



Good Friday Collection

Help Christians in the Holy Land

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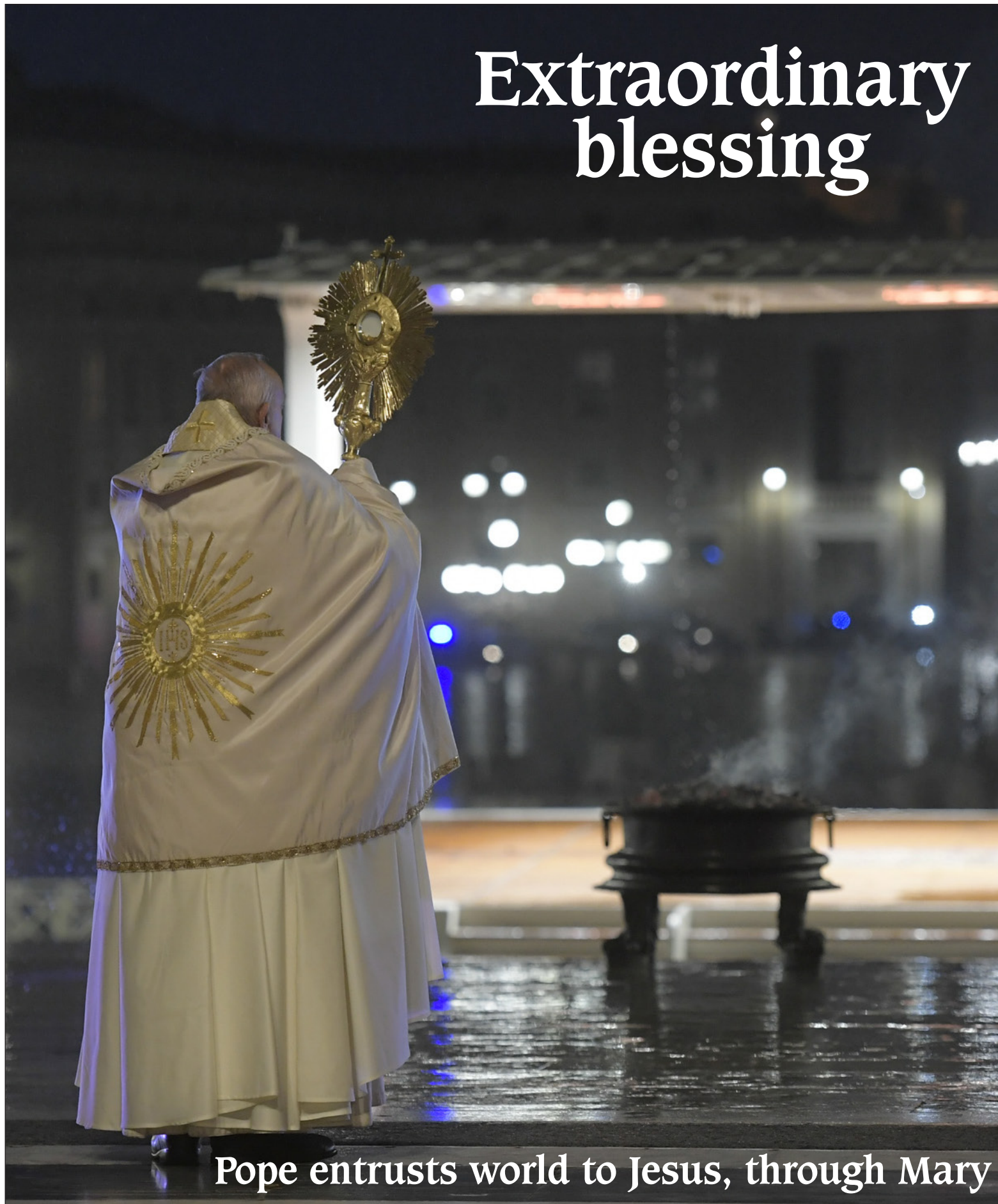
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TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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Extraordinary blessing



Pope entrusts world to Jesus, through Mary

CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis offered his meditation on the meaning of the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications for humanity before raising a monstrance with the Blessed Sacrament and giving an extraordinary blessing “urbi et orbi” (to the city and the world) before an empty St. Peter’s Square March 27. The service was livestreamed in the midst of the pandemic and broadcast around the world. Popes usually give their blessing “urbi et orbi” only immediately after their election and on Christmas and Easter.

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P.O. Box 11169
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PUBLISHER: Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Editorial Department

PUBLICATIONS MANAGER: Jodi Marlin
STAFF WRITER: Jennifer Barton
PAGE DESIGNER: Francie Hogan
NEWS SPECIALIST: Mark Weber

Business Department

BUSINESS MANAGER: Jennifer Simerman
BOOKKEEPING/CIRCULATION: Geoff Frank
circulation@diocesefwsb.org
BUSINESS SALES MANAGER: Erika Barron
ebarron@diocesefwsb.org

Website: www.todayscatholic.org
260-456-2824

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MAIN OFFICE: 915 S. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46802. Telephone 260-456-2824. Fax: 260-744-1473.

BUREAU OFFICE: 1328 Dragoon Trail, Mishawaka, IN 46544. Telephone 260-456-2824. Fax 260-744-1473.

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P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN
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editor@diocesefwsb.org



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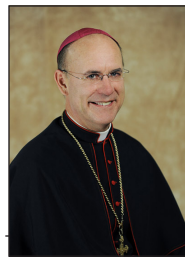
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Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, defeats the virus of sin and overcomes the rule of death



IN TRUTH AND CHARITY

BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

The following homily was given by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades March 29, 2020, on the Fifth Sunday of Lent, during a livestreamed Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne.

On this fifth Sunday of Lent, we hear the account of the greatest sign of Jesus' public ministry: He brings Lazarus, who has been dead for four days, back to life. This miracle reveals Jesus' divine power over life and death. We hear this amazing story at a time when we need to hear it — during this coronavirus pandemic, when thousands of people have died around the world and the deadly virus continues to spread, threatening the lives of many others.

There's a detail at the beginning of today's Gospel that makes me think of the fortitude and courage of our doctors, nurses, health care workers and first responders during this pandemic. They enter into situations of danger to care for those who are suffering. Jesus went into a situation of great danger when he went back to Judea to be with Martha and Mary and to awaken his friend Lazarus. The disciples warned him about this danger. They said to Him: "Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?"

Yes, Jesus wanted to go back there. He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep. Our Lord courageously headed into danger to help Lazarus, to bring him back to life. Next Sunday, Palm Sunday, we will hear what happened because Jesus went back to Judea. He would be arrested. He would lay down His life and embrace death so that we can receive life.

Many medical workers around the world have contracted the coronavirus because they were dedicated, despite the risk, to care for their patients. Let us pray for them and for all those who continue to face danger, yet courageously do so because of their selfless commitment to the sick and the dying.

Notice in the Gospel that after Jesus said to the disciples: "Let us go to Lazarus," the apostle Thomas said to the other disciples: "Let us also go to die with Jesus." By faithfully following Jesus, the disciples head into the same dangerous situation with their Master.

I read this past week of a doctor who was asked by a reporter about entering into a hospital to care for his patients in a situation where there was a shortage of protective gear for the doctors. He said he did his best to protect himself with homemade gear. He told the reporter that he could not 'not serve' his patients, despite the risk. This doctor, like so many others, had the Holy Spirit's gift of fortitude, of courage. Motivated not only by duty, but by love, he was ready to lay down his life for his patients.

