

# TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 94 No. 17

TODAYSCATHOLIC.org

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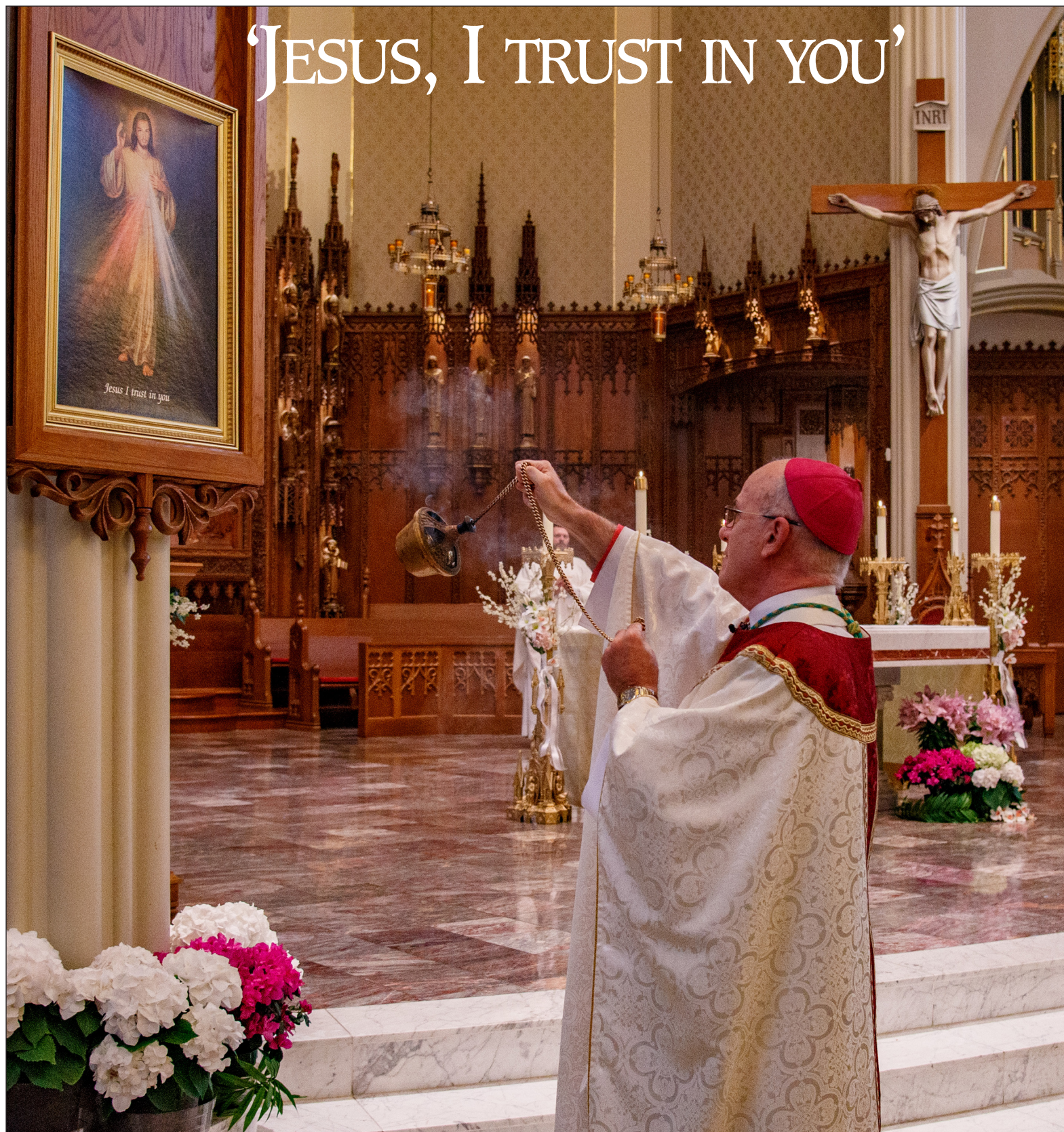
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### 'God knew I needed this little extra time'

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Jennifer Simerman

During a livestreamed Mass April 19 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades incenses a painting of the Divine Mercy image.

## Devotion to Divine Mercy is a truth to be lived, says bishop

*The following homily was given by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 19, 2020, during a livestreamed Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne.*

After the crucifixion of Jesus, the disciples stayed in the upper room. They

stayed there out of fear, today's Gospel tells us. After Jesus' death, they were filled with anguish. Their Master, their Teacher, was no longer with them. They were confused — after all, they had left everything and followed Him and now He was dead. They were left in sorrow and must have felt very desolate.

While they were in that state of fear and sorrow and anguish, the Risen Jesus "came and stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace be with you.'" The Lord showed them the wounds in His hands and side. In that marvelous encounter, their sorrow and fear evaporated. The Gospel tells us that the disciples rejoiced

when they saw the Risen Lord. And then, the Lord said to them again, "Peace be with you."

