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CNS/Bridgeman Images

THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

The Adoration of the Magi is depicted in this 17th-century painting by French artist Claude Vignon. The feast of the Epiphany is celebrated this year on Sunday, Jan. 5.

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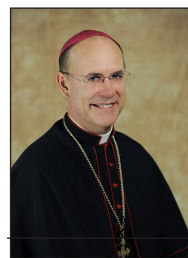
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The Shining Example of the Holy Family



IN TRUTH AND CHARITY

BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

The following homily was delivered by Bishop Rhoades at a Vigil Mass for the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph Dec. 29:

When we think of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, we think of the ideal family. In fact, in the Collect of this Mass, we prayed that we may imitate the shining example of the Holy Family. Yes, it was an ideal family when it came to practicing the virtues of family life and being a family united in a beautiful love for one another.

Jesus certainly honored His father Joseph and revered His mother Mary, fulfilling the counsel we heard in our first reading from the Book of Sirach. The Holy Family certainly was filled with the virtues listed by St. Paul in the second reading from his letter to the Colossians: heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, ... and, above all, love. Yes, we can speak of the family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph as ideal in the sense of being truly holy, a reflection of the holiness of God, the family of the Most Blessed Trinity.

At the same time, we should not idealize the Holy Family in the sense of it being immune from the trials and sufferings of life. It was not. The Holy Family experienced incredible hardships, beginning with their trip to Bethlehem with Mary pregnant and then finding no room in the inn when she was about to give birth. The Holy Family knew poverty and homelessness. And they experienced terrible danger, as we heard in the Gospel today.

The paranoid King Herod, who had already killed his own wife, his mother-in-law and his three eldest sons because he was suspicious of their supplanting him as ruler, sought to kill the child in Bethlehem, whom he had learned was the newborn king of the Jews. As you know, in his fury, Herod ordered the massacre of all the boys 2 years old and under in Bethlehem and its vicinity. We call them "the Holy Innocents" and celebrate their feast on this day, Dec. 28, every year.

As we heard in the Gospel, before the massacre, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, telling him to flee to Egypt with Jesus and Mary. With complete docility, Joseph immediately did so. He always acted in obedience to God. He faithfully lived his vocation as the guardian of the Redeemer. And so Jesus was saved. We can say that Joseph saved our Savior.

No, the life of the Holy Family was not easy. What is recounted in today's Gospel was the first of the persecutions that Jesus would undergo on earth throughout history, whether against Himself or against members of His Mystical Body, the Church. Today is a good day to pray for persecuted Christians, our brothers and sisters who suffer for their faith in Jesus, who are imprisoned or forced into exile, and for all who have to flee from the murderous rage of modern-day Herods.

Just three days ago, we contemplated the Holy Family in the stable of Bethlehem and the adoration of the shepherds that first Christmas night. Today, we contemplate the Holy Family on the sorrowful road of exile,



Wikimedia Commons

Cropped image of Giotto's Flight into Egypt, between 1304 and 1306.

seeking refuge in Egypt.

A couple years ago, I visited Gaza on a trip with Catholic Relief Services. As you know, the Gaza Strip is a very dangerous place. It's governed by Hamas and is blockaded from the world. There's only one Catholic parish in Gaza, and it's called Holy Family Parish. I was blessed to celebrate Mass and pray with the small Catholic community there, a community that includes Mother Teresa's sisters, who care for disabled children in Gaza.

Even amid the not infrequent bombings of the city, the sisters remain. According to a reliable tradition, it was there in Gaza where the Holy Family stopped for food and rest on their way to Egypt. That's why the parish is named for the Holy Family.

Pope Francis said the following: "Joseph, Mary and Jesus experienced the tragic fate of refugees, which is marked by fear, uncertainty and unease. Unfortunately, in our own time, millions of families can identify with this sad reality." On this feast of the Holy Family, when we remember their flight into Egypt, let us pray for the many families fleeing today "from hunger, war and other grave dangers, in search of security and a dignified life for themselves and for their families" (Pope Francis).

We can only speculate about the time the Holy Family spent in Egypt. They probably stayed somewhere along the Nile Delta where there were many Jewish communities. Joseph likely got a job to support the family. It must have been difficult, but at least they were safe. Surely, like so many refugees today, they longed to return home. It's thought that the Holy Family stayed in Egypt probably from one to three years. They knew it was safe to return home when an angel again appeared to Joseph to tell him that Herod had died and that he should take Mary and Jesus back home to Israel. Again, Joseph obeyed. Prudently, he went back not to Judea, where

Herod's cruel son Archelaus was ruling, but to Galilee, to the town of Nazareth.

It was in Nazareth, at that time a village of about 400 people, that Jesus grew up. The Holy Family lived a simple life there. We can say it was an ordinary family life. Their family home would have been like other family homes. They would have related together, talked, had fun, worked, eaten and dealt with the everyday problems that every family encounters. They were not exempt from daily toil or challenges that face most families — illnesses, trying to make ends meet, the death of loved ones, etc. The Son of God was born into a human family and experienced life within a family. Jesus did His daily chores, went to school and learned carpentry from His father. He enjoyed time with relatives, friends and neighbors. We can only speculate about these hidden years of Jesus' life.

We know that it was in the family, from his parents, that Jesus was brought up in the faith of Israel. He learned the Jewish prayers and practiced the traditional rituals and customs of His human ancestors. He learned the commandments of the Law, including the great commandment to love God with all one's heart, soul and mind. This love for God and for one another was the overriding characteristic of the home of the Holy Family. That's what made it holy. The home of Jesus, Mary and Joseph was a sacred place and a dwelling of true peace and unity. I said that theirs was an ordinary family life, but it was extraordinary in its love and unity.

On this feast, let us pray for our own families. God desires to give us strength and virtue to live as the Holy Family. We ask the Lord to sanctify our families, making them holy in imitation of His family in Nazareth. May Mary Most Holy, the Queen of Families, intercede for our families, and may St. Joseph, her spouse, keep them under his powerful protection!

Ancient Epiphany blessing brings peace, evangelizes

BY DEB WAGNER

The feast of the Epiphany used to be called “Epiphanytide,” and celebrated as an octave, until Pope Pius XII removed the octave in 1955. It’s now celebrated on the Sunday closest to Jan. 6. In 2020, it will be celebrated Jan. 5.

Around the feast of the Epiphany each year, Catholic families throughout the world participate in a blessing of chalk. The blessed chalk is used to mark the main entrance to a family’s home. The tradition is not only a symbol of the presence of God in the home, it places the family under His loving care and protection.

Sarah Cheever of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Fort Wayne learned about the Epiphany blessing last year from a friend who attends St. Jude Parish, also in Fort Wayne. Cheever and her husband are parents to seven children ages 4 to 21 years old, all living at home: She remarked that making the directed inscrip-

tion on her family’s door brings them peace, knowing that their door is blessed by a priest. It also gives her family the opportunity to evangelize and share their faith, when visitors ask why there are markings on their front door.

In ancient years, the parish priest administered the blessing and marked the lintel of the doorway.

But as parishes grew in population, it became more difficult for him to visit everyone’s homes. It then became customary for the chalk used to make the markings to be blessed and distributed to parishioners for their own use in blessing their homes.


The tradition is deeply tied to the Passover. It is written in Exodus 12:1-13 that the Lord said to Moses and Aaron while in the land of Egypt ... “take some of the blood [of the lamb],

and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat them. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it ... The blood shall be a sign for you, upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.”

A priest blesses chalk on the Sunday nearest the feast of the Epiphany. The ritual reads:

“Bless, O Lord God, this creature, chalk, and let it be a help to mankind. Grant that those who will use it with faith in your most holy name, and with it inscribed on the doors of their homes the names of your saints, Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, may, through their merits and intercession, enjoy health in body and protection of soul; through Christ our Lord.”

The blessing incorporates prayers led by the head of the household upon entering the house, including the Magnificat. After they are recited, that person walks through the house and blesses each room with the sacramental of the holy water. The blessed chalk is then used to first write the initials of the three Wise Men, connected with crosses, over the inside of the front door.



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, January 5: 11 a.m. — Mass, St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend
 Tuesday, January 7: 6:30 p.m. — Meeting with Fraternus and Fidelis groups, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Fort Wayne
 Wednesday, January 8: 6:30 p.m. — Adoration and Mass with Cor Jesu Young Adult Group, St. John the Baptist Church, Fort Wayne
 Friday, January 10: 9 a.m. — Mass and Pastoral Visit, Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne
 Saturday, January 11: 5 p.m. — Mass with Rite of Admission to Candidacy for Permanent Deacon Candidates, St. Martin de Porres Church, Syracuse

The tradition is deeply tied to the Passover.