I also heard about a nurse caring for coronavirus patients. She was asked about how she was doing and if she was afraid. She replied that she often prays silently in her heart as she moves from patient to patient words spoken by her patron saint, St. Joan of



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The rising of Lazarus is depicted in this graphic.

Arc: "I am not afraid. I was born to do this."

Besides health care workers, there are the priests who also enter into danger to anoint and bring Viaticum to the sick and dying. You may have read the in the news that over 60 priests in Italy (20 from one diocese alone) have died from the coronavirus, many because they were faithfully and courageously ministering to the sick and dying. They, like so many health care workers, entered into danger because of their vocation to love and care for those who are suffering.

In His dialogue with Martha, Jesus makes a great proclamation of His identity. He says to her: "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who believes in me will never die." Then he asks Martha if she believes this. Martha makes a beautiful profession of faith: "Yes, Lord, I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." Jesus asks all of us today this same question: "Do you believe this? Do you believe that I am the resurrection and the life?" May the Lord bless us with the gift of faith during this time so that we may respond with Martha; "Yes, Lord, I believe."

What does this faith in Jesus as "the resurrection and the life" mean? Jesus is talking about another realm of existence. We are very focused these days on the realm of physical, earthly life. The word in Greek for this kind of life is "bios" from which we get the word "biology." Jesus resuscitated Lazarus. By the power of Jesus, Lazarus returned to biological life. This is the realm of life that is threatened by the coronavirus. Scientists are working tirelessly to confront this threat by developing viral medicine and a vaccine to fight and defeat the virus and protect life. Now, when Jesus speaks of Himself as the resurrection and the life, He is speaking about another realm of life. He doesn't use the word "bios." He uses the word "zoe." Zoe means more than biological life. It is a different plane. The realm of biology always involves death. Jesus opens up the realm of a life that is not restricted by biology: definitive life, life that has left behind the rule of death. It is the life we will celebrate at Easter, the life of the Resurrection, the life that never ends. It is the life St. Paul is talking about in today's second reading from his letter to the Romans where he writes: "If the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from

the dead dwells in you, the One who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through His Spirit dwelling in you."

During this pandemic, when so many are working tirelessly to fight and defeat the coronavirus and to preserve biological life, let us also remember that there is an even more destructive virus out there. It is the virus that attacks the definitive life that Jesus gives us. That virus is sin. It is a virus that is defeated by grace and by love. It is the virus that is conquered on the cross. And the death that the virus of sin causes is defeated when Jesus rises from the dead, something infinitely greater than the resuscitation of Lazarus. That's why the early Christians would sing these words quoted by St. Paul: "Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

My brothers and sisters, because of Jesus, death does not have the last word. Life has the last word. That life we received at our Baptism. It is life without end. When we encounter Christ, we enter into communion with that life. We are in touch with true life, beyond our biological life. We come into contact with that life when we receive the drug of immortality, the antidote to death, the Holy Eucharist, the bread of life. During this time, we long for that day when all will be able to receive again this medicine of immortality. In the meantime, the Lord invites us to live the Eucharist through prayer, love and service.

Finally, I invite you to meditate on these words of Jesus: "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." One thing we can hopefully learn from this pandemic and its economic toll is that life in abundance is not what so many tend to think. It's not about having everything, material comforts and pleasures or being able to go out and do whatever we want. Hopefully, all will learn that we don't live for inanimate things or for things that pass away. If we do, we live for death. As disciples of Jesus, we live for life, true life, the abundance of life. We live for communion with the infinite love which is the source of life: communion with the Most Holy Trinity through our communion with the One who is the Resurrection and the Life. He stretches out His hand to us during this pandemic. Let us take His hand and live the abundance of life He gives and communicate that life to our neighbors!

Catholics urged to support Middle East Christians on Good Friday

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Middle East, which continues to face many hardships and challenges, needs the ongoing support of Catholics around the world, a Vatican official said.

“Long and exhausting wars continue to produce millions of refugees and strongly influence the future of entire generations,” said Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches.

“They see themselves deprived of the most basic goods, such as the right to a peaceful childhood, to a harmonious school education, to dedicating one’s youth to looking for a job and forming a family, to discovering one’s vocation, to an industrious and dignified adult life, and to a peaceful old age,” he wrote.

In a letter sent to bishops around the world, Cardinal Sandri asked for continued support for the traditional Good Friday collection for the Holy Land. The Vatican released the letter March 4.

“The funds traditionally collected on Good Friday are the main source of material support for Christian life in the Holy Land,” the cardinal wrote. “The territories that benefit in various forms of support from the collection are Jerusalem, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Turkey, Iran and Iraq.”

The Church in the Holy Land and throughout the Middle East has endured “severe trials” over the centuries, Cardinal Sandri wrote.

“Those trials are not yet finished: The tragedy of the progressive reduction of the number of local faithful continues, with the consequent risk of seeing the various Christian traditions that date back to the early centuries disappear,” he wrote.

“The Holy Land, and especially the Christian community that lives there, has always occupied an important place in the heart of the universal Church,” the cardinal wrote.

“The whole Church has received from Jerusalem the gift and joy of the Gospel and of salvation in Christ Jesus,” and the awareness of that gift “motivates us to give with joy and generosity,” he wrote.

The Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, an administratively autonomous province of the Franciscan order, uses the collection to carry out its mission of preserving most of the shrines connected with the life of Jesus as well as for providing pastoral care to the region’s Catholics, running schools, operating charitable institutions and training future priests and religious.

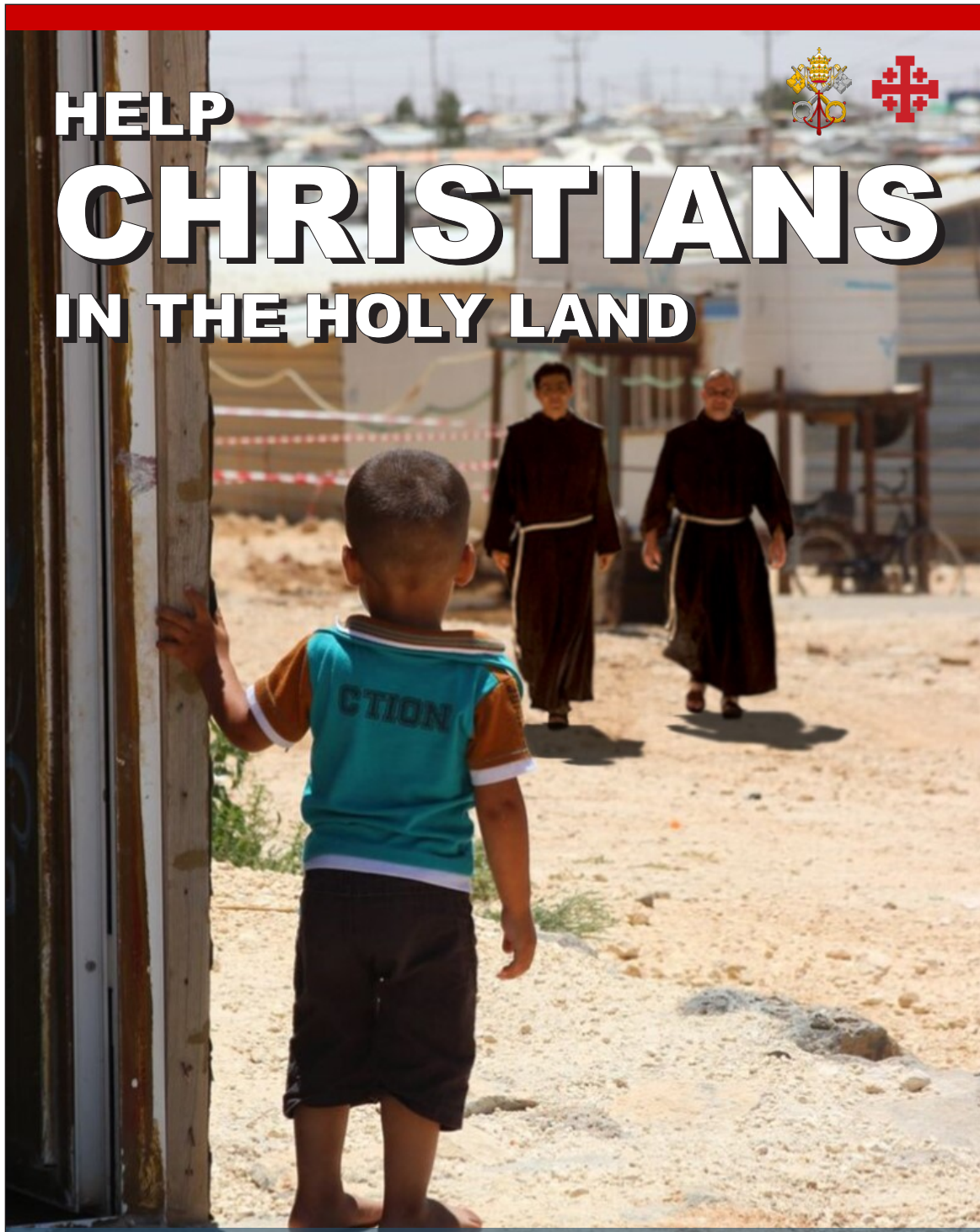
The collection, taken up at the request of the pope, is administered by the Franciscan Custody and the Congregation for Eastern Churches, which uses it for the formation of candidates for the priesthood, the support of the clergy, educational activities, cultural formation and subsidies.