At different times in our lives, we experience anguish and sorrow. We can be confused and afraid. In this time of pandemic, many are

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**HOMILY, from page 1**

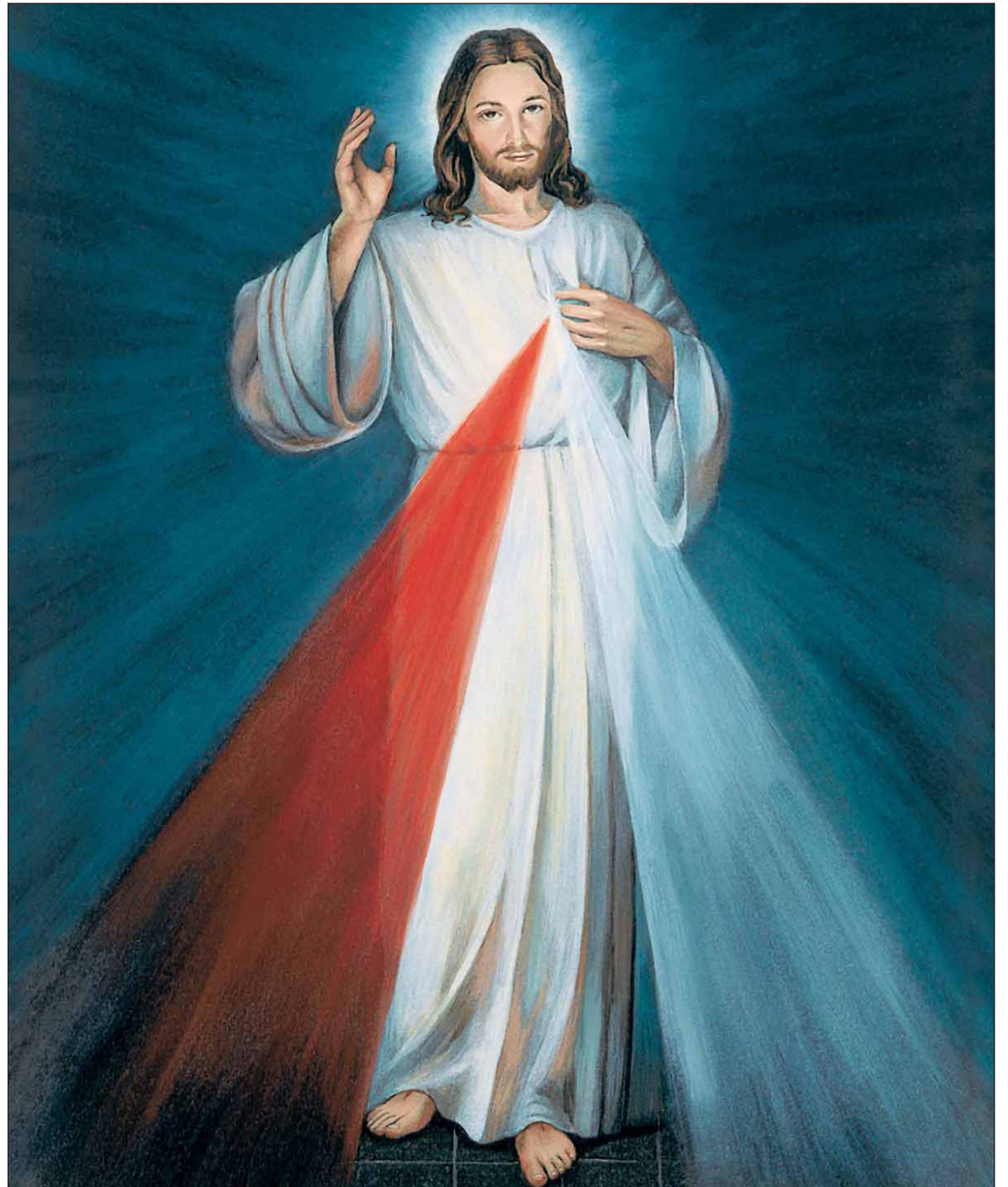
in sorrow at the death of loved ones. Many are in anguish and are afraid of contracting the coronavirus. Many are afraid because they've been laid off from work or might be laid off from work. They are afraid for their and their family's economic wellbeing. Many are confused about what our country and our community should do next: afraid that if restrictions are lifted, the virus might spread more or afraid that if restrictions are not lifted, the economic toll will be disastrous for many people.

In the midst of fear, anguish, confusion, and sorrow, the Lord wants to give us His peace. We need to hear Him say to us as He said to the disciples that first Easter night, "Peace be with you." The Risen Lord wants to enter our homes and our hearts with His peace. We need to open the doors to let our Lord in. We do so when we pray. We open the doors of our homes and our hearts when we say like St. Faustina: "Jesus, I trust in you." When we do so, we receive the Lord's Easter gift to us: His peace.

I invite you today, Divine Mercy Sunday, to look at the wounds of Jesus, the wounds in His hands and feet, and especially the wound in His heart. These are the source from which flows the great wave of mercy that Jesus poured out on humanity. I invite you to gaze upon the image of Divine Mercy: with His right hand, Jesus is blessing us and the world. His left hand is touching the wound in His Sacred Heart, and from that Heart two rays of light come forth, one red and the other white and bluish, like the blood and water that flowed from His heart on the cross. The wound in Jesus' heart is the great proof of God's mercy, proof that God's love for us is real and comes forth upon those who trust in Him.