Priest appointments

The Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has made the following appointments:

Reverend Michael Osondu Okoro, C.S.Sp., to Priest Chaplain of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, Donaldson, effective January 3, 2020.
Reverend Andrew Curry to Administrator of Most Precious Blood Parish, Fort Wayne, effective January 8, 2020.
Reverend Dennis DiBenedetto to Pastor of St. Robert Bellarmine Parish, North Manchester, and Catholic Chaplain at Manchester University, effective January 8, 2020.

Blessing of the home and household on Epiphany

The ceremony of the blessing of the home and inscription of the initials of the three Magi above each door can be performed by a priest or the leader of the family. The following prayer is taken from the book, “The Twelve Days of Christmas,” by Elsa Chaney.

On entering the home,

Leader (Priest, or leader of the family): Peace be to this house.

All: And to all who dwell herein.

All: From the east came the Magi to Bethlehem to adore the Lord; and opening their treasures they offered precious gifts: gold for the great King, incense for the true God, and myrrh in symbol of His burial.

All Pray: The Magnificat. During the Magnificat, the room is sprinkled with holy water and incensed. After this is completed,

All: From the east came the Magi to Bethlehem to adore the Lord; and opening their treasures they offered precious gifts: gold for the great King, incense for the true God, and myrrh in symbol of His burial.

Leader: Our Father. . . And lead us not into temptation

All: But deliver us from evil.

Leader: All they from Saba shall come

All: Bringing gold and frankincense.

Leader: O Lord, hear my prayer.

All: And let my cry come to You.

Leader: Let us pray. O God, who by the guidance of a star didst on this day manifest Thine only-begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we who know Thee by faith may also attain the vision of Thy glorious majesty. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: Be enlightened, be enlightened, O Jerusalem, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee — Jesus Christ born of the Virgin Mary.

All: And the Gentiles shall walk in thy light and kings in the splendor of thy rising, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee.

Leader: Let us pray. Bless, O Lord God almighty, this home, that in it there may be health, purity, the strength of victory, humility, goodness and mercy, the fulfillment of Thy law, the thanksgiving to God the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. And may this blessing remain upon this home and upon all who dwell herein. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.



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Catholic families throughout the world mark the main entrance of their home with blessed chalk on the feast of the Epiphany. The tradition creates a symbol of the presence of the Lord in the home and places it under His care and protection.

At year's end, humanitarian aid for migrants moves across border

BY RHINA GUIDOS

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Over the last year, Catholic dioceses on the U.S. side of the border with Mexico, in places such as El Paso and Brownsville, Texas, scrambled to accommodate the growing number of children, men and women crossing the border, seeking asylum and entering the U.S.

Donations, volunteers and financial help flowed into shelters, such as the Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley's respite center in McAllen, Texas, to help clothe, feed and provide other temporary help to the migrants.

But the introduction of the Migrant Protection Protocols, also called MPP and popularly known as the "Remain in Mexico" policy, rolled out by the Trump administration in early 2019, greatly slowed the flow of migrants into the U.S. in the last part of the year. Yet, it didn't slow the exodus, nor the conditions of violence, climate change and poverty that have sent tens of thousands fleeing from Central America, seeking safety or better economic conditions to the north.

Many still are fleeing, and as 2019 came to an end, Catholic dioceses remained on alert to help the migrants — but this time, on the other side of the border.

"It was a difficult year," said Bishop Eugenio Lira Rugarcia of the Diocese of Matamoros, Mexico, during a joint event Dec. 13 with Brownsville's Bishop Daniel E. Flores and Auxiliary Bishop Mario Aviles, as they welcomed humanitarian aid from the Knights of Columbus destined for a shelter for migrants in Matamoros, Mexico. There, thousands of men, women and children who normally would have been able to enter the U.S. as applicants for asylum, before MPP, now are stranded.

"Remain in Mexico" dictated that anyone seeking asylum in the U.S. had to stay on the other side of the border until their case could be heard by a U.S. immigration court. Since January, more than 55,000 trying to enter the U.S. to ask for asylum at various ports of entry have been forced to stay in Mexico and some in dangerous territories controlled by drug cartels.

Dioceses, such as the one in Matamoros, have stepped in to help but can only do so with the help of their sister dioceses across the border.

Makeshift camps have formed close to the border in Mexico, where people wait their turn for a hearing on U.S. soil, even as figures released Dec. 19 showed the slim chance migrants have of getting in: Just 117, out of the tens of thousands who showed up at the border since the policy began, have been granted protection, according to a December Syracuse University report based on immigration court figures.

Previously, authorities had released migrants inside the U.S. and many passed through shelters such as McAllen's respite center en route to a family member's home or a friend's, anyone who would take them in while they waited for a hearing. The respite center's executive director, Sister Norma Pimentel, became the face of those in the Church providing help.

The Rio Grande's Catholic Charities shelter, which she runs, was seeing up to 1,000 people a day at the height of the wave of incoming migrants in 2019, said Sister Pimentel in a Nov. 10, 2019, interview with Catholic News Service in Baltimore.

At year's end, that number had dropped to just 10 to 20 migrants a day in McAllen, but that didn't mean the problem was over, said Sister Pimentel, a member of the Missionaries of Jesus.

Like the Knights of Columbus,



CNS photo/Henry Romero, Reuters

Central American migrants who were returned to Mexico from the U.S. under the Migrant Protection Protocols, are seen Sept. 14 outside their tent in Matamoros, Mexico. Sister Norma Pimentel, a member of the Missionaries of Jesus, who is executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley in Texas and a longtime advocate for immigrants and refugees, said about 2,000 families have camped out on the Mexico side in Matamoros while they wait to be called for their asylum cases.



CNS photo/Jose Luis Gonzalez, Reuters

Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, shares a smile with a Honduran girl named Cesia as he walks and prays with a group of migrants at the Lerdo International Bridge in El Paso June 27.

Sister Pimentel took her mission across the border into Mexico to help. But unlike the amenities to be found at the shelter Catholic Charities provided in McAllen, there is nowhere in the camps for the migrants to sleep, eat, bathe or seek basic shelter from the elements while they wait. She posted video on Facebook of a windstorm ripping through the area, kicking up dust as migrants took shelter in small tents.

"This situation has become more complicated," Sister Pimentel told CNS. "The weather is changing. There are rains coming, the cold. These families are exposed to multiple dangers and there's a complete disarray."

About 2,000 families have camped out on the Mexico side of a bridge in Matamoros while they wait to be called for their asylum cases, she said. But it's not a place where hygienic or safety conditions exist, noted Sister Pimentel, who worries particularly about what it could mean for the health of children and families.

Some groups, including Catholic organizations, are looking for short-term solutions, such as organizing cleaning crews, taking food and clothes and tents to provide minimum protection, medical help, but for now "families are suffering tremendously," Sister Pimentel said. "All we want is that they be cared for with dignity."

She places blame on the policy that is keeping them in Mexico, where local governments do little to help the migrants.

"Our country has to provide a better response than the one it is providing right now with this policy," she said. "Leaving them in Mexico is dangerous. Even the residents of Mexico are afraid because of the confrontations among the cartels, the organized crime. Why are we putting these families in danger?"

During the Dec. 13 event, which Sister Pimentel also attended, bishops voiced worries that the plight of the migrants had been all but forgotten by the public. Bishop Flores said, however, that the move-

ment of people is taking place "not just in the Americas but in other parts of the world" and it's something that can't be ignored. Figures from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees put the number of those leaving their homelands due to conflict, persecution or violence at more than 25.9 million worldwide in 2019.

"As the pope says, the problem is one that many don't want to see, don't want to know about," Bishop Flores said in Spanish to a group of reporters, and others say that it's not their problem. "The Church says, it is the problem of humanity and we are human beings."

For its part, the Catholic Church in the U.S. and around the world, through its organizations and via its leaders, maintains its steady commitment to extend help — even if it means having to cross a border to do so, just as the Texas bishops did in mid-December and just as El Paso's Bishop Mark J. Seitz did in late June when he helped a group of migrants with health conditions enter the U.S.

"This is a sign of who we are here on the border," said Bishop Aviles. "That when one side or the other needs help, we're always one Church, one family."

Though the Church's actions on the border, because of the urgent nature of the humanitarian challenges, command immediate attention, they are by no means the only effort on the part of the Catholic Church to tend to matters dealing with migrants.