The Vatican press office released, along with Cardinal Sandri’s letter, some details of how the money was used from the 2019 collection, which totaled more than \$8.2 million.

The congregation spent more than \$3.2 million on academic, spiritual and human formation of seminarians and priests of churches under their jurisdiction as well as men and women religious; more than \$3 million went for subsidizing schooling and educational activities for young people, including at Bethlehem University; nearly \$2 million was used provide emergency assistance and support to people in 10 countries.

The Vatican also released a list of the projects supported through the funds given to the Franciscan Custody to assist the Christian minority in the region, preserve and provide pilgrim access to the archaeological sites and Christian shrines and support education.

Humanitarian support was provided to Christians needing medicine, medical assistance, social support, education, job training and legal assistance to families facing eviction from liv-



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 Commissariat of the Holy Land in the United States
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A family prays during Mass in the Church of St. Catherine in Bethlehem, West Bank.

CNS photo/Debbie Hill

ing in East Jerusalem.

Among the maintenance and restoration work carried out were projects at: the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem; the monastery at Bethany, which has Byzantine and medieval remains; the Church of the Holy Sepulcher; and the ongoing expansion of the Terra Sancta Museum in Jerusalem, highlighting the cultural, historical, artistic and archaeological heritage, preserved by the Franciscans.

The collection also helped fund university scholarships and grants for 668 students; support small artisanal businesses; build and renovate numerous homes and apartments for needy and young families; upgrade schools with better bathrooms, recreation

facilities and desks; and install solar energy systems in schools to reduce electricity use.

Editor’s note: In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, contributions to the Good Friday collection for the Holy Land can be mailed to your local parish during the first week of Easter.

NEWS BRIEFS

Pandemic casts spotlight on a nearly forgotten martyr: St. Corona

BONN, Germany (CNS) — She had become nearly forgotten. Little is known about the young woman who was killed for her Christian faith, presumably in the second century A.D. But now, a pandemic is shedding light on her: St. Corona. The German Catholic news agency KNA reports the church's martyr records put the year of her death at A.D. 177. It is not certain where she lived. A Greek account put it in Syria, while a Latin one said it was Marseilles, France, and Sicily. What is proven is that she began to be honored starting in the sixth century in northern and central Italy. All the rest is the stuff of legend — propagated above all by monks in the Alpine region. "This has nothing to do with the real history of Corona, but instead with stories aimed at deepening the faith," said Manfred Becker-Huberti, a German theologian known in the Rhineland as an expert on folklore and customs. The St. Corona legends are bloody. One account is that, as a 16-year-old, she was forced to watch her husband, St. Victor, being murdered because of his faith. She died in a gruesome manner: Her persecutors tied her between two palm trees that had been bent to the ground. Her body was then torn apart when the trees were set loose to snap back into standing position. She is above all revered in Germany's southern state of Bavaria and in Austria, KNA reports. A chapel is dedicated to her in Sauerlach, near Munich. In the Bavarian Diocese of Passau, two churches recall her name, while in the province of Lower Austria and outside of Vienna there are two towns named "Sankt Corona." In the cathedral of Munster in northwestern Germany, there is a St. Corona statue, currently decorated with flowers placed at its base. Some relics of the martyr were taken to the Prague cathedral in the 14th century.

Vatican releases pope's pandemic-influenced plan for Holy Week, Easter

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — With public gatherings, including Masses, banned in Italy to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, the Vatican published an updated version of Pope Francis' schedule for Holy Week and Easter. In a March 27 statement, the Vatican said that all Holy Week celebrations will be celebrated at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter's Basilica "without the participation of the people." The Vatican also said the release of the updated schedule takes into account the provisions made by the Congregation for Divine

Coronavirus may produce misery beyond disease to migrants, home countries



CNS photo/Lindsey Wasson, Reuters

Seattle's Refugee Artisan Initiative founder Ming-Ming Tung-Edelman works to cut elastic material for masks with a volunteer March 24, who will deliver them to individual homes for further production in order to provide protective gear to health care workers testing for COVID-19. The Refugee Artisan Initiative continues to employ refugee and migrant women as U.S. Catholic immigration advocates call for immigrant protections amid the pandemic. Those who long have worked with migrants worry about the effects COVID-19 will cause on the already fragile economic systems of the migrants' home countries. They also worry about the environment the pandemic is creating for those migrants on the move and in new lands.

Worship and the Sacraments. Cardinal Robert Sarah, prefect of the congregation, said in a decree dated March 20 that because the chrisms Mass is not formally part of the Triduum, a bishop can decide to postpone its celebration. For the first time, the pope's schedule for Holy Week does not include the chrisms Mass, which is usually celebrated the morning of Holy Thursday. During the liturgy, priests renew their promises and the oils used for the sacraments are blessed. This year also will be the first time Pope Francis will celebrate the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper in the Vatican instead of at a prison, hospital or other institution. The Congregation for Divine Worship said that "the washing of feet, which is already optional, is to be omitted" when there are no faithful present.

Website now receiving donations for parishes, schools, ministries

NEW ORLEANS (CNS) — With the global spread of COVID-19 financially impacting the ministry of the U.S. Catholic Church, the bishop-led board of the annual 24-hour #iGiveCatholic online giving platform activated its national website March 26. It has begun accepting donations from individuals and businesses in support of parishes, schools and ministries of 39 dioceses across the country. Cory Howat, executive director of the Catholic Community Foundation of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, which launched the 24-hour online giving campaign in 2015, said the website — igivecatholic.org — would be activated indefinitely to address "the looming financial crisis to our par-

ishes, dioceses and other Catholic institutions." The campaign will be branded as #iGiveCatholic-Together. Howat said about 25 "mission" dioceses represented by Catholic Extension would benefit from the online funding, and he projected "another 25 dioceses would come aboard" once word of the expanded giving platform was disseminated more broadly. Catholic Extension is a Chicago-based mission organization that supports the nation's mission dioceses.