When the Risen Jesus appeared to Thomas and the other disciples a week later, He greeted them again with the words, "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas: "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Jesus wants to take away Thomas' doubt. He wants to take away our doubts, our anguish, our fear, and our sorrow. He wants us to believe in His love and mercy. He wants us to believe what He has done for us on the Cross and to believe in His resurrection from the dead. He desires the light of His mercy to descend upon us (the light we see in the Divine Mercy image). When it does, we experience the peace which this world cannot give.

The peace that Jesus offers us is not a life free of suffering, but it's the peace of knowing that God truly loves us, that Jesus is



File photo

**The image of Divine Mercy as seen by St. Faustina Kowalska.**

with us in our suffering. He still bears the wounds of His passion. They are wounds of mercy and they are now glorious wounds.

God's merciful love defeats sin and conquers death. When we are anxious or upset or afraid, we need to look at those wounds and pray: "Jesus, I trust in you."

St. Peter wrote in his first letter: "By his wounds, you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus invites us to behold His wounds and to enter into the mystery of those wounds, to believe in God's merciful love, and to look at Him and say with St. Thomas: "My Lord and my God." Then we can hear Jesus saying to us: "Peace be with you."

On this Divine Mercy Sunday, I invite you to pray before the image of Divine Mercy and to

say: "Jesus, I trust in you." These words summarize our faith, "the faith of the Christian, which is faith in the omnipotence of God's merciful Love"

(Pope Benedict XVI, Regina coeli, 4-15-2007). I also invite you to pray today for all who are sick and suffering, those who have wounds that afflict their bodies and souls, that the Risen Lord may heal their wounds.

We heard in our first reading today from the Acts of the Apostles that the early Christian community, the primitive Church, was of one mind and heart. Every day the Lord added to their number. I pray that the Church today, all of us, will be so united. Like those first Christians, the Lord has entrusted us with the mission to be agents of His mercy. He calls

us to be bearers of His peace and agents of His mercy. The message of divine mercy is not just for our individual spiritual lives. It is a message to be shared and spread throughout the world, especially by our actions. The Lord said to Sister Faustina: "Speak to the whole world about my mercy."

Pope St. John Paul II told us: "Be apostles of Divine Mercy." The devotion to Divine Mercy is not just for our chapels and churches. It is a truth to be lived by showing mercy and compassion to our neighbors in need. We're not just to talk about the divine mercy, but to live it. It is actualized in our gestures of charity, kindness and forgiveness towards others. That's what the early Christians did. And the Church grew. "Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved." May that happen to the Church today!

May Mary, our Mother of Mercy, intercede for us, for the Church and for the whole world!

**CORRECTION:** In the April 12 issue of Today's Catholic, the front page article was not Bishop Rhoades' Easter Sunday homily. The article was his Easter Vigil homily from April 11. We regret the error. To view the bishop's homilies online, visit [www.diocesefwsb.org/Bishop-Rhoades-homilies-and-talks](http://www.diocesefwsb.org/Bishop-Rhoades-homilies-and-talks).

# Head of FDA urged to ensure COVID vaccine be free of abortion connection



CNS photo/Dado Ruvic, Reuters

A woman models a small bottle labeled "Vaccine COVID-19" in this illustration photo April 10.

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The chairmen of four U.S. bishops' committees, joined by the leaders of several health care, bioethics and pro-life organizations, "urgently and respectfully" implored the commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to ensure any vaccines developed for the coronavirus "are free from any connection to abortion."

"To be clear, we strongly support efforts to develop an effective, safe, and widely available vaccine as quickly as possible," the leaders said in an April 17 letter to Dr. Stephen M. Hahn, the FDA commissioner.

"However, we also strongly urge our federal government to ensure that fundamental moral principles are followed in the development of such vaccines, most importantly, the principle that human life is sacred and should never be exploited," they said.

Copies of the letter were sent to President Donald Trump, Vice President Mike Pence and Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar. The text of the letter was released late April 17 by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The chairman who signed it and their respective USCCB committees were: Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, Committee on Pro-Life Activities; Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, Domestic Justice and Human Development; Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, Committee on

Doctrine; and Bishop John F. Doerfler of Marquette, Michigan, the Subcommittee on Health Care Issues, which is a subcommittee of the doctrine committee.

Other signatories were the heads of 20 organizations such as the Catholic Medical Association, National Catholic Bioethics Center, American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, National Association of Catholic Nurses, Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Children of God for Life, March for Life Education & Defense Fund, Family Research Council and Students for Life of America.

"We are aware that, among the dozens of vaccines currently in development, some are being produced using old cell lines that were created from the cells of aborted babies," they said.

They noted that, for example, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc. has a substantial contract from HHS and "is working on a vaccine that is being produced using one of these ethically problematic cell lines."

Other vaccines such as those being developed by Sanofi Pasteur, Inovio and the John Paul II Medical Research Institute "utilize cell lines not connected to unethical procedures and methods."

"It is critically important that Americans have access to a vaccine that is produced ethically: No American should be forced to choose between being vaccinated against this potentially deadly virus and violating his or her conscience," the group said.