Through advocacy and lob-

MIGRATION, page 5

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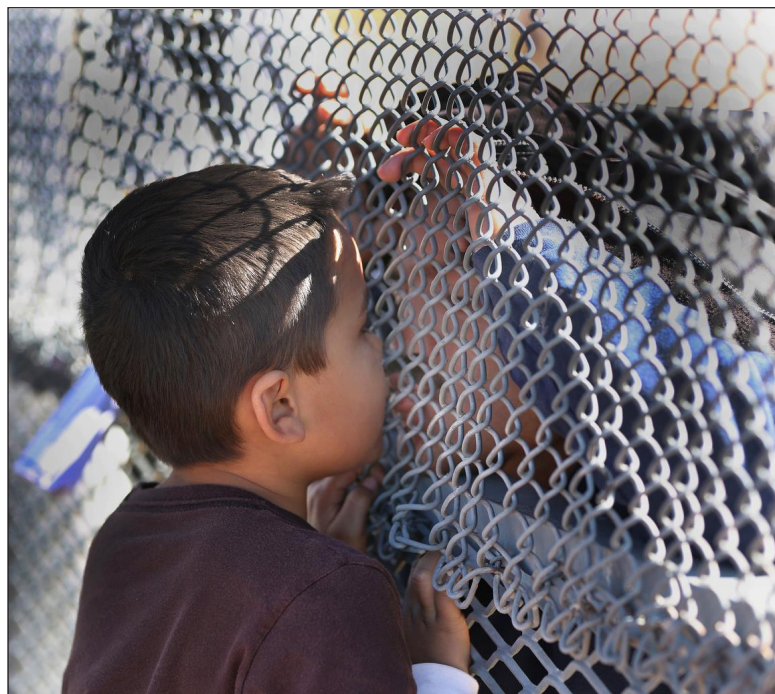
bying efforts, it has publicly supported migrants, and leaders have raised their voices in the migrants' defense, including support of young adults who were brought into the country illegally as children and whose fate may be decided in 2020 by the U.S. Supreme Court when it rules in the DACA case — Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. The Church also supports beneficiaries of Temporary Protected Status who are at risk of losing protections in the upcoming year.

Perhaps one of the Church's biggest shows of support for migrants came from the pope himself Dec. 19, when he welcomed to Rome 33 migrants who had arrived through the Greek island of Lesbos.

"We must rescue and save because we are all responsible for the lives of our neighbor and the Lord will ask us to account for them at the moment of judgment," he said during the meeting.

National Migration Week

January 5-11, 2020



Provided by USCCB

For nearly a half century, the Church in the United States has celebrated National Migration Week by reflecting on the circumstances confronting migrants, including immigrants, refugees, children and victims and survivors of human trafficking. The theme for National Migration Week 2020, "Promoting a Church and a World for All," draws attention to the fact that every family has a migration story, whether recent or in the distant past.

During National Migration Week, Catholics are encouraged to take the opportunity to engage migrants in a meaningful way, as community members, neighbors and friends.



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Amid these trying times, faithful urged to look to good news of Christmas

PHILADELPHIA (CNS) — In a world and culture that makes believers weary and wary, the Ukrainian Catholic bishops of the United States in a Christmas pastoral message reminded all of the faithful that Jesus didn't have it so easy Himself, being born into a world that was not very welcoming or peaceful. "These days we have a lot on our minds," said the U.S. Ukrainian Catholic hierarchy. "The global political atmosphere is supercharged," they added. "There are indicators that depression, addictions and suicides are on the rise in the American population. Objective and subjective causes of anxiety abound: the absence of a moral compass, aggression in music and movies, immigration and refugee crises, poverty, the climate. Many among us are dislocated, bewildered and sad. Much in society is coming unglued. Things are not going that well in the Church. "There is much to mull over," they added, "Even the good news of Christmas is filtered through the media and colored by conflicts and controversies." Yet "in the midst of all this, it is essential to remind ourselves what Christmas is really about," the pastoral said. "The Nativity of the Lord begs to interrupt and distract us from our anxiety and alienation in the most gentle and vulnerable way. It could not be more humble, hidden or human." They added: "God is with us — you and me. He will never abandon us."

Pope, at Angelus, prays for Philippine victims of typhoon

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Reciting the Angelus with thousands of people in St. Peter's Square the day after Christmas, Pope Francis asked them to join him in reciting the "Hail Mary" for the victims of Typhoon Phanfone in the Philippines. The pope told the crowd that he shared the suffering of the Filipino people, "whom I love very much." "I pray for the numerous victims, for the injured and for their families," he said. The Associated Press said the typhoon, which made landfall Dec. 24, caused at least 20 deaths. Many people were still missing by Dec. 26 and tens of thousands of people were forced to evacuate their homes. Marking the feast of St. Stephen, a Vatican and Italian holiday, Pope Francis acknowledged that it may seem strange for the Church to mark the feast of the first martyr just one day after celebrating the birth of Jesus. But, the pope said, the account of St. Stephen's death in the Acts of the Apostles shows his complete faith that in Jesus "violence is defeated by love, death by life."

Kenyan Christmas celebration



CNS photo/Njeri Mwangi, Reuters

Children in Nairobi, Kenya, ride on a makeshift train Dec. 25 during Christmas celebrations. Pope Francis, in his Christmas address, "urbi et orbi," prayed that Jesus would "bring His smile, through our poor faces, to all the children of the world: to those who are abandoned, and those who suffer violence."

Faith leaders, nonprofit groups hail House repeal of 'parking lot tax'

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Congress has repealed a so-called "parking lot tax" that was part of the 2017 tax cut measure and would have required houses of worship and other nonprofits to pay a 21% tax on employee benefits such as parking spaces and transit subsidies. The repeal was part of House and Senate appropriations bills, passed by the two chambers Dec. 17 and Dec. 19, respectively. President Donald Trump signed the bills Dec. 20. "Houses of worship and charitable organizations provide invaluable spiritual care, social services, and support in every community in our country," the chairmen of two U.S. bishops' committees said in a Dec. 20 statement. "Especially during this time of year, we remember the ongoing good work happening through these organizations. To impose a new tax on these entities was wrong in the first place." "We applaud Congress for amending the Internal Revenue Code to eliminate this burdensome tax," they said. Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the U.S. Conference

of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, and Bishop George V. Murry of Youngstown, Ohio, chairman of the Committee for Religious Liberty, issued the joint statement.

Arizona women shower 'Marys' in need with gifts for their unborn children

PHOENIX (CNS) — The idea of a "baby shower" figuratively, not literally, appears in the Gospels. Matthew mentions the Magi and their famed gifts brought to the manger, while Luke recounts Mary's three-month visit to help prepare her cousin for motherhood. Two women with Arizona connections made a biblical baby shower a reality this Advent. Six official Mary's Baby Shower events were listed online with 100 people downloading a free party pack within an hour of the pack's release in November. The pack comes with an editable invitation, banner, food and activity ideas, event timeline, a reflection from Pope Francis and a guided meditation. Erica Tighe Campbell, who grew up in St. Benedict Parish in the Phoenix neighborhood of Ahwatukee, created it toward the

end of her pregnancy — her child is due in January. "We had so many offers for baby showers, and our friends and family have been so generous in giving us gifts. Everything is so expensive. ... I wondered about how scary it could be for a mom who didn't have that kind of support and wondered how she'd be able to get these essentials," Campbell told The Catholic Sun, newspaper of the Diocese of Phoenix. She realized a baby shower for Mary was the solution with pregnancy resource apostolates serving as the gift distributor. After all, such staff and volunteers encounter plenty of "Marys" facing a pregnancy amid difficult circumstances. Campbell gets followers via her "Be a Heart" online community who yearn to host women's gatherings in the home but lack further insight. Her free guide equips willing shower hosts. She saw 100 people download it within the first hour.

Knights continue humanitarian efforts to help dioceses provide aid to migrants

MATAMOROS, Mexico (CNS) — A border divides them, but when it comes to helping the men,

women and children caught in the immigration drama playing out in the area that straddles Mexico and the United States, Catholic dioceses are acting as one humanitarian body. And for the second time this year, the Catholic fraternal organization Knights of Columbus is playing a hand in carrying out that mission. Just days before Christmas, on Dec. 13, the Knights of Columbus delivered more than \$50,000 worth of supplies to a shelter in the border town of Matamoros in Mexico, where stranded migrants have been able to secure food and supplies. Bishop Eugenio Andres Lira Rugarcia of the Diocese of Matamoros, Mexico, during a joint event with the Bishop Daniel E. Flores and Auxiliary Bishop Mario Aviles of the Diocese of Brownsville, Texas, thanked the Knights for their help. "This is an expression of the solidarity between the Church in the United States and in Mexico, seeking to fulfill the humanitarian necessities of immigrants," said Bishop Flores to a group of reporters. The supplies delivered included food, water and medicine, said a Dec. 17 release from the organization, explaining that the Knights had earlier in the year set a goal of donating humanitarian aid at the border.