USCCB website now offering resources for Catholics amid COVID-19 pandemic

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has created a special link on its website to a

page offering various resources for the nation's Catholics as they weather the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Under the heading "Together in Christ: Responding to Coronavirus," the usccb.org/coronavirus page also has a link to for all Catholics and other Christians to participate in Pope Francis' special "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) blessing in response to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. It takes place at 6 p.m. Rome time March 27. Among the many resources on the USCCB page are lists of websites for Mass being livestreamed by various outlets, such as Catholic TV and EWTN, and on various internet platforms; links to prayers for an end to COVID-19, including from the pope and Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, USCCB president; and daily reflections "to help us all during this trying time." There are Eastern Catholic Church resources and several Catholic publishers have made their resources available. Lists on the page will be updated as more resources become available.

Catholic nurses often only spiritual connection to hospitalized patients

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (CNS) — A tightening of some hospital visitor restrictions on religious ministers and patient family members has begun as the coronavirus pandemic ramps up around the U.S. "It has been about two weeks — it started out with a limit on the times ministers or family members could come in, then a week later they completely stopped it," said Maria Arvonio, a night-shift nursing supervisor for a large community hospital near Mount Laurel, New Jersey, and the lower Northeastern regional director of the Chicago-based National Association of Catholic Nurses. Catholic nurses, Arvonio noted, are now often the only spiritual connection for those in their care. "The patients can make phone calls, but eucharistic ministers, volunteers and family are not allowed to visit at this time, so Catholic nurses are the only Catholic lifeline to their spirituality," Arvonio said, adding that historically the Church has encouraged strong collegial associations of Catholic nurses. The Joint Commission, an organization that accredits and certifies over 22,000 health care organizations in the U.S., likewise acknowledges that offering spiritual care to patients is vital toward supporting their health. "In my opinion, we are the hands and feet of Christ ministering God's love and healing to our patients, especially now more than ever since patients are unable to receive the Eucharist and spiritual care" offered by extraordinary ministers of holy Communion, Arvonio said, adding the patient disconnect with family members can lead to anxiety and fear of the virus.

Blessed Solanus: Canoe the Wabash

FORT WAYNE — The Blessed Solanus: Canoe the Wabash event will be an outdoor canoe pilgrimage with high school youth from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. July 30. The day will begin with Mass at St. Felix Friary in Huntington to celebrate the feast day of Blessed Solanus Casey, and following Mass, participants will embark on a 15+ mile canoe trip down the Wabash River.

A \$60 registration fee will cover canoe rental, shuttle service from Wabash to Huntington and a meal. Registration opens May 1 at <http://www.fwsbym.com>. For more information contact John Pratt at jpratt@diocesefwsb.org.

High schools donate equipment, lunches

SOUTH BEND — As Saint Joseph High School, South Bend, shifted courses to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, students in the school's Project Lead the Way biomedical track began participating in virtual labs. Normally, biomedical students would enter a classroom and observe standard lab procedure, donning personal protective equipment such as disposable gloves, gowns and safety glasses; but now that the class is meeting online, students are not utilizing the equipment.

In light of projected shortages on personal protective equipment, the school decided to donate the unused items to medical personnel. While the quantities are lim-

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Parishioners offer friendship and solidarity amid crisis



Colleen Schena

A member of St. Joseph Parish, Mishawaka, checks in with his neighbor, who is homebound, in mid-March. With the blessing of pastor Father Chris Lapp, volunteers from the parish have initiated a service to ensure the physical, social and spiritual needs of homebound and elderly parishioners during the stay-at-home order enacted to stop the spread of COVID-19. "We just wanted to do something to be helpful," said co-organizer Margaret Cabaniss. What means the most to people, they've discovered, is that someone has expressed interest in their day and asked for their prayer requests.

ited, the school felt called to do what it can to support the greater community at this time, and to contribute to the fight against the coronavirus. The items were donated to Saint Joseph Health Systems and consisted of three boxes of 50 disposable isolation gowns in large and extra-large sizes, two boxes of Comfort Face Masks, 23 pairs of safety glasses, two cans of Lysol, eight boxes of large-size gloves one box of medium-size gloves.

The school has also partnered with Marian High School, Mishawaka, to ensure healthy meals for school-age children in Michiana. Saint Joseph was granted special permission from the Indiana Department of Education to be a lunch distribution site and has been serving its own students and their siblings since e-learning began. The temporary permit restricts the school from serving students not associated with Saint Joseph, but thanks to the partnership with Marian the program has nonetheless been able to expand.

Since Monday, March 23, area school-age children in the South Bend and Mishawaka have been able to pick up a lunch at St. John the Baptist, St. Adalbert, Holy Cross and Corpus Christi schools. Lunches are available Monday through Friday, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The children do not have to be enrolled at the Catholic elementary schools in order to receive a lunch. Saint Joseph High School students and their siblings can pick up lunches Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Saint Joseph High School loading dock on Cedar Street.

Before suspension of Lenten fish fries, fellowship and fun were their primary blessings

BY KATIE MURRAY

Fish fries have traditionally been a way for parishes to raise funds for projects and activities or to help others. During the last several years, however, there seems to have been a shift from this purpose in offering the public meals. The new purpose of the get-togethers has become fellowship.

St. Joseph Parish, Roanoke, offers a fish fry each year on or near St. Patrick's Day at the local American Legion. The holiday gives the dinner a fun theme. Pat Mattes and several subcoordinators from the parish Men's Group pitch in to help plan the event, and other volunteers prep, cook and serve the food and drinks. "It's not intentionally run as a fundraiser, but it does raise funds. It's for fellowship and community visibility ... plus, it's fun for the volunteers to work together," said Mattes.

Diane Banic, secretary at St. Dominic Parish in Bremen, described her parish's annual fish fry as "festive." "We've been

holding this event for 20-plus years," she said. Volunteers work as servers and confirmation students earn hours by bussing tables and resetting them for the next guest. The Tyner Odd Fellows prepare the fish and parishioners also contribute by donating baked goods.

The money raised goes to support whatever the church needs, but the most important aspect, said Banic, is that it is a community event.

"Part of the definition of the church is to reach out to non-Catholics," said Father Dale Bauman, pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Roanoke. "It's not completely about the money, it brings people together as a whole community."

Jennifer Girardot and her husband, Jay, are members of St. Aloysius Parish in Yoder and the coordinators of their fish fry. According to Jennifer, "People really enjoy our fish fry because we make our own cheesy potatoes and coleslaw and we have many cookies, brownies and other desserts."

"They come for the fellowship



Joe Romie

Parishes and diners alike look forward to the return of fish fries after pandemic restrictions are relaxed — and definitely during Lent 2021.

and a good meal," Jay reiterated. So many people come, however, that the dinner is among the parish's biggest fundraising events of the year. Proceeds go to parish programs and other church needs.

St. Bernard in Wabash offers

six fish fries throughout the Lenten season at the Knights of Columbus Hall. They have many parish volunteers who help prepare the meal alongside the Knights. Ann Unger, parish secretary, said while the parish does

want to profit from a fish fry, in order to be able to provide services to parishioners and others, "we ultimately want to connect with the church and community. It's a friendly, community-oriented event."

Easter traditions around the world

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Among Catholics in other parts of the world are numerous Easter traditions that local Catholics might consider incorporating into their own Easter celebration. The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is made up of people from many of those different countries and ethnic backgrounds, who celebrate Easter in fascinating and unique ways. While some of these traditions may have been forgotten over the course of generations, families may find this period of social isolation and spiritual waiting the ideal time to recapture some of these and incorporate them into their in-home Easter celebrations.