"Fortunately, there is no need to use ethically problematic cell lines to produce a COVID vaccine, or any vaccine, as other cell lines or processes that do not involve cells from abortions are available and are regularly being used to produce other vaccines," they said.

The group told Hahn: "We urgently and respectfully implore you to not only ensure that Americans will have access to a COVID vaccine that is free of ethical concerns, but to encourage and incentivize pharmaceutical companies to use only ethical cell lines or processes for producing vaccines."

On April 6 a group of about a dozen Democrats in Congress sent a letter to Azar urging the Trump administration to lift restrictions on research that uses human fetal tissue for potential treatment for COVID-19. They argued that allowing fetal tissue in such studies could lead more quickly to a treatment.

On June 5 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services banned the National Institutes of Health from using human fetal stem cells from electively aborted babies for government funded research. The department also issued a \$20 million grant for research to develop models that do not rely on human fetal tissue.

**Editor's Note:** The full text of the letter with all the signatories can be found online at <http://usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/index.cfm>.



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## Heartfelt healing amid the coronavirus crisis

*Editor's Note: April is Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month. The following reflection was shared in the April issue of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection Newsletter and encapsulates the lifelong process of healing experienced by victim-survivors of child sexual abuse by clergy.*

BY MIKE HOFFMAN

Healing from my wounds of childhood sexual abuse, I take comfort in regular and predictable routines at home, work, socially and at Church. With coronavirus, the shelter-in-place order, near constant disruption of regular life patterns and what seems as all bad news — predicted to get worse before it gets better — I am fully aware of my own brokenness. I have a deep concern for other survivors of any kind of abuse that they might feel unsettled and anxious, like I do. I'd like to offer a message of hope in the midst of real despair.

This Fourth Sunday of Lent, I viewed the taped Mass celebrated by Cardinal Cupich from Holy Name Cathedral. Additionally, I livestreamed Mass celebrated by Father Aidan O'Boyle, our former administrator at St. Mary of the Woods.

During his homily, Cardinal Cupich spoke about healing in all aspects of our lives. He spoke about the man in the Gospel reading, born blind, who literally had zero points of reference in his life for his next step, his next meal and how to survive each day. Yet Jesus brought healing to him. I can relate to this story. At first, I heard the cardinal's words from the perspective of a survivor of childhood abuse. I have felt alone and abandoned as a childhood sexual abuse survivor, similar to how the blind man would feel. Getting through and surviving each day is mine and so many other childhood trauma survivors'

daily reality. Yet, with God's grace, I have accepted healing from my wife, my family and my friends. Looking past my own lens, as all of us cope with the impact of coronavirus and the related feelings of isolation, each of us has zero points of reference in this new reality which causes us all to feel unsettled. Jesus, in the act of spitting on dirt, making a paste, coming close to the man and applying the paste to his eyes, in a true miracle, caused the man to see. He was healed. He was not abandoned and alone, and with that, he now had points of reference to reorient his life. I appreciate Cardinal Cupich reminding me that I, and all of us, are not alone. Even in this time of despair, God is with us. God offers us healing. From the perspective of a childhood abuse survivor, I am comforted by these words and I feel their impact in my heart. I hope other abuse survivors can be comforted as well.

Additionally, I livestreamed Mass from St. Muredach's Cathedral Ballina County Mayo celebrated by the former administrator of St. Mary of the Woods, Father Aidan O'Boyle. During his opening welcome, he also welcomed us from his former parish. It is Mother's Day in Ireland today, and Father O'Boyle acknowledged all mothers, including three mothers who recently died in our parish. Sitting on my living room chair streaming the Mass at 7:30 a.m., with tears in my eyes, I was comforted by his thoughtfulness from half a world away. During his homily, Father O'Boyle shared how hope is contagious. I believe that!

I'd like to remind all abuse survivors they are not alone, or abandoned, during this time. Please take time for yourselves and your needs. Hope and healing is possible, even now. My thoughts and daily prayers are with survivors of abuse. Stay safe and be well.

*Hoffman is a co-founder of The Healing Voices Magazine.*

## After violent storms, states facing recovery while coping with pandemic

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (CNS) — The Diocese of Birmingham “may have been spared greater disaster” because of Mary’s intercession when numerous tornadoes and widespread damaging winds ripped through Alabama and much of the South April 12 to April 13, said Bishop Robert J. Baker, apostolic administrator of the diocese. “Because the Diocese of Birmingham falls in the trajectory of what is referred to as ‘Dixie Tornado Alley,’ we have a special prayer that we promote when storms come our way,” Bishop Baker said in an April 15 statement. “As the storms came our way Easter Sunday evening, I went to Facebook and shared that prayer to Our Lady of Joyful Hope.” Bishop Baker said that while there was no loss of life in Alabama, serious damage was done to homes in northern Alabama, which is the area covered by the diocese. “Our Catholic Social Services offices in those areas will reach out to people in distress,” he added. The storms hit central Texas early April 12 with what was described as “gigantic” hail, leaving damage behind as the storms went east through Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas. News reports said the severe weather left at least 33 dead and left over 1 million people without power early in the morning of April 13.