Biblical document does not signal opening to gay marriage, official says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A new book by the Pontifical Biblical Commission cannot be read as opening the Catholic Church to the acceptance of gay marriage or homosexual unions, said the secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. "There does not exist any 'opening' to unions between persons of the same sex as some people erroneously have claimed," Archbishop Giacomo Morandi, the doctrinal official, told Vatican News Dec. 19. The archbishop was commenting on issues raised by an in-depth study of the human person in the Bible conducted by the international group of biblical scholars and theologians on the Pontifical Biblical Commission. The commission released its 336-page book, in Italian, "What Is Man? An Itinerary of Biblical Anthropology," explaining that it is designed as a launching pad for further biblical, theological and philosophical study. The book looks at the entire Bible in an attempt to respond to questions about the meaning of human life and, especially, how that meaning is found in biblical descriptions of the human relationship with God and with others. The question of homosexuality is treated in a chapter on "The Human Family."

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Knights provide Coats for Kids



Provided by John Blomeke

Father August Young Council Knights of Columbus No. 1790 in Garrett used proceeds from parish fish fries to purchase winter clothing for the Coats for Kids program. Forty-one articles of winter clothing were presented to St. Martin's Clothes Closet at St. Joseph Parish in December. This was the second year the Coats for Kids program was conducted by the council.

St. Vincent de Paul Society walk nets \$25,000 for poor

FORT WAYNE — The St. Vincent de Paul Society third annual Friends of the Poor: Walk a Mile in My Shoes event took place Sept. 22 at Parkview Field in Fort Wayne. The walk is the organization's major fundraising event and supports the St. Vincent de Paul Society in the greater Fort Wayne area. It raised over \$25,000 that is already being given back to St. Vincent de Paul Society conferences to help those in need.

Around 150 people, six parish priests among them, walked the 3.2 mile route, past the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store and St. Patrick Church before returning to the finish line.

The mission of the St. Vincent de Paul Society is to alleviate poverty by offering hope and help to all, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Last year over 47,000 people were helped by Vincentians who visited their homes or helped them by offering pantries, voucher programs, or other services. St. Vincent de Paul Society of Fort Wayne members volunteered over 53,000 hours of service, drove over 97,000 miles and, through its 23 conferences, provided over \$650,000 in cash assistance in 2018.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will participate in the next Friends of the Poor: Walk a Mile in My Shoes event, which takes place on Sunday, Sept. 27, the feast date of St. Vincent de Paul, at Parkview Field.

Trivia Night fundraising event at Forever Learning

SOUTH BEND — Forever Learning Institute will host a trivia night fundraising event Saturday, Feb. 8, at Forever Learning, located in St. Therese, Little Flower Parish Center, 54191 Ironwood Rd., South Bend. Doors will open at 6 p.m. with competition beginning at 6:30 p.m.

The general knowledge trivia event will support FLI's mission to improve the quality and dignity of senior adult life through continuing intellectual challenge, spiritual reflection and social interaction. Forever Learning serves approximately 800 seniors each semester by offering over 100 courses covering an amazing variety of topic areas.

Each team brings its own snacks. Cash bar for beer, wine, soda and water will be offered. Teams are encouraged to bring table decorations. Prizes will be awarded.

Teams of up to eight participants may register at the Forever Learning Office. Registration forms are available at the office or online at ForeverLearningInstitute.org. A \$100 tax-deductible registration fee per team is due by Feb. 1. Call FLI at 574-282-1901 for more information.

Scouts make 'Holy Hike'



Provided by Carl Loesch

Cub Scout Pack 10 of St. Pius X Parish, Granger, organized its annual Advent Holy Hike in December. The family-based event provides a time of prayer and fellowship for families during a small pilgrimage across the University of Notre Dame campus. Participating Scouts were able to earn the Saint patch from the National Catholic Committee on Scouting for St. André Bessette if they wished to complete a few simple activities after the hike.

Mary, St. Vincent de Paul Society members honored



Provided by Darrel Dodane

The St. Vincent de Paul Society, Fort Wayne District, celebrated its annual Mass and breakfast Dec. 7 at St. Mary, Mother of God Church in Fort Wayne. At the breakfast, Top Hat awards were given to Marilyn Drummond of the St. Jude Conference; Tom Yaggy of the St. Mary of the Assumption Conference, Avilla; and Julie and Jim Quinn of the St. Vincent de Paul Conference, Fort Wayne. The award can be received once in a lifetime by a Vincentian Conference member who exemplifies the work of the organization's founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam.

2019: A TIME FOR EVERY

In the book of Ecclesiastes, it says there is "a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance." The year 2019 had its share of each. Though there were moments of heartache, the periods of joy greatly outweighed the pain. Hope shined through the darkness. Looking back puts both the good and bad moments into perspective as

A time to dance

BY JENNIFER BARTON



File photo

JANUARY — Diocesan pilgrims, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, priests, religious and young people travel to Panama to participate in World Youth Day. Youths who were unable to make the pilgrimage have an opportunity to attend a local World Youth Day event in Fort Wayne in February.

January

The SEEK conference in Indianapolis draws roughly 17,000 Catholic college students to the state.

The former St. Andrew Church in Fort Wayne is saved from demolition by JAGH Restoration, a nonprofit group that specializes in preserving historic sites.

March

"Unplanned," the story of former Planned Parenthood clinic Director Abby Johnson, hits movie theaters nationwide, depicting the horror of abortion.

May

Stephen Felicichia and Daniel Koehl are ordained deacons at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

Renovations at Our Lady of Good Hope Parish, Fort

June

Dr. Joseph Brettmacher is appointed superintendent of Catholic schools, succeeding Marsha Jordan, a longtime advocate and administrator of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.



DR. JOSEPH BRETTMACHER



JENNIFER SIMERMAN

Jennifer Simerman is named secretary for communications for the diocese, succeeding Stephanie Patka.

Redeemer Radio show "Doctor, Doctor" is picked up by Eternal Word Television Network. Hosted by Drs. Christopher Stroud, Thomas McGovern and Andrew Mullally, the show discusses medical topics from a Catholic perspective.

July

Symposium on Catholic family life takes place at the University of Notre Dame July 19-21. Thirty theologians and



Joshua Schipper

JANUARY — Bishop Dwenger students have the honor of leading the 46th annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. More than 200 of the school's students take a visible stand for life in the nation's capital.



JUNE — Father Spenser St. Louis, Father Daniel Niezer and Father José Arroyo Acevedo are ordained to the priesthood at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne.

family life experts attended to discuss ways to build the domestic Church and enhance the worldwide Church.

September

Bishop Rhoades confirms 10 candidates with special needs in a bilingual, low-sensory Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe, Warsaw, Sept. 7.

October

The film "Love and Mercy: Faustina" debuts in theaters around the diocese Oct. 28. Shot in both Polish and English, the movie garners enough attention to gain a second showing in December.

November

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' fall meeting is Nov. 11-13; topics discussed include the priest shortage, gun violence and support for pregnant women. Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles is elected the first Latino president of the USCCB.

The National Catholic Youth Conference brings roughly 20,000 youth to Indianapolis Nov. 21-23. Several dozen teenagers attend from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, and Bishop Rhoades concelebrates the closing Mass.

JANUARY
Paul Pa

THING

*a time to dance."
outweighed them.
a new year begins.*



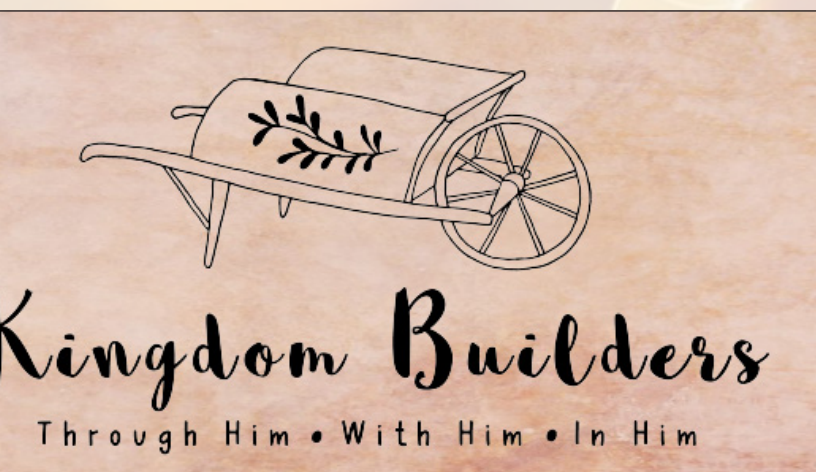
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File photo

NOVEMBER — Erin Strzelecki of Bishop Dwenger wins the Indiana High School Athletic Association girls state cross-country meet Nov. 2. She will continue her running career at the University of Notre Dame next fall.