Germany

The Fort Wayne area has a large German-descended population, and Easter traditions in Germany are deeply rooted.

Eggs get a unique twist in Catholic areas of Germany, where Osterbaum — or Easter trees — are very popular. Whether using an actual tree or branches cut from a tree and brought inside, these trees are decorated with painted Easter eggs. A similar tradition is the Osterkranz, or Easter wreath, which is decorated with colorful eggs and hung from the ceiling.

Germany is also the originator of the Easter Bunny. But

the event of greatest interest in Germany happens once every 10 years, held this year, is the Easter Passion Play in Oberammergau. It began close to 400 years ago in 1633 when villagers promised to continue it if God would spare the village from the plague. Plague-related deaths ceased.

At home, cut fresh branches from a tree or bush and place in a vase inside the house. Eggs may be in short supply during Easter this year, so rather than dyeing eggs, a little ingenuity can create “eggless” ones made from materials found around the house such as yarn, paper or decorated plastic eggs to tie from the branches.

Spain

In Spain, Easter celebrations begin before the actual holiday with what is called “Semana Santa,” Spanish for Holy Week, with great pageantry. Parades that date back hundreds of years take place on Palm Sunday and throughout the week as Catholics build floats covered in flowers, candles and most importantly, an elaborate statue of either Jesus or the Virgin Mary. The floats are carried on the backs of dozens of men and paraded around particular cities in Spain. Part of these processions are the inclusion of hundreds of people dressed in robes, often white or black, with tall pointed hats and carrying large, lighted candles. These hooded costumes are hun-



Provided by Kathy Fech

Example of a traditional Slovakian Easter basket to be blessed at Mass. The baskets usually contain food items such as sausage, lamb-shaped butter, eggs and an Easter candle meant to be lit during Mass.

dreds of years old and represent penitence. The penitents' faces are covered to show mourning due to the shame of sin.

Though Semana Santa processions in Spain have been canceled, most Catholic homes have statues or pictures of Jesus and Mary that could be decorated with flowers and other symbols to commemorate this celebration of Holy Week.

Italy

Similar to Spain, Italy holds solemn processions on Good Friday or Holy Saturday with costumed participants carrying statues of Jesus and Mary through the town. Some towns also stage Passion plays or Stations of the Cross on Good Friday. Italian Easter bread is braided with three strands to represent the Holy Trinity and shaped in a crown like the crown of thorns with colored eggs baked into the bread. Some areas of Italy bake their bread in the shape of a dove to symbolize hope.

With plenty of time in the home, families can experiment

with baking bread for Easter. Various recipes for braided Easter bread, both with and without eggs baked into it, are available online.

Mexico

Many of the traditions that originated in Spain were carried to their colonies in Central America and South America hundreds of years ago. Processions on Palm Sunday are traditional in some cities in Mexico, commemorating Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The town of Iztapalapa holds one of the largest Passion plays, known as the Via Crucis.

If children are mature enough, families can watch the crucifixion scene from the 1977 miniseries “Jesus of Nazareth” on YouTube together or pray a virtual Stations of the Cross.

Eastern European

In the South Bend area, there are many churches founded by

people from Poland and other Eastern European countries. In places like Poland, Slovakia and Hungary, the tradition of placing a basket filled with certain foods at the altar of the church to be blessed is popular and has transitioned to the United States with these immigrants. Each food item has meaning in Christianity. Some popular items are butter, generally in the shape of a lamb, which symbolizes Christ's goodness; meat in whatever chosen variety as a symbol of God's generosity; and, interestingly, horseradish mixed with grated beets represents Christ's passion and bloodshed. These baskets are typically covered with an elaborate cloth to resemble Christ's burial shroud. And, of course, eggs are part of Easter tradition as a sign of new life, painted most elaborately in some Eastern European countries like Romania.

At home, an Easter basket can still be put together by a family, with items chosen for their symbolic natures — even if there is no Mass at which to bless the basket.

Ireland

Ireland holds rather low-key celebrations for Easter. Good Friday is a solemn day in which eggs are collected, but not eaten. Bread is marked with a cross when it is baked on Good Friday, similar to hot cross buns in England. Catholics attend Mass on Easter Sunday, usually wearing new clothes, then return to their homes for a large meal. Homes are also prepared in advance for a priest to come and bless them on Easter Sunday.

At home, Irish soda bread can be baked on Good Friday with a cross cut into the top of the bread before baking.

France

Where in Germany the Easter Bunny is the one who delivers the eggs, in France eggs are dropped by the flying bells of churches as they wing their way “back” from Rome on Easter morning. The bells in French churches are silenced on Holy Thursday and are said to “fly” to Rome to be blessed by the pope before ringing out the Resurrection on Easter Sunday. The eggs that the bells supposedly scatter in gardens along their flight path become part of the children's traditional Easter egg hunt. And in one town in France, Bessieres, it has been a part of their Easter tradition for the past 40 years to create the world's largest omelet using around 15,000 eggs to feed the town.

At home, the ringing of the bells of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome can be played through YouTube videos or families can ring bells through their own homes, after which Easter egg hunts can take place inside or outside the house.

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Elkhart students blanket city with JOY

BY TAMI DELUCENAY

Jesus-Others-Yourself, a project nicknamed JOY, kicked off the beginning of the school year for St. Thomas the Apostle School students in Elkhart. Bringing joy to others has been the theme throughout the school year and took the form of students pledging to do various acts of kindness and charitable acts.

Marcia Gleason, school administrative assistant, learned of an organization called Sleep in Heavenly Peace and was moved to see how St. Thomas could become involved. Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a national effort dedicated to building and providing beds to children without a bed. Her daughter, Casey Szabo, a counselor at the Elkhart Women's Care Center, is also involved with the organization because it helps her clients.

"When my daughter shared with me how many children in Elkhart County sleep on the floor or in shared beds, I was heart-

broken," stated Gleason. "I went to our middle school students to see how we might help the children and at the same time advance toward our JOY project 500-hours-of-service goal. It quickly turned into a total school- and parishwide outpouring of service."

The Elkhart chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace was established in 2018. Families with children from ages 10 months to 17 years old can submit an application for a bed. Beth Camp, St. Thomas religion teacher, first encouraged the middle school students to help with an October countywide bed build. "We had 15 students come out on a Saturday and devote their day to build 44 bed kits," explained Camp. "It was so cool to see the students saw, hammer, sand and put these kits together."

The parish community piled on the effort. "We put a call out and the response was phenomenal," shared Gleason. "The organization also takes donations for bedding, and we wanted to send



Provided by Marcia Gleason

The school and parish community of St. Thomas the Apostle, Elkhart, supported the local Sleep in Heavenly Peace organization during Lent by collecting hundreds of pieces of bedding, stuffed animals and pillows, sewing fleece blankets and building 40 beds for children who don't have their own place to sleep.

a bed set, a fleece blanket and a pillow for each bed we built. Parishioners donated enough fleece to make 71 blankets, our third graders held a Math-a-thon to purchase bed sets, the fourth and fifth grades raised donations for pillows and our moms held a bake sale. The response has been a total community expression of service."

Lent gave the St. Thomas school community another opportunity to serve the organization. "We kicked off our Lenten journey with a Stuff the Bus campaign," explained Camp. "Along with our bedding we wanted each child to receive a stuffed animal and a book. Students earned money by doing good deeds at home and then using the money to purchase stuffed animals to Stuff the Bus. Our librarian, Liz Baker, used proceeds from our Book Fair to purchase the books, and at the end of our Lenten journey we looked forward to sharing the gifts of JOY to this wonderful organization," concluded Camp.