## Retired pope, celebrating 93rd birthday, is well, secretary says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Retired Pope Benedict XVI “is well,” although the coronavirus pandemic restrictions mean he received no visitors April 16, his 93rd birthday. “Thank God, all of us in the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery are well,” Archbishop Georg Ganswein, the retired pope’s personal secretary, told *Avvenire*, the Italian Catholic newspaper. The retired pope, the archbishop and a group of consecrated women live in the former monastery in the Vatican Gardens. Usually for his birthday, Pope Benedict is joined by his older brother, Msgr. Georg Ratzinger, who turned 96 in January, but Archbishop Ganswein told Vatican News that, this year, the two spoke on the phone. Msgr. Ratzinger’s call was just one of many birthday calls the retired pope had received. Despite the lockdown, Archbishop Ganswein told *Avvenire* April 16, the day would be “more festive” than usual in the monastery. And, he told Vatican News, it would feature the singing of Bavarian folk songs. The day began, as usual, with Mass in the monastery chapel. The retired pope, the archbishop said, prays each day for the sick and for those suf-

## Catholic pandemic app



CNS photo/handout via Archdiocese of Chicago

Alex Jones, Erich Kerekes and Alessandro DiSanto of Chicago pose for a photo April 3. The three, who have ties to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, are the founders of a popular Catholic app called Hallow centered on meditation and prayer. They recently added special features to help people cope during the coronavirus pandemic.

fering because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Bishops join concerns for protection of migrants, virus spread via deportations

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Some U.S. bishops joined an effort by national organizations and other groups in Latin America calling on global leaders to provide better protections for migrants and refugees during the coronavirus pandemic, while also voicing worries about the spread of the virus to other countries via deportations. One of the organizations that joined the statement, released by the Washington-based Faith in Action and the Hope Border Institute of El Paso, Texas, raised an alarm about Mexican authorities busing migrants to shelters near the Guatemala border and encouraging migrants to cross

south into the country. “They’re not providing any medical care or taking precautions to protect against the spread of COVID-19. The situation is very chaotic and it’s exposing migrants and our staff to a great risk of contracting the virus,” said Ramon Marquez Vega, who directs La 72, a migrant shelter in southern Mexico near the Guatemala border. He made the comments in the statement provided by Faith in Action and the Hope Border Institute. Guatemalan authorities recently said the U.S. sent a plane of deportees to the country with the majority of them carrying the coronavirus, which causes COVID-19. The April 15 statement backed by El Paso Bishop Mark J. Seitz, along with Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, and Cardinal Alvaro Ramazzini of Huehuetenango, Guatemala, called for an immediate release “of as many migrants and asylum-seekers from detention as possible.”

## Vulnerable people seeing rapid COVID-19 response from U.S. aid agencies

WASHINGTON (CNS) — U.S.-based aid groups are devoting extra resources to refugees and migrant people globally who are vulnerable to the new coronavirus. Efforts by Catholic Relief Services, Malteser International, Jesuit Refugee Service and AVSI-USA are focusing on basic education about the virus, sanitation and hygiene and boosting staff capacity to ensure an effective response to COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus. The message being shared is the same as that in the developed world: maintain social distancing, wash hands, and cover sneezes and coughs. The lack of clean water and soap in many poor communities has made the work more difficult to carry out, however,

agency officials said. At the same time, Aid to the Church in Need announced it will provide \$5.5 million in emergency funding to priests and nuns who care for the most vulnerable communities around the world but who have lost their own basic means of subsistence because of the pandemic. Sean Callahan, CEO and president of CRS, said in a statement the agency, which is the U.S. bishops’ overseas relief and development agency, is utilizing its relationships with partners around the world to respond as quickly as possible to the pandemic. Particular emphasis is being placed on addressing the needs of older adults and vulnerable children, refugees and migrants, people with compromised immune systems and their caregivers, as well as other high-risk groups. “Our COVID-19 response will draw upon our experience in acute health emergencies,” Callahan said, citing his agency’s work to respond to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and the HIV crisis. “Our work will be informed by the local context and focus on some of the most vulnerable communities.”

## Pope pens editorial on joy in the time of coronavirus

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Like the women at the tomb whose sorrow turned to joy after the Resurrection, Christians also are called to be joyful witnesses to Christ’s victory over death amid the coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis said. In an editorial published April 17 by the Spanish magazine, *Vida Nueva*, the pope said that those who take part in “the Lord’s passion, the passion of our brothers and sisters, even living our own passion, our ears will hear the newness of the Resurrection: we are not alone, the Lord precedes us on our journey by removing the stones that paralyze us.” “If there’s one thing we’ve been able to learn in all this time, it’s that no one is saved alone,” he wrote. “Borders are falling, walls are crumbling and all fundamentalist discourses are dissolving before an almost imperceptible presence that shows the fragility of which we are made.” In his editorial, titled “Un plan para resucitar” (“A plan to resurrect”), the pope also acknowledged that an invitation to be joyful “may seem like a provocation or a bad joke in front of the grave consequences we are suffering due to COVID-19. Like the first women disciples who went to the tomb, we live surrounded by an atmosphere of sorrow and uncertainty that makes us ask, ‘Who will roll back the stone from the entrance to the tomb for us?’ How will we deal with this situation that has completely overtaken us?” he asked.



