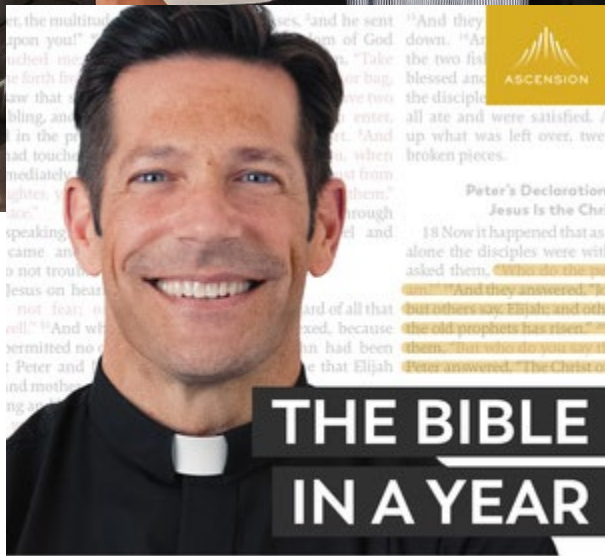
Click this link to book a speaking engagement: *Book Ellen Salter for a speaking event.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ha5Gsv6KU6c&t=2s>

Family of the Year Nominee & Their Clergy



Fr. John Dudek, Fr. Bob McCabe (DC Pastor), Fr. David Pellican and Meghan



Fr. Mike Schmitz

The Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries in the Diocese of Duluth, Minnesota, Father Schmitz is most notable for his social media presence, which mainly consist of his YouTube videos and *The Bible in a Year* podcast, both of which are produced by Catholic publisher Ascension Press. Schmitz is a public speaker and makes speeches at Catholic events such as the Fellowship of Catholic University Students leadership summit.



Fr. JJ Mech, Rector of the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament,
Detroit, MI



Fr. Matthew Hood Chaplain and leader of the
Detroit Catholic Campus Ministry



Fr. John Kopson faculty member of Sacred Heart Major Seminary,
effective July 1, 2024



Fr. John Shi and Meghan



Fr. Jeremy Schupbach and Meghan

Family of the Year Nominee & Their Hospital / University



One of many Survival Flights to the University of Michigan
C.S. Mott Children's Hospital





Jim Harbaugh, UM Football Head Coach and 2024 National Champion is Catholic, and took his team to Italy in 2017, which included a trip to the Vatican where they met the pope. Harbaugh has previously said “faith, then family, then football” are his biggest priorities in life.



JJ McCarthy, 2024 UM Football QB and National Champion, although he is private about his faith reportedly he is Catholic.

Blake Corum, 2024 UM Football RB and National Champion and MVP.



“Because I was little and weak, Jesus stooped down and in secret taught me the marvels of His Love.”

— Saint Thérèse of Lisieux