APRIL Is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Every April, Catholic parishes and schools across the United States participate in National Child Abuse Prevention Month.



The Effects of ABUSE

When a child is abused, the effects are grave and can last a lifetime. Some of the most common effects of abuse include:

- Loss of faith and trust in God.
- Post-traumatic stress disorder, psychological distress, and other indirect signs of trauma, such as anxiety, trouble sleeping, chronic stomach pain, and headaches.
- A greater risk of developing behavioral problems, substance abuse, and suicide.

The sense of violation goes deep into a person's psyche and feelings of anger, shame, hurt, and betrayal can build long after the abuse has taken place.

Steps to Prevent ABUSE

Communicate with Your Children

It is extremely important to communicate openly with your children. Let them know that they can talk to you about anything that bothers them. This will help you identify warning signs and grooming behaviors perpetrated by offenders before they escalate to abuse.

Educate Yourself and Your Children on Abuse

Learning how to identify, prevent, and report abuse is key. Parents and guardians should empower their children to protect themselves from harm and to report abuse. Ask your diocesan safe environment coordinator or parish delegate about opportunities for safe environment training.

Identify and Report Warning Signs of Child Abusers

Grooming behaviors are the actions abusers take to project the image that they are kind, generous, caring people, while their intent is to lure a minor into an inappropriate relationship. Offenders can be patient and may groom their victim, his or her family, or community for years.

Some abusers isolate a potential victim by giving him or her undue attention or lavish gifts, while others allow young people to participate in activities which their parents or guardians would not approve, such as watching pornography, drinking alcohol, using drugs, and excessive touching, such as wrestling and tickling. Abusers also often try to isolate their victims from family or friends and encourage their victims to keep secrets from their parents or other caring adults.

Holding Offenders ACCOUNTABLE

To help hold offenders accountable, report all suspected abuse to local public authorities. You can also contact your local diocesan victim assistance coordinator to make a report and seek outreach for the abused.

In accordance with diocesan policy, when a single act of sexual abuse is admitted or established, the offender is to be removed permanently from ministry.



"Let it be clear that before these abominations the Church will spare no effort to do all that is necessary to bring to justice whosoever has committed such crimes . . . To those who abuse minors I would say this: convert and hand yourself over to human justice, and prepare for divine justice."

—Pope Francis, Dec. 21, 2018



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St. Vincent de Paul volunteers rush to create food boxes

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Tents in parking lots sometimes signal sidewalk sales, but in the parking lot of the St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Joseph County, a blue tent has become a sign of charity in difficult times.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society is comprised of lay men and women who volunteer their time to aid those living in poverty. Begun in France in 1833 by Blessed Frederic Ozanam, the society took its name from St. Vincent de Paul, a French priest who dedicated his life to serving the poor. The organization spread to the United States through its establishment in St. Louis, Missouri, branching out from there.

Restrictions enacted in the state of Indiana due to the COVID-19 virus have caused officials at the agency to reconsider how to best meet the needs of the poverty-stricken in their local communities. "We really had to reimagine what we're doing," said Anne Hosinski Watson, executive director. Not only did they need to continue the mission of assisting the poor, but also "to take care of our own people."

She explained how the organization has temporarily put other

programs on hold and is focused on the vital need to feed those who cannot get food elsewhere. Currently, the society is in what she calls its "emergency phase."

To protect at-risk volunteers, or "Vincentians" as they are typically called, the society decided to suspend in-home visits to distribute food. In lieu of this, they had to find another method of connecting food and the people who need it. They came up with a plan to package boxes of food from their pantry for people to pick up on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10 a.m. to noon. On the day before the order issued by Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb to stay at home took effect, volunteers were able to prepackage 270 boxes for distribution the following week. All of the boxes were claimed by patrons and 500 had to be ordered to keep up with the need.

Because St. Vincent de Paul is a charitable organization, paid staff are exempt from the stay-at-home order and are able to go to work, handing out the boxes to the needy. Some staff members are at higher risk than others and therefore working from home, so a team of five is now performing the work that a group of eight-plus volunteers would typically do. "The boxes are standard, so they're easy to put together in an assembly-line



Provided by Anne Hosinski Watson

Rent and utility assistance, along with food and spiritual nourishment, continue to be provided by the St. Vincent de Paul Society of South Bend to those who need assistance making ends meet during the current economic uncertainty.

format," Watson said. While some staff members distribute boxes outdoors, others work inside the office packing more food to be handed out.

The boxes provide spiritual as well as physical nourishment. They include a copy of the New Testament and a prayer card provided by John Boughton, the new president of the St. Vincent de Paul Conference at St. Joseph Parish in South Bend. "He asked if he could bring (500 copies) and we said 'yes.' People have been very appreciative," stated Watson.

In the past two weeks, 330 boxes have been distributed, consisting of 7,260 pounds of food worth \$8,000. That's roughly 20% more than the usual amount of food given away by the society.

"It's a new situation; it's uncertain, and a lot of people are worrying," Watson commented. In the midst of that uncertainty, the agency has seen a "big spike in need," with new clients coming who previously

had not known of its existence or had never asked for help. "It's definitely a community in need," she said.

To continue meeting those needs, the society is seeking financial contributions to continue its generous work. Watson explained that staff members have been buying food commercially because the Food Bank of Northern Indiana has also been running low on supplies. Food purchases at stores such as Meijer and Gordon's Food Service help fill their boxes, and Meijer also gave a grant of gift cards to the agency. The boxes cost about \$25 for St. Vincent de Paul volunteers to put together and contain \$60 worth of food for needy families.

Watson expects that the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Joseph County is only beginning, and that more help will be needed when utility companies lift the temporary waiver on shutoffs. Many people who have been unable to go to work could fall behind on their house-

hold income, she fears.

One of the organization's programs offers rent and utility assistance. Watson and her staff have applied for outside grants, although those have not yet been approved. Watson stated that some of the grants represent resources that were not available in the months prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

And naturally, prayers for this and other organizations providing assistance to the poor are always welcome. Watson said, "Pray that no one else gets sick and that we can continue to do this and help those in need, because that's what we're called to do."

Although there's no date set for discontinuing the box program, Watson says the agency is envisioning a continuation until May 1 at the earliest. "We're adopting a wait-and-see approach. The Vincentians want to get back to work."

Watson sees a few positive things coming from the crisis, including the fact that many people and organizations are reaching out and working together to meet the needs of those in distress and to ensure the well-being of others, especially those at greatest risk from COVID-19. She has also seen a rise in interest of people wishing to volunteer with the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Additionally, the society has partnered with local resources to provide food to charitable organizations like "Meals on Wheels," which deliver it. "St. Joseph Hospital Systems has been wonderful - making a few extra deliveries for us as we have had some folks contact us because they are disabled or have no other way to get to us for the food."

St. Vincent de Paul is known as the "Apostle of Charity" and is the patron saint of charitable organizations. The St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Joseph County is doing its part to continue his mission of bringing hope and spreading faith within the local community. With the statewide travel ban in place until at least April 6, those who wish to financially support this work can donate at www.svdpsb.org.

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The benefit of Catholic schools

“A lot,” my mom said. “A whole lot.” And she went back to washing the dishes.

I shrugged and laughed, and pressed her for an actual answer.

“Honestly, I don’t know, Katie. I’d have to sit down and do the math. But I can tell you this much: Your Catholic education, from day care through college, was worth every penny.”

“Why?” I asked.
“Because you clearly still love the Lord, and you’re raising your family in the faith. And I think Catholic schools had a lot to do with that.”