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# AROUND THE DIOCESE

## Showing their Easter joy



Jennifer Barton

On Good Friday, several members of St. John the Baptist Parish and school, New Haven, placed crosses on the church grounds to show support for their faith community. They returned on Easter Sunday to decorate the crosses with flowers. Some of the crosses bear the names of the families who placed them.

## Annual Women's Care Center Golf Classic postponed

FORT WAYNE — John Tippmann, Sr. and Don McArdle, co-chairmen of the annual Women's Care Center Golf Outing at Sycamore Hills Golf Club, Fort Wayne, have announced the 2020 event, originally scheduled for May 18, has been postponed due to the coronavirus until Monday, Sept. 28. With virtually everything shut down and no definite reopening in sight, it was decided the prudent thing to do was to postpone the event far enough into the future to maximize the probability of it actually taking place.

With three locations in Fort Wayne, the Women's Care Centers help young women choose life and offers programs to help them have healthy pregnancies, become better parents and ultimately become more self-sufficient. They do this by offering one-on-one birth preparation, a nine-week "Baby Basics" program, goal counseling, parenting classes and a crib club which, by participating in education, young parents earn vouchers that can be redeemed for brand new cribs, car seats, baby clothing and diapers.

Sycamore Hills is listed in the top 100 golf courses in the United States by Golf Digest magazine and is a prestigious

layout that appeals to the most discriminating golfer. All the arrangements planned for the original date will still apply on the new date, with the practice range opening about 10:30 a.m., lunch at noon and a shotgun start at 12:30. Cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and dinner will follow the event.

For more information on the golf outing or the Women's Care Centers, contact McArdle at 260-466-7268.

## Diocesan virtual lesson presented on St. Faustina, Divine Mercy

FORT WAYNE — Through a generous collaboration on the part of OSV, an online lesson about the life of St. Faustina Kowalska and Christ's message of Divine Mercy took was offered by the Secretariat for Education of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend from 7-8 p.m. April 17.

The opportunity was open to religious education students of the diocese, students of Catholic Schools and those involved with Catholic Scouting as a way for families to engage in faith activities during the stay-at-home order and presented a lesson feature a presentation by Father Anthony Gramlich, MIC, rector of the national Shrine of Divine Mercy. It concluded with the Chaplet of Divine Mercy prayed by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades.

Viewers in 270 homes participated in the webinar and an additional 200 people signed up to receive the recording afterward. Scouts were able to earn patches through the National Catholic Committee on Scouting religious activities program for participating.

"The lesson on St. Faustina and Divine Mercy was so good to hear! Knowing that a simple young lady was chosen by God to hear His promise of mercy encourages all of us to open our ears to hear God's message," said Theresa Dirig, a member of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting and St. John the Baptist Parish in Fort Wayne. "Father Gramlich shared the story in words that all could understand. And praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet with Bishop Rhoades made the evening extra special."

"My 6-year old son was especially impressed by the description of her childhood," said Mary Elizabeth Kaltenbach. Two days later, on Divine Mercy Sunday, she led a den meeting via Zoom for her 8-year old son's group. "He shared some of what we learned with the other boys. We closed that meeting with some of the chaplet prayers and encouraged the other boys to pray them with their families."

Those who may have missed the live lesson but would still like to view it can go to <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/3148873065404139024>.

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# Epidemic danger and Catholic sacraments

BY THOMAS JOSEPH WHITE

*Editor's note: Following column first appeared online April 9, 2020, at firstthings.com.*

As the Church enters a Triduum where a great majority of the faithful lack public access to the sacraments, I'd like to offer some reflections that stand in sharp contrast to those currently being promoted by the editor of First Things, my friend Rusty Reno, regarding the current pandemic, civic responsibility and access to the sacraments. In fact, I take his views to be rather misguided, though well-intentioned, and am grateful for his magnanimity in inviting me to offer an alternative position. I realize the issues are fraught and anyone's view is necessarily subject to a fair amount of fallible prudential judgment. I hope, however, to at least ground my arguments in both Catholic principles and a realistic assessment of our current situation, so as to develop what I think are measured and appropriate positions.

## On the civic response of quarantine measures

My first claim is based on a basic given of natural law. The state has a fundamental obligation to protect human life, especially when it is gravely threatened. This obligation is compounded in a time of epidemic if there is a danger of a generalized collapse of the medical system through a rapid and overwhelming influx of new cases of a deadly disease, which COVID-19 certainly is. In a context where the medical system breaks down, deaths from the disease multiply and many other maladies cannot be safely treated. The state, then, has a moral obligation to seek to halt or slow the spread of the disease. In requesting a thoroughgoing but temporary quarantine, governments across the world are following both traditional, time-tested procedure and proven scientific advice. In doing so they are acting in accord with human inclinations to protect life that are both basic and intrinsically good, even ineradicably so, despite the effects of sin on political organizations. Civic governments are wounded by sin, but not radically depraved. They can still pursue and uphold basic



John Martin

**Although the suspension of public Masses is trying for the Catholic faithful, it's the most reasonable course of action given the unpredictable nature of COVID-19, says Thomastic Institute director Father Thomas Joseph White.**

natural goods, as they are seeking to do in this case.