JANUARY — Kingdom Builders, a new ministry for women, plants roots at St. Vincent de parish in Fort Wayne and begins to grow.



File photo/CNS

OCTOBER — Blessed Cardinal John Henry Newman is canonized in Rome Oct. 13, along with four other new saints. Newman was an English theologian who led the Oxford Movement. Many colleges have Catholic resource centers dedicated to him.

A time to weep



January

Sister M. Rose Agnes Pfautsch, local superior of the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, Mishawaka, and a trustee on the board of directors of the University of Saint Francis, passes away Jan. 25.



March

The Born Alive Survivors Protection Act fails to pass the U.S. Senate in February. The bill would have guaranteed protection for babies born alive after failed abortions.



April

On Easter Sunday, about 290 people are killed and hundreds injured in Sri Lanka after a bombing of churches and hotels took place, targeting minority Christian and Catholic populations of the country. Catholics throughout the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend join in prayer for the victims of the attacks. The diocese has seven priests from Sri Lanka.

May

Marsha Jordan, superintendent of Catholic Schools for five years, passes away after battling cancer. Shortly before her death, Jordan was awarded the prestigious Sagamore of the Wabash recognition from Gov. Eric Holcomb.



June

Sister M. Elise Kriss, OSF, announces her impending retirement as president of the University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne. When she steps down on June 30, 2020, she will conclude a 27-year presidency.



August

A Pew Research Center survey reveals that 69% of Catholics do not believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, stating they are only "symbols" of Christ's body and blood.



September

In the Illinois home of deceased Indiana abortionist Ulrich "George" Klopfer, 2,246 aborted babies are found. Additional remains were found in his car in October. Indiana Attorney General Curtis Hill launches an investigation. A new law took effect the day Klopfer died, requiring abortionists to properly bury or cremate the remains of aborted babies, ensuring the dignity of the unborn.



CCS Baby Bottle Campaign: 'change-ing' the lives of children

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Large cardboard boxes the size of moving crates line the back wall of the classroom-like space, stacked five to six columns high. All are filled with empty baby bottles. It takes a hundred of the bottles to fill a pink garbage bag, and many bags piled together around the boxes. But a diligent group of ladies labels and stuffs more bottles into more bags.

The women are members of the Christ Child Society of Fort Wayne, which is preparing for its annual Baby Bottle Campaign. Roughly 5,700 of the bottles will be distributed at Fort Wayne-area Catholic churches on the weekend of Jan. 25-26. Three weeks later they'll be collected, full of pocket change and dollar bills collected by generous parishioners.

It may seem like just another fundraising event, but there's an extensive life cycle to the coins and bills collected in Christ Child baby bottles.

The Baby Bottle Campaign was the brainchild of the family of Amy Urban, who brought the program to Fort Wayne in 2014. "It was my mom's idea," Urban said. "At the time, we were looking for creative ways to raise money, and my mom went to Mass in Chicago with my brother and they passed out baby bottles." Urban took the idea to Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, spiritual advisor of the Fort Wayne chapter of Christ Child Society, and he was supportive of the idea. The volunteers went to work.

The kickoff: Baby bottle brigade

The Baby Bottle Campaign gears up in November, with the planning phase. In early December, volunteers meet for a baby bottle workday: labeling, stuffing and organizing the bottles needed for each participating parish. January sees the distribution of the bottles at the parish level.

Not all area parishes participate in the campaign, and some are brand-new to it. Participating parishes typically have a dedicated coordinator to oversee the efforts. Pro-life groups sometimes participate in handing out baby bottles after each Mass as well.

On the pre-announced collection day, CCS members and other volunteers retrieve the filled bottles that have been turned in at each parish. After each bottle is emptied, a Brinks truck comes to the site to pick up the money and deliver it to the bank for counting and processing.

Any bottles returned after the collection date go to the chapter treasurer, who takes those donations to the bank as they

trickle in. Sometimes bottles will be returned nearly a full year later, but that doesn't bother CCS members. "I keep a bottle in my house all year long and keep putting change in it," said Tina Bailey. Bailey has been a member since 2008 and begins a two-year commitment as director this year.

Initially, Bailey joined because her mother, Marlene Offerle, wanted them to join together. She remained in the organization because of the deep love she developed for the women with whom she served. "To see them bend over backwards to get the best deals on coats, the highest quality coats; how they would go out of their way to pay it forward...it was inspiring," said Bailey.

Urban sees the fundraising event as an excellent opportunity for parents to teach young children generosity. "This is a fun thing for the kids; they really get involved, and it's a great way to teach them about giving."

It's especially touching for Urban to see the connection children make with their younger siblings who still use bottles, knowing that they are helping children their siblings' age.

Layettes for babies

The Baby Bottle Campaign supports five main projects run by the Fort Wayne Christ Child Society: the Layettes Program, Coats for Kids, Crib Clubs, My Stuff backpacks and the Reading Rangers.

"Every chapter has a layette program. It's the Christ Child Society's signature program," said Bailey. A layette was the first gift given out by the group's founder, and it was given at Christmastime. The connection to the Christ Child gave the society its name. Today, the layettes are delivered through local hospitals to new mothers.

Books for preschoolers

The Reading Rangers program was the Fort Wayne chapter's take on a nationwide Christ Child Society initiative to improve childhood literacy. Volunteers visit two local Catholic schools, St. Joseph and Most Precious Blood, once a month to read to preschool students and make a craft project with them. The books are selected by members who use their expertise as librarians, former teachers and grandmothers to choose appropriate content, and the current classroom teacher also offers input on books that might appeal to the students. Each child is also presented with his or her own copy of the chosen book, helping to put books into households that may not have many.



Photos by Jennifer Barton

Baby bottles wait for distribution to local parishes on Jan. 25-26. The bottles have been carefully labeled and stuffed with a flyer stating the mission of the Christ Child Society of Fort Wayne. The organization supports local children of all ages with the funds, providing layettes, books, coats, backpacks and more.

Coats for Kids

The other three programs that benefit from the Baby Bottle Campaign are unique to Fort Wayne. Coats for Kids may be the most well-known and is largest charitable operation of the Fort Wayne organization. "We gave away around 1,900 coats in a month last year," Bailey said.

Volunteers make certain that they get the best deals to stretch the funds to their maximum. The new coats are high-quality, many of them from Macy's end-of-season sales. Working with

an online company, Janet Didier, co-chairman of Coats for Kids, does most of the ordering, ensuring that the inventory is well-stocked. She is able to ask for specific sizes and styles to avoid overstocking sizes or styles the program already in abundance.

The coats are given away on Wednesdays in October, when families in local Catholic and public schools whose children are in need are invited to a central location to pick one out for themselves. The children are given gloves and a scarf to go along with their new coat.

Occasionally, the Christ Child

Society will make a road trip to accommodate a school with great need. Bailey recalled the joy on the faces of the children at St. Patrick Parish in Ligonier three years ago, to which the society brought coats at the bishop's request.

Crib Clubs and school backpacks

The Christ Child Society partners with Women's Care Center to provide clothing and

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY, page 11

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY, from page 10

baby items through Crib Clubs. Mothers served by the WCC can earn coupons to buy necessary items at Crib Clubs located throughout the area.

Older children, specifically children in foster care, were originally meant to be the recipients of yet more Baby Bottle-funded generosity: "My Stuff" backpacks filled with school supplies. But when a miscommunication left the Christ Child Society without a way to distribute the backpacks, rather than allowing the supplies to pile up a member went out to "find avenues that hadn't been covered yet," said Bailey. The backpacks have since gone to homeless children staying in temporary housing such as Charis House and Vincent Village. Volunteers who sew also saw a need for teaching sewing skills to younger generations: so members of the sewing committee now visit Vincent Village and The Courtyard at SCAN to help young adults develop those skills.

Phantom Ball and Golfing for Kids

While the Baby Bottle Campaign is the Christ Child Society's largest fundraising event of the year, a Phantom Ball does take place each autumn.

"This is a non-event," Bailey described. Instead of black-tie and gown, the fancy invitations to the Phantom Ball ask if sponsors would be willing to donate the amount they would usually pay for the trappings of a formal dinner. This allows more funds to go to the children, rather than splitting proceeds with the expenses of a formal dinner.



Reading Rangers volunteer Carrie Rice reads the Christ Child Society December book selection, "The Littlest Angel," to preschool children at Most Precious Blood Parish in Fort Wayne.