I was asking about the cost merely because I wanted to compare tuition costs today to those of the ’90s and early 2000s, when my little sister and I both attended Catholic schools, going on to Catholic universities and earning degrees in theology. We now both work for the Church, I in writing and youth ministry, she as a canon lawyer.

I’d bet the amount of money my folks spent on our Catholic education is far from small, and while it’s hard to do a cost-benefit analysis on a Catholic education, I can certainly identify tangible benefits in my life — benefits I want for my daughter, who will begin attending a Catholic school in August.

The Catholic schools I went to weren’t just places that put me in a plaid skirt and marched me in and out of mandatory religion classes, weekly Masses, daily morning prayer and the occasional retreat/day of reflection. They were places that marched

me into a theology class and gave me space and time to wrestle with big questions, working through confusion and doubt until I could come to a place of belief and understanding.

Catholic schools are where I learned to pray. I remember vividly when my second grade teacher, Mrs. Tartamella, led us into the quiet, empty church the first week of school, explaining that talking to Jesus is like talking to your very best friend. What a perfect way to explain prayer to a 7-year-old who would go to confession for the first time and have first Communion a few months later.

Catholic schools are the place I made lifelong friends in classmates and teachers alike. They were the places that encouraged me to try new things, like joining the speech and debate team, writing for the school newspaper, serving on the student council and playing (for one game) soccer.

Catholic schools gave me community, witnessed to the faith, led me to a deeper understanding of Catholicism and showed me the Church was far more than a building, but could be my home.

Catholic schools were so impactful on me that I taught theology in one for five years, hopefully giving to students the same gift that was given to me: space, time and the opportunity to meet and fall in love with Jesus.

When my husband and I began talking about how we want to educate our kids, we weighed all the options. Home



KATIE PREJEAN MCGRADY

WINDOW SEAT WISDOM

school? Not really suited to our temperaments. Public school? Sure, we’re in a good school district. But something nagged at us.

So, we went and toured St. Margaret, a small Catholic school in our hometown, known for its small class sizes, vibrant and tightknit student body, a gorgeous church and the Religious Sisters of Mercy on campus.

Something clicked when we walked in ... something felt right. It felt like home. The same way my schools always felt like home. The same way the Church is our home.

In that moment, I knew — this must have been the same feeling my mom and dad had every time they wrote a tuition check, chaperoned a field trip or volunteered for a school fundraiser. It was the feeling that this was worth it and there’d be a great benefit, because we’re giving our child a remarkable gift: a Catholic education that will certainly cost, but also mean a lot.

Katie Prejean McGrady is an international Catholic speaker and author.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for April 5, 2020

Matthew 21:1-11

Following is a word search based on the processional Gospel reading for Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, Cycle A: The coming of Christ. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

THE MOUNT UNTIE THEM ZION BROUGHT THE TREES HIGHEST JESUS	OLIVES SPOKEN KING CLOAKS WHO COMES CITY NAZARETH	A COLT DAUGHTER FOAL LARGE CROWD THE LORD WHO IS THIS GALILEE
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HE WHO COMES

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F T R I N E K O P S T N
Y N T G P B R O U G H T
D A N H E D Z S L I G I
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O A N S J M R J O I A T
L R A T O C O O F N D H
E E A C O L T U W G L E
H T O L I V E S N D L M
T H E T R E E S H T A P
W H O I S T H I S R G H
    
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Out of love for us, Jesus offered His life on the cross



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Sunday of the Lord's Passion Matthew 26:14-27:66

This weekend observes Palm Sunday, recalling with such great reverence and intense drama the Lord's traditional entry into Jerusalem, bringing us into Holy Week.

The liturgy includes two readings from the Gospels. The first occurs at the blessing of the palms, and as the procession of the faithful bearing the palms assembles. It reveals both the Lord's divine power, seen through Christ's knowledge that an ass and colt are in the village ahead, and the mission of Jesus as messiah.

Jesus is approaching Jerusalem. More than just a city

in pious Jewish minds, Jerusalem is the holiest place, in which God's temple stands; where David once reigned as king; and where the prophets spoke in the name of God. It was, as it still is, the center of Jewish faith and culture. It was to be the site of the culmination of the Lord's mission.

The crowd proclaims the Lord as “son of David,” greeting Jesus as their own legitimate king and David's heir, repudiating the detested Roman emperor. It sets the stage for Good Friday. The Romans allowed no one to shortchange the emperor.

For its next reading, the Church gives us a passage from the third part of Isaiah, one of those eloquent and expressive sections of Isaiah called by biblical scholars the “Songs of the Suffering Servants.” Poetic and descriptive, these four songs laud an unflinchingly faithful servant of God, who despite abuse and persecution remains steadfastly loyal. Christians always have seen Jesus prefigured in these beautiful poems.

In the next reading, from the Epistle to the Philippians, the stress again is on Jesus and

again presented in the literary genre of poetry. Experts believe that this passage was an early Christian liturgical hymn. Its deep understanding of the person and place of Christ is clear and compelling.

Finally, the liturgy presents the Passion Narrative of St. Matthew's Gospel. Matthew's presentation of Jesus, even in the horrifying circumstances of the Passion, conveys powerful lessons.

First, even at this time, Jesus is the Christ. Far from being overwhelmed and helpless, the Lord is majestic and in control. He is a victim, of course, but completely complying and committed to His mission as the Savior.

While the Apostles do not come across as heroic, to say the least, Jesus never repudiates them. He called them. Despite their fear and cowardice, especially in Peter's case, their call endures, as the call stands for all called to discipleship. Believers sin and fall, but they can return. Their vocation is not canceled.

Finally, all the intrigue, conspiracy and prejudice that

surrounded Jesus fall away before the fact that the Lord triumphs. He is always in control.

Reflection

Matthew's Passion Narrative is the centerpiece of this weekend's Liturgy of the Word. It is easy to lose its deep meaning by concentrating on the awfulness of all that was brought to bear upon Jesus.

Certainly the treachery and cruelty cannot be dismissed or understated. These elements underscore the evil that genuinely exists in the world, and which overtakes many people.

Next week, the Church will celebrate Easter. Jesus rose. Never forget. Even in the dark hours of Good Friday, the Lord was almighty and victorious. Nothing occurred without ultimately lending itself to the fulfillment of the divine plan of salvation.

The praise of the people who acclaimed Jesus' entry into Jerusalem does not illustrate fickleness just on their part, long ago. We all are fickle.

The reading from Philipians

illustrates not only that Jesus is Lord, but that we can be good disciples, even if we fall. Christ awaits us with forgiveness. No sin breaks our relationship with God, unless we choose to reject God ultimately and finally. The Lord, living and victorious, always offers us mercy if simply we ask.

READINGS

Sunday: Is 50:4-7 Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24 Phil 2:6-11 Mt 26:14—27:66

Monday: Is 42:1-7/Jn 12:1-11 Ps 27:1, 2, 3, 13-14 Jn 12:1-11

Tuesday: Is 49:1-6 Ps 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5ab-6ab, 15, 17 Jn 13:21-33, 36-38

Wednesday: Is 50:4-9a Ps 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34 Mt 26:14-25

Thursday: Ex 12:1-8, 11-14 Ps 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18 1 Cor 11:23-26 Jn 13:1-15

Friday: Is 52:13—53:12 Ps 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25 Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9 Jn 18:1—19:42

Saturday: 1)Gn 1:1—2:2, 26-31a 2)Gn 22:1-18 3)Ex 14:15—15:1 4) Is 54:5-14 5)Is 55:1-11 6)Bar 3:9-15, 32—4:4 7)Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28 Rom 6:3-11 Mt 28:1-10



HOLY WEEK 2020

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- April 5 | Palm Sunday Mass: 10 a.m.
- April 9 | Chrism Mass: 10 a.m.
- April 9 | Holy Thursday: 7 p.m.
- April 10 | Good Friday: 1 p.m.
- April 11 | Easter Vigil Mass 9 p.m.
- April 12 | Easter Sunday Mass: 10 a.m.