Furthermore, because temporary (two to three months) quarantine measures are the essential key to stemming transmission rates so that societies can learn to deal with this illness more competently, quarantine is also a necessary first step in the restoration of public economic well-being and civic freedoms. Opposing the two (health vs. civic flourishing) is scientifically unrealistic and ethically irresponsible.

The Catholic perspective on the common good and solidarity can and should naturally align with the act of public reason requiring temporary quarantine, not protest it in the name of a misbegotten exaggerated libertarianism. It is true that Christians

can and should maintain measured reserve regarding political regimes and the state, especially when they illegitimately ignore the moral obligations of natural law or encroach upon arenas of religious freedom. But Christians should also be on guard against exaggerated individualism, magical thinking that ignores scientific evidence and religiously rationalized narcissism. Protesting quarantine because it disrupts one's lifestyle choices can be a sign of displaced individualism, denial of reality and bourgeois entitlement. Furthermore, it is obvious at this time that the national community must agree

on measures of public health as a precursor to resolving larger political and religious disagreements. Here Christians should exhibit a sense of solidarity in pursuing the common good and foster a sense of greater empathy for those who are especially vulnerable: the elderly, those with pre-existing medical conditions, people with disabilities and the poor who frequently have a lower quality of health, to say nothing of the young and ordinarily healthy people who are also dying from this disease. To cause division on the fundamental good of protecting human life during a pandemic by way of moderate quarantine measures seems to belie these efforts.

## Sacraments in an era of pandemic

The first thing to be said about the suspension of public Masses is that it is not innovative nor is there any evidence that it stems from undue influence of a secular mentality. In fact, there is clear evidence that in medieval and modern Europe, as well as in the U.S., this form of response on the part of the Church is a very traditional and time-tested one. St. Charles Borromeo has been mentioned much in these discussions. He closed the churches of Milan due to a plague in 1576–77. During this time, he arranged for Masses to be celebrated outside and at street intersections so that people could watch from their windows. There wasn't any question of distributing Communion since it would have been rather unusual in this period for most people to receive regularly at Mass. This lasted about two years. There are many other medieval and early modern examples that could be

cited, but much more recently, in 1918, the churches in many parts of the United States closed for public worship during the Spanish Flu. In New Orleans (hardly a Protestant city) the city ordered that churches had to close, which did prompt some outcry from Catholic pastors who said that this had not been done during earlier epidemics. They were in error. Old moral theology manuals classically indicate that one of the reasons a priest can celebrate Mass privately without a server is due to plague, which shows that earlier moralists understood that priests might not be able to celebrate publicly during such times. The bottom line is that the Catholic Church generally did whatever was reasonable to prevent the spread of disease and to comply with rational city ordinances. It chafed a little and pushed back against things that seemed unreasonable, but when it needed to suspend gatherings for Mass, it did so. By contrast, in 1918 some Christian Scientists in the U.S. refused to close churches based on the premise of their spiritual superiority and argued that if they were pious enough, the gathering would not be affected by the illness, nor would they transmit it to others. Here nature is replaced by an appeal to permanent miracle and common sense and natural reason have given way to vain spiritual presumption. This is what good old-fashioned theology calls a heresy.

Secondly, it is in fact seriously unethical to attribute to the leaders of the Catholic Church the principal intention of selfishly trying to protect themselves from getting sick. (The technical word here is "calumny.") Bishops and priests do have the right to try to avoid getting sick, as a matter of fact and it is a natural right

that cannot be denied to them even if one disagrees with their prudential decisions. More to the point, they also can infect older members of their communities who will be likely to die. (As I write this, two older Dominican priests I know have died from the virus this past week and dozens of others are struggling with the illness. I wonder how many of my confreres will have to die before critics will concede that it is reasonable for younger priests who live in rectories with them to take serious precautions?) But this set of concerns, while legitimate, is in fact secondary. The primary issue the bishops are concerned with is the protection of others. This virus spreads through social contact, purely and simply. Often those who have it are asymptomatic and can transmit it even when they think they are healthy enough to say Mass or attend Mass. If priests have public Masses and then they visit anyone who is older than 50, or if they visit the sick and then say public Masses, they will help spread the illness both indirectly (by gathering people together) and directly (by becoming transmitters). Under these conditions the temporary suspension of public Masses is not only reasonable, but strongly morally defensible.

This is the case even when there are also priests who decide to heroically expose themselves



**Modern technology allows for more opportunity in crisis, while still erring on the side of safety for**



Molly Gettinger

**“The life of the heart is as real as the life of the mind and in our current moment, for however long it should last, charity is itself the most basic prophetic activity.” (Father White)**

to the illness for the sake of others and their spiritual care. In the Catholic tradition, the practice of heroic virtue on the part of priests and religious is not mandated but should be invited and lauded. Even here, however, one has to be reasonably prudent. It is one thing to make a martyr of one's self and another thing to eradicate a nursing home in the process. In a case like this, priests may only minister to those who are infected if they themselves are taking sufficient precautions not to infect others, which requires some kind of ongoing quarantine for the duration of the crisis (at least in its most acute phase). This is precisely the practice

that has been undertaken in my own Dominican province (and I've heard of other such cases in both Italy and the U.S.), where members of the province living under quarantine apart from others are ministering to the sick. The decision is not a trivial one. At least one priest I know has already contracted the illness and recovered, but is back again serving at the hospital. In Italy, meanwhile, the fact that the churches are not having public Masses allows for the priests to visit the sick either at home or in the hospital. In doing so, many of them have contracted the illness and some of them have died as a result. What this approach prevents is priests spreading the illness either to healthy laity or other priests, who in turn may die from it.