Provided by Tina Bailey

Christ Child Society member Kathy Crick selects a coat for a client of the Coats for Kids program. Volunteers bring coats two at a time to the main fitting room for children and parents to make their selection.

'Nothing is ever too much to do for a child'

The Christ Child Society takes a break from its work during the summer, except for an annual golf outing, "Golfing for Kids," a social event that has morphed into an opportunity to raise just a little more money for layettes, books, coats and backpacks. Two years ago, men were allowed to join in the 18-hole Florida scramble.

As there are no paid staff in the Christ Child Society, the organization's overhead is minimal. All members volunteer their time. Urban stated that the most

important characteristic of the Baby Bottle Campaign is that "when those bottles come back filled, the money goes right back out" to fulfill the mission of helping underprivileged children.

The decorative baby bottles will appear in parishes soon and should be returned the weekend of Feb. 15-16. Bottles are always collected before the beginning of Lent so as not to interfere with other charitable tithing during the solemn season. However, donations are accepted year-round at the society's website, and funds can be designated for specific programs. These donations help the Christ Child Society fulfill their mission of improving the lives of children, as "nothing is ever too much to do for a child."



To connect with the Christ Child Society of Fort Wayne

visit
christ-child-society-of-fort-wayne.myshopify.com
 or call
 260-637-4181



BISHOP LUERS
 HIGH SCHOOL



NEW FRESHMAN REGISTRATION FOR 20-21

Opens Monday, January 13

Application link found at: www.bishopluers.org under Admissions

NEW Family Financial Aid/Tuition Meeting

Thursday, January 9th at 6:30p.m. | Bishop Luers Media Center

Synchrony and culture

Last month I paid a visit to Bar-Ilan University in Israel for a discussion about the role of faith in higher education. Bar-Ilan is distinctive among Israeli universities in its ambition to fuse a reverence for its Jewish legacy with rigorous academics.

Its religious inspiration is easy to spot. It helps define the landscape of the campus — a patio built in the form of a temple, a garden shaped like a menorah. A number of the male students wear kippas. Some of the married women (especially the younger women) cover their hair. The university website has a weekly Torah portion.

But alongside all this is evidence of change. The website welcomes “students from all over Israel; secular and religious; Jews and non-Jews.” It speaks of diversity, tolerance and civility as the paramount virtues. Students at Bar-Ilan, it goes on to say, will “learn to assume social responsibility.”

My host at Bar-Ilan, Rabbi Shabtai Rappaport, is a descendant of a prominent rabbinic family. He has devoted much of his life to exploring the intersection of Torah studies with science and culture. But he has experienced what we see at many Catholic colleges and universities in the United States — an increasing secularization of the intellectual life.

We discussed ways in which religion might become a more integral part of the business of higher education, at least at institutions founded for that pur-

pose, like our own. We are not the army, so we can't promote faith by fiat. The best we can do is build faculties committed to our project and hope that the beauty of what they offer will appeal to young minds.

We also talked about whether our university work could have a transformative effect on the culture. This seems like an unrealistic ambition — like trying to raise the temperature of the ocean by adding a tub or two of warm bathwater. Yet there are hopeful counterexamples. I mentioned the Great Awakenings that occurred in America in the 18th and 19th centuries. They changed a culture that was greatly colored by Enlightenment rationalism.

Rabbi Rappaport shared a more interesting image. He pointed to examples in nature where independent entities have been observed to synchronize their actions. Fireflies in Thailand can flash in unison at a constant tempo. Cells in the sinoatrial node around the heart, about 10,000 or them, oscillate in rhythm for years.

What's interesting about these cases is that the individual actors (fireflies, cells) are not responding to a single director, as to a symphony conductor or an army drill sergeant. They synchronize by communicating with each other, through light flashes or electrical impulses. Think of “the wave” at football games, another case of independently coordinated group action where the members communicate to neighbors by sight and sound.



JOHN GARVEY

INTELLECT AND VIRTUE

It is important in these cases that there be a critical mass acting in synchrony to get things started. This is true of riots and stock market panics as well as more benign phenomena. And you can see where the metaphor, if that's what it is, is going: Our universities might be the critical mass.

But this kind of spontaneous ordering happens even among nonliving things. Lasers are synchronized light waves that result from stimulated emissions from atoms. This seems to contradict the principle of entropy — that systems in the universe inevitably tend toward disorder. Maybe there is another force at work.

The rabbi, a man of deep faith, was open to the possibility that our meager efforts could change the world for the better, though we might never know how.

John Garvey is president of The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Catholic University's website is www.cua.edu.

A thrill of hope

The arena was perfectly silent. Twenty thousand young people knelt at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis as the Eucharist was exposed in a monstrance on the altar in the center of a stage on the 50-yard line of an NFL football field during the National Catholic Youth Conference.

A magnetic energy pulsed through the quiet. It was a silence filled with expectant hope, as if the quiet in that place would lead to a vibrant and vocal renewal in a noisy world.

It was a joyful silence, prompted by the encouraging words of Pope Francis spoken via video the night before. It was a healing silence, inspired by the challenging words of Immaculee Ilibigiza's powerful testimony shared that morning. It was a contemplative silence, as the young people pondered the insightful words of Mark Hart. It was a silence building to worship, as Village Lights began leading the crowd in song and praise.

It took everything in me to not cry as I listened to the deafening silence and then heard voices begin to raise in praise as we knelt before the Eucharist and sang “Lord, I Need You.”

A few verses in, I saw her. A young girl was kneeling on the floor, close to the stage, her arms lifted as she stared up at Jesus. Then I saw him, a young man, walking to the other side of the stage, kneeling down and staring straight at the monstrance.

Then they all came: The floodgates opened and hundreds of teenagers poured from their seats and began filling the floor of the



KATIE PREJEAN MCGRADY

WINDOW SEAT WISDOM

stadium, kneeling as close as they could get, to be a little bit closer to the altar ... closer to Jesus ... closer to the one they desperately need.

That joyful, healing, contemplative silence became a joyful, healing, contemplative and vibrant worship, as 20,000 voices continued to sing “Lord, I Need You,” and then began softly singing, “Here I am, Lord ... Is it I, Lord? I have heard you, calling in the night.”

For all the problems we face in the Church — the stats showing us that more than 34% of Generation Z has no religious affiliation and that teenagers are twice as likely as baby boomers to say they're atheists — what I witnessed in that stadium on a Friday night in November wasn't a problem.

No, it was a solution. It was a visible witness to the power of the on-fire, faith-filled, passionate, zealous, well-formed, in-love-with-Jesus young people who are unafraid to run to the altar to be close to the Lord because they hear His voice and want to hear it more clearly.

PREJEAN, page 13

All people may hope for salvation, through Jesus



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord Matthew 2:1-12

This weekend the Church invites us to celebrate the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord, one of the most revered feasts in the Christian calendar.

Clear and distinct in the first reading from the third section of the Book of Isaiah is a brilliantly triumphant note. Why? The long, dreary exile of the faithful Hebrews in Babylon has ended.

It was not all rejoicing, however. For those who returned to the Holy Land, life was not easy. The land was decimated.

Despite this, the prophet insists, a new day will come. It

is not necessarily a prediction of material success, although this would be a part of it. Rather, the new day will come when the Chosen People will realize their vocation. Then, as they return to God, the world will see the majesty and power of the great God of Israel.

For its second reading, this liturgy presents a selection from the Epistle to the Ephesians. In the first generations after Jesus, as converts increased the numbers of the Christian community, great interest began understandably to surround the question of who were to benefit from the salvation secured by the Lord.

Prompting this interest was the fact that so many new converts were from pagan backgrounds. Very soon, these Christians outnumbered the Jewish Christians.

Part of the message of Jesus was that throughout the ages God had spoken through, and to, the Chosen People, namely the descendants of Abraham, the Hebrews — but also to the

world. Gentiles could expect salvation.

This is the promise underlying this reading. The salvation procured by Jesus is open to any human being.

St. Matthew's Gospel furnishes the last reading, the story of the Magi who came from the “East” to find, and then to adore, the newborn “king of the Jews.” The story is unique to Matthew. None of the other three Gospels reports such a visit.

The story situates Jesus, the newborn Son of Mary, in the great sequence of God's saving works. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the birthplace of David, who as king established his own covenant with God. David ruled the Chosen People, but he was much more than a political leader. His task was to bring the people to God, God to the people.

The Magi were searching for the “king of the Jews.” The title reappears in the stories of Jesus offered in the Gospels. It is inscribed on the placard that was placed atop the cross as

Jesus was dying. His entire life on earth was to complete the mission of divine salvation.