Visit Facebook or YouTube and search @diocesefwsb

TELEVISED LITURGIES FOR EASTER SUNDAY

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10 a.m. | WISE CW 33.1

10:30 a.m. | WFFT-TV, FOX 55

As additional opportunities to participate in Holy Week liturgies are confirmed, they will be published on diocesefwsb.org/holyweek

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Pope: Personnel, priests caring for COVID-19 patients are heroes



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Two priests stand in front of a crucifix as they celebrate the Via Crucis (Way of the Cross) from the roof of their church, Santa Maria della Salute in Naples, Italy, March 20.

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — With the number of priests and religious dying from coronavirus-related illnesses rising, Pope Francis offered his prayers for those who died after being infected helping COVID-19 patients and their communities.

At least 50 priests, four nuns and at least 24 doctors have lost their lives and 5,000 health care workers in Italy were known to be infected as of March 24 because of the pandemic.

At the start of his morning Mass March 24, the pope said he was aware of the growing number of doctors, nurses and priests who have died after becoming infected while being “at the service of the sick.”

“Let us pray for them and their families. I thank God for the heroic example that they have given us in their care for the sick,” he said.

Archbishop Cesare Nosiglia of Turin told his priests in a letter they are called to a ministry in some ways similar to that of doctors, nurses and psychologists.

“The people turn to you with trust and hope, seeking help or even just a word of support, of accompaniment,” he wrote.

Recognizing the difficulties and restrictions placed upon them for the safety of themselves and others, the archbishop said they were still shepherds, and Jesus teaches that when confronted by a wolf, a good shepherd “is not afraid and does not

run away like a mercenary, but defends his flock.”

The Diocese of Bergamo website has a page dedicated to commemorating the more than 20 priests who have died after March 6.

Meanwhile, the Italian bishops’ conference daily newspaper, *Avvenire*, has a special section online paying tribute to the many deceased priests — with photographs and biographical details — using the hashtag #pretipersempre or #PriestsForever. After the worst-hit Diocese of Bergamo are the other northern dioceses like Milan, Parma, Cremona and Brescia.

At least three bishops, retired and active, were still being hospitalized, in quarantine or isolation for either testing positive or having contact with a person known to be positive, *Avvenire* reported March 18.

Dozens of priests have tested positive for the coronavirus, and some were in serious condition, it said. The number of religious men and women was still being tallied, it said, with at least four men and four women having died as of March 20.

Entire communities of women religious have been infected or are in quarantine or isolation.

In the northern city of Tortona, four members of the Little Missionary Sisters of Charity died and at least 20 were hospitalized; near Rome, in Grottaferrata, tests were conducted on members living in the motherhouse of the Daughters

of St. Camillus, resulting in 59 sisters testing positive as well as one security guard. Local health authorities will be monitoring them as they remain isolated in their community, which also houses students and older nuns.

In another community in Rome, the Congregation of the Angelic Sisters of St. Paul, 19 of its 21 members tested positive for the coronavirus.

The papal almoner, Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, visited both communities March 23 to personally convey the pope’s prayers and affection.

The cardinal brought fresh milk and yogurt produced by dairy cows at the papal villa of Castel Gandolfo. The same products were also donated to the John XXIII retirement home run by the Sisters of Charity Association; its residents were also put under quarantine after two health care workers tested positive.

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PHJC, 96, Ancilla
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Mishawaka

Cynthia Dyes, 65,
Queen of Peace

Alice Hartman, 94,
Queen of Peace

Antonio Portolese, 85,
St. Monica

Norma Ward, 76,
St. Monica

South Bend

Loretta Briedis, 97,
St. Anthony de Padua

Aloysius Kolacz 97,
St. Anthony de Padua

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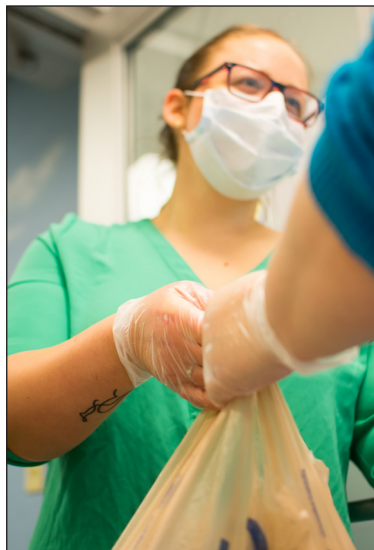
Friday, April 3, 7 p.m.

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Local Catholic Charities office reaching out to provide aid during COVID-19 crisis

FORT WAYNE — Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is participating in the community response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The agency's personnel are working with allied organizations to provide aid to low-income families, seniors on fixed incomes, those laid off as a result of business closures and to other vulnerable populations.

"We are experiencing a great surge in requests for food, clothing, housing, transportation and other basic needs," said Gloria Whitcraft, CEO of Catholic Charities. "Already we are receiving many, many calls from those laid off because of the shut-down."



Whitcraft added that the most important task at present is to quickly and accurately assess the needs of parishes in our diocese as well as the broader public in our area. The organization is surveying parishes to gather an accurate picture of those in need of assistance. They are also coordinating with other relief agencies to compare data and avoid duplication of efforts.

"There are many organizations responding generously to the crisis," said Whitcraft. "We want to make certain in the midst of this chaos that we aren't duplicating efforts or letting some people fall through the cracks."

Catholic Charities food pantries will remain open during this crisis. The South Bend Food Pantry operates Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to noon, and from 5-7 p.m.; the Auburn Community Center of Caring operates Tuesdays from 9:30-11:30 a.m. and Wednesdays from 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Regarding the emergency relief package passed by Congress on Friday, March 27, Whitcraft said it's too early to know when financial aid might arrive for individuals and businesses. In the meantime, there are many people living paycheck to paycheck who need immedi-

ate assistance with food, utilities and housing costs.

On Monday, March 23, Gov. Eric Holcomb told Hoosiers to remain at home until at least April 7. He said the measure is crucial to combating Indiana's rising number of coronavirus infections. The order, which took effect Tuesday, March 24, at 11:59 p.m., told all Indiana residents to stay at home and confine their movement to essential travel. Catholic Charities and other social service organizations were deemed by the governor to be "essential businesses" so they continue to operate at full capacity.

Whitcraft said counselors continue to meet with clients but do so virtually online. For those who are not proficient in English, case managers still accompany clients in person to medical appointments to provide translation assistance. When available, they provide translation virtually to avoid personal contact. Whitcraft added that the staff is taking extraordinary measures to both prepare for and mitigate community transmission of COVID-19 and other viruses.

To meet the urgent demands in the Fort Wayne-South Bend diocese, Catholic Charities is requesting the following:

First, pray for Our Lady's protection and intercession in this time of crisis.

Second, using recommended safety protocols, assist your neighbors, especially the elderly and the most vulnerable.

Third, if possible, make a financial contribution to the local Catholic Charities office. All donations will remain in the diocese and go to serve those in need.

To donate, go to: www.CCFWSB.org/donate or send a check to: Catholic Charities, PO Box 10630, Fort Wayne, IN 46853.



Photos by Molly Gettinger



Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is keeping the doors of its South Bend and Auburn food pantries open to help the homeless and those who are out of work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteers have even taken to commercially purchasing food, when necessary, to meet the need. At left, South Bend volunteers pack food bags and boxes for clients; above, a client leaves with some assistance for the week.