Finally, who were the Magi? No one knows exactly. Where was their home? We know only that they came from the mysterious East. How many of them? Tradition says three. The Gospel is silent. The point is that they were searching for truth, for God, and they found both in Jesus.

Reflection

At the time of Jesus, relying upon the divine revelation given the Jews through the centuries, salvation with its promise of God's mercy and eternal life was seen as being primarily, if not exclusively, available to the Chosen People. After all, Jesus was a Jew, born of a Jewish mother. Could people of other nationalities expect to be saved?

The message of this feast, drawn from these readings, is that all people may hope for salvation through Jesus. None is preferred. All are beloved.

Nationality is no longer so much the issue, but sin, fear, guilt, or indifference separates people from God and from a sense of being with God.

On this feast, the Church calls us to come to the Lord, born of Mary, the king of the Jews, the lamb slain on Calvary. He belongs to us all. He loves us all.

READINGS

Sunday: Is 60:1-6 Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13 Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6 Mt 2:1-12

Monday: 1 Jn 3:22—4:6 Ps 2:7-8, 10-12a Mt 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday: 1 Jn 4:7-10 Ps 72:1-4, 7-8 Mk 6:34-44

Wednesday: 1 Jn 4:11-18 Ps 72:1-2, 10, 12-13 Mk 6:45-52

Thursday: 1 Jn 4:19 - 5:4 Ps 72:1-2, 14, 15bc, 17 Lk 4:14-22a

Friday: 1 Jn 5:5-13 Ps 147:12-15, 19-20 Lk 5:12-16

Saturday: 1 Jn 5:14-21 Ps 149:1-6a, 9b Jn 3:22-30

Miracle in D.C.

In August 2018 a beautiful young lady living in Washington, D.C., experienced a sudden and excruciating headache. Seconds later she fell unconscious to the floor.

Her dog, Lacey, sensed something was terribly wrong and began to lick her face. This temporarily revived her, and she was able to dial 911. The medics arrived promptly and she was taken to MedStar Washington Hospital Center, which was only a three-minute ride from her condo. Soon after arrival at the emergency room she lost consciousness again and stopped breathing. A prompt neurologic exam by the emergency room doctor revealed a fixed and dilated pupil as well as decorticate posturing. These neurologic signs are indicative of a catastrophic brain event.

This young lady is part of my extended family. Her name is Christina, but her family knows her as Christie. She is a very close friend of my fourth-born daughter, and they are also cousins. Our families vacation together and frequently break bread together. Her parents are both highly educated and work in the medical field. She has two brothers; one had served as an Army Ranger in Afghanistan and was working for a big tech firm out west at the time, while the other is a physician in residency at one of the most prestigious hospitals in the country. They all immediately headed to Washington, D.C., to be at her bedside.

Once she crashed in the emergency room, she only had minutes to live without heroic efforts. She was immediately intubated and placed on a ventilator. She then had a "stat" CT scan of the head, which documented a subarachnoid hemorrhage (brain bleed) and evidence of dangerously high intracranial pressures that would cause brain damage and possible death if not immediately relieved.

The neurosurgical team was "stat" paged, and within minutes they were able to place an external ventricular drain to help relieve the high intracerebral pressure. This entailed drilling a hole in her skull. This life-saving procedure cannot even be performed in many hospitals. She was already lucky that the medics had taken her to this particular hospital, and she was also very lucky she had a special dog.

Christie was admitted to the Neuro-ICU unit and the nurses

immediately noticed she had low oxygen levels, despite being on 100% oxygen. This would be the first of several life-threatening complications that were being driven by the brain hemorrhage. She had developed Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome, in which, basically, the blood vessels in the lungs leak fluid into the lung tissues.

Her brothers arrived before her parents, and they received the first reports as to how critically ill their sister was. When mom and dad arrived and their sons told them how sick Christie was, their mom collapsed into their arms, exclaiming "Why couldn't this be me!" A selfless expression of love for her only daughter.

By now the word was out and a huge contingent of family members began to pray. Because her father and I are physicians, we have always had a special connection. I received frequent phone calls and texts from him and then relayed any new information to dozens of our family members and friends almost on a daily basis. My four daughters were all quite close to Christie and were in shock. It was just hard to believe that in just one moment a vivacious, highly intellectual young lady would be fighting for her life.

Her physician brother also sent out frequent detailed updates by email, and it is with the help of these saved emails that I am able to accurately recall and share this incredible story.

The next morning she went for a cerebral angiogram to find the cause of the brain hemorrhage. She had bled from two aneurysms found in the back of the brain. The interventional radiologist was greatly challenged, but eventually two stents and two coils were carefully deployed to help prevent further bleeding.

The ICU nurses kept constant vigil, watching for any changes in neurologic status. Critically high intracranial pressures continued and the neurologic team decided to induce hypothermia, which has been shown to help preserve brain tissue and reduce potential brain damage.

The next life-threatening complication that occurred less than 24 hours after presentation was shock (low blood pressure) requiring high doses of vaso-pressors, which are intravenous medications to raise the blood pressure. Echocardiography performed to assess the heart discovered that there was severe



THE CATHOLIC DOCTOR IS IN

DR. DAVID KAMINSKAS

dysfunction of the left ventricle. It is also known as "broken heart syndrome" and can suddenly affect the heart during extremely stressful situations.

The hearts that were truly breaking were the hearts of her mom, dad and two brothers, who were at constant vigil at her bedside.

Thankfully, during the next two weeks her heart fully recovered and her lungs showed significant improvement, although there continued to be concerning neurologic signs supporting spasm or possibly brain damage.

I recall a phone call from her father one day where he shared his worry about a new concerning neurologic finding. Christie had developed divergent eyes. This can best be described as one eye looking one way and the other looking the opposite way. His anguish over the phone was palpable.

As this father struggled to make sense of what had befallen his child, he soon received more bad news. His mother had suddenly died. For several days he pondered if he should attend her funeral or stay in D.C. His family encouraged him to fly to South Bend for the funeral, and the team of physicians assured him that his daughter would be waiting for him when he got back. He did indeed attend, and family and friends came from all over the Midwest to pray with him and show their love and support.

After the funeral Mass this broken-hearted man headed to his alma mater, the University of Notre Dame. There he would go to the famous Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes on campus, get down on his knees, and ask Mother Mary for her intercession.

This column is the first of a two-part series. The second installment will appear in the Feb. 2 issue of Today's Catholic.

Dr. David Kaminskas is a board-certified cardiologist and member of the Dr. Jerome Lejeune Catholic Medical Guild of Northeast Indiana, www.fortwaynecma.com.

PREJEAN, from page 12

I didn't see the disaffiliation crisis we worry about during NCYC: I saw, firsthand, hope for the future of our Church.

The young people at NCYC, the ones I saw fill workshop rooms, share meals, dance, sing and fervently pray — they are the ones who will solve the problem of disaffiliation, not because they have a slick film with glitzy edit-

ing or because they have a well-produced podcast with thousands of downloads, but because they're simply being themselves: young people who have big questions, are searching for big answers, and who are unafraid to rush forward to be close to Jesus and bring their friends along, too.

Jesus' birth gives us the thrill of hope and worth to our souls. But my weary soul, worried mind and heavy heart was already

thrilled in late November, when I saw the hope of our Church rush to the 50-yard line to be close to Jesus in the Eucharist. Those young people were my thrill of hope, the ones who will help this weary world rejoice.

Katie Prejean McGrady is an international Catholic speaker and author.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for January 5, 2020

Matthew 2:1-12

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the feast of Epiphany, Cycle A: The Magi visit the Holy Land. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

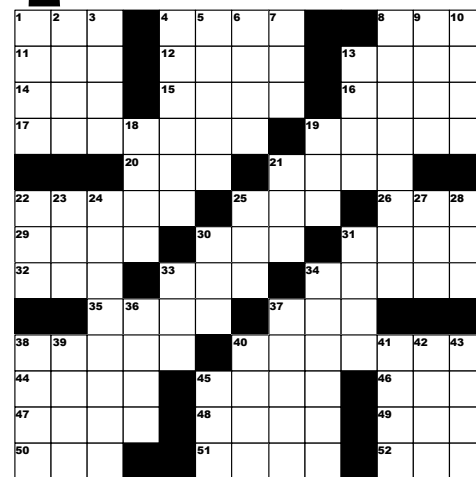
HEROD	HIS STAR	HOMAGE
PRIESTS	INQUIRED	BORN
BETHLEHEM	LAND	RULERS
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DILIGENTLY	THE CHILD	WORD
STOPPED	HOUSE	MARY
GIFTS	WARNED	DREAM

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The Cross Word

January 5 and 12, 2020



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Sunday readings: Is 6-: 1-6; Eph 3: 2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12 and Is 42: 1-4, 6-7; Acts 10: 34-38; Mt 3: 13-17

ACROSS

- 1 Pod vegetable
- 4 Asian humped ox
- 8 Car fuel
- 11 Scientist's office
- 12 Native ruler
- 13 Bowed
- 14 Vane direction
- 15 Light gas
- 16 Opposed
- 17 Achieves
- 19 Used for baptism
- 20 Limited (abbr.)
- 21 Indonesian island
- 22 Dromedaries from Midian and

- 25 "If God is __ us..."
- 26 Popular papal name
- 29 What Magi followed
- 30 Representative
- 31 Jacob's son
- 32 Sticky black substance
- 33 St. Simon symbol
- 34 Artist's stand
- 35 Traced
- 37 Old-fashioned Dads
- 38 Cloying
- 40 Plans
- 44 Waiting place
- 45 Dole out
- 46 Owed
- 47 Chilled
- 48 Computer worker

DOWN

- 1 Supplication
- 2 Where Magi came from
- 3 A wager (2 wds.)
- 4 Sun at noon
- 5 Improve text
- 6 Life histories
- 7 Cremation holder
- 8 Not Jews
- 9 A stake in betting
- 10 Uproar
- 13 False bible god
- 18 Like a wing
- 19 Battle of nations
- 21 Dance to jazzy music
- 22 Eastern Time
- 23 School group
- 24 Pectin
- 25 Hardly any
- 27 Adam's wife
- 28 Used to anoint
- 30 Uncooked
- 31 Eye fringe
- 33 Position
- 34 Diner
- 36 What God's servant will not break
- 37 First among the apostles
- 38 Glided
- 39 Smolders
- 40 Tableland
- 41 Chances of winning
- 42 Dynamic pairs
- 43 Disciples were, on mission
- 45 Not talkative

Answer key can be found on page 15

Priests spoil seminarian basketball streak

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

Marian High School, Mishawaka, hosted the sixth annual Cupertino Classic basketball game Friday, Dec. 27. While the seminarians, back-to-back Cupertino champions, were attempting a three-peat, the priests, captained by Father Andrew Curry, found themselves victorious that evening.

The game drew fans from parishes across the diocese, with several fans traveling from Fort Wayne to watch their priests and seminarians compete.

As hundreds of fans filed into the gymnasium, the two teams made some warmup shots.

After Father Daniel Neizer led a prayer, and the national anthem played, the game began. Throughout the evening, the seminarians trailed the priests by a small margin. Father Matthew

Coonan and his brother Father Terrance Coonan repeatedly and aggressively drove to the basket to maintain a slim lead over their opponents.

Emceeds Father Jacob Meyer and Father David Huneck provided humorous commentary throughout the evening, often making light-hearted jabs at several seminarians while the future priests had possession of the ball or when they committed a foul. The two witty priests also poked a little fun at Father Eric Burgener, who had almost completely ripped the sides of his jersey in what seemed like an attempt to gain greater mobility on the court.



As players passed the ball to their teammates, several fans in the crowd waved creative homemade signs to cheer on their parish priests and seminarians.

At several instances during the game it seemed that St. Joseph of Cupertino, the legendary, levitating priest from whom the annual competition receives its name, had granted his intercession to seminarian team captain Benjamin Landrigan, who jumped for layups and blocked shots by the clergy.

The priests retreated to their



Joshua Schipper

Members of the priest team hold the winner's trophy after beating the seminarians 48-45 in the annual Cupertino Classic basketball game Dec. 27 at Marian High School, Mishawaka. See more photos on page 16.

CUPERTINO, page 16

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WHAT'S HAPPENING carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. View more Catholic events and submit new ones at www.todayscatholic.org/event. For additional listings of that event, please call the advertising sales staff at 260-399-1449 to purchase space.

Cor Jesu with Bishop Rhoades presiding
FORT WAYNE — Cor Jesu is a weekly Wednesday event geared for young adults, but all are invited to St. John the Baptist Parish, 4502 Fairfield Ave. Exposition of the Eucharist begins at 6:30 p.m. with confessions. Mass is held at 7:30 p.m. with a social following. On Wednesday, Jan. 8, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will preside. Cor Jesu is Latin for the "Heart of Jesus" and aims to provide a place where one can hear the heart of Jesus through adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Contact Anne Therese Stephens at 262-527-2364.

Northeast Indiana March for Life
FORT WAYNE — Join other pro-life advocates to march through downtown Fort Wayne on Saturday, Jan. 18. The March for Life is an annual pro-life rally held near the anniversary of the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. This year's keynote speaker is Congressman Phil Roe, Tennessee Dist. 1, retired OB-GYN and advocate for life. The rally will begin at noon at the University of Saint Francis Performing Arts Center, 431 W Berry St., followed by the March at 1 p.m. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. with informational tables on the lobby. For information visit www.ichooselife.org/marchnortheastin. Contact Abigail Lorenzen 260-471-1849 or abigail@ichooselife.org.

Trivia Night at Bishop Dwenger
FORT WAYNE — Bishop Dwenger High School, 1300 E. Washington Center Rd., will have a Trivia Night Saturday, Jan. 18. Doors open at 6:15 p.m., games begin at 7 p.m. Put a team of 10 together or be placed on a team. Cost is \$15 per person or \$150 per table — Must be paid in advance. Carry in food; cash bar will be available. Must be 21 or older to attend. Contact Molly

Schreck mschreck@bishopdwenger.com.

Bingo at St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel
FORT WAYNE — Bingo will be at St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel, 11521 Old Decatur Road S., on Sunday Jan. 19. Doors open at 2 p.m. and games start at 2:30 p.m. Cost is \$25/person and includes 10 games with payouts of \$25 to \$100. Must be 18 to play. Bring a canned good

donation for the food bank and receive extra door prize tickets.

St. Stanislaus trivia night — TV sitcoms
SOUTH BEND — St. Stanislaus Parish will offer a Trivia Night Saturday, Jan. 18, from 6-11 p.m. at MR Falcon Hall, 3212 Keller St. Tickets are \$10 each or \$80-100 to reserve a table. Beverages will be sold, bring snacks to share. Doors open at 6 p.m.

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 Father Lawrence
 E. Calhoun, CSC, 84,
 Basilica of the Sacred
 Heart

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 Assumption

Colette Vance, 72,
 St. Vincent de Paul

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 Cathedral of St.
 Matthew

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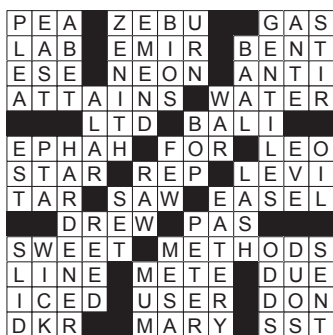
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The CrossWord

January 5 and 12, 2020



CUPERTINO, from page 14

locker room at the half, leading by eight points. After the players left the court, Father Huneck and several Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration played a playful pick-up game.

The seminarian team's luck did not improve in the second half. Father Matthew Coonan's striking endurance allowed him to continue driving to the basket for layups, as he had done in the matchup's first half. The seminarians kept the game close, but at the end of the third quarter, they still trailed their ordained opponents by four points.

With a minute and a half remaining in the game, the priests lengthened their lead. However, with less than two seconds left, the priests fouled on a shot. Seminarian Brian Florin made his first of two free throws, bringing his team within only three points of the clergy. Florin missed the second shot, but there was hope his teammates would rebound and tie the game from the three-point line; the game clock expired, however, before the seminarians could capitalize on the opportunity.

The triumphant priests achieved a close 48-45 victory over their opponents. Although the seminarians' attempted three-game run had crumbled, they commended their challengers with congratulatory handshakes and brotherly hugs after a hard-fought game.

As the evening drew to a close, Father Meyer led the gymnasium in prayer. Father Huneck presented a gleaming trophy to his brother priests.

The annual Cupertino Classic basketball game raises awareness for vocation discernment, especially vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Inside the game-day guide, spectators could find not only Friday's roster, but also tips for discernment from the USCCB.

For more information on discernment, or to contact the diocesan vocations office, visit discernpriesthood.com/discernment or email vocations director Father Andrew Budzinski at info@discernpriesthood.com.

The annual evening of community, competition and camaraderie returns to Fort Wayne next winter at Bishop Luers High School.



Players from the priest and seminarian teams bow their heads as Father Jacob Meyer leads the gymnasium in prayer following the Cupertino Classic game at Marian High School, Mishawaka, Dec 27.



Seminarian Vince Faurote pressures Father Matthew Coonan as he drives toward the basket.

Photos by Joshua Schipper

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