In saying this I am presuming that some essential services can and should be made available to the laity, such as keeping churches open for public prayer or Eucharistic adoration with spatial distancing. Churches should be able to provide confessions in safe circumstances, facilitate anointings and carry out private marriage ceremonies and baptisms, all under the guidance of due prudence. I'm also presuming that the measures enacted by the bishops are temporary, as clearly they are intended to be. A worldwide pandemic of this nature is not an ordinary event and thus leads to many uncertainties in the short and long term. That the Church should suspend public Masses temporarily is defensible as the most reasonable course of action given the novel and unpredictable nature of the illness. It is objectively the best course in such circumstances to err on the side of safety in the protection of life. This gives one time to re-evaluate. Once the quarantine reaches some initial degree of success, standards of practice will evolve and there will be questions of how to safely re-engage public sacramental practices while minimizing public risks. This is not bourgeois reasoning. It is prudential public responsibility.

## What is our current task? Hope, interiority, Christian empathy

We might ask, what should we be doing as a Church in this time, one that is extremely trying for a great number of people, both religious and non-religious alike? Currently around 1800 to 2000 people are dying in the U.S. daily from this virus, the vast majority of whom would not have died if it had not broken out three months ago. These are not mere statistics. These are people's parents, brothers and sisters, children, friends and loved ones. The medical staff of our country are currently experiencing the greatest medical crisis in generations and it is costing them a tremendous amount spiritually and physically. In Italy over 100 physicians and 20 nurses have died from the illness in just two months. Something similar is to be expected in the U.S. and is already happening across much of Europe. These people go to work every day knowing that they might die and along with janitors, grocery store clerks and public transport personnel, they are risking their lives for others. Currently priests like myself are being contacted daily by people struggling with the illness or with the death of loved ones. We are living in a time that is deeply troubling for many of our fellow human beings.

In this context the instinctual move of some conservative Christian commentators to practice social criticism while fomenting division among priests, bishops and laity is spiritually corrosive. (What does it do to a priest's soul, by the way, when we incite him to break the vow he made to God to obey his bishop?) Nor is it helpful to utter the tone-deaf claim that the COVID-19 pandemic is not so bad and that people are overreacting. People are not overreacting when they grieve as their patients, friends, or family members die by the thousands. In fact, the Christian message in this context is one of basic evangelical hope. What we are to learn first in this crisis is that there is life after death, that God loves those who die, that there is the possibility of the forgiveness of sins, that our littleness in the face of death is also an opportunity for surrender, that Christ too died alone from asphyxiation and that he was raised from the dead, that God can comfort the fearful and that there is a promise of eternal life. In the face of death, Christians should be precisely those who put first things first.

Second, Christians ought to treat this pandemic as an opportunity to learn more about God. What does it mean that God has permitted (or willed) temporary

conditions in which our elite lifestyle of international travel is grounded, our consumption is cut to a minimum, our days are occupied with basic responsibilities toward our families and immediate communities, our resources and economic hopes are reduced and we are made more dependent upon one another? What does it mean that our nation-states suddenly seem less potent and our armies are infected by an invisible contagion they cannot eradicate and that the most technologically advanced countries face the humility of their limits? Our powerful economies are suddenly enfeebled and our future more uncertain. Priests and bishops are confronted with a new obligation to seek interiority over activism as their sacramental ministry is rendered less potent and laypeople have to find God outside the sacraments in their own interior lives, discovering new ways to be grateful for what they have rather than disdainful in the face of what they lack. We might think none of this tells us anything about ourselves, or about God's compassion and justice. But if we simply seek to pass through all this in hasty expectation of a return to normal, perhaps we are missing the fundamental point of the exercise.

Finally, what can Christians do to console both their religious

and secular neighbors? What about the people heroically risking their own lives to serve others at this time, or those who are ill and afraid, especially those who do not have a religious recourse or perspective? What about those grieving, or those who are isolated? How can we be creative in our hope and empathy? Bishops, priests and laity alike should work together in the coming months to discern how we can safely return progressively to the public celebration of sacraments and have interim steps of public worship in limited ways. But we should also be thinking about how to communicate Christian hope and basic human friend-

ship and compassion to people who suffer, in our words and gestures, both individually and collectively. The life of the heart is as real as the life of the mind and in our current moment, for however long it should last, charity is itself the most basic prophetic activity. “By this they will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35). I'm citing him because in this and in every other case, His authority comes first.

*Thomas Joseph White, O.P., is director of the Thomistic Institute in Rome.*

*Article reprinted with permission from First Things journal.*

*We should also be thinking*

*about how to communicate*

*Christian hope and basic*

*human friendship and*

*compassion to people who suffer.*



Nate Proulx

**ties to practice the faith than in past times of both priests and the public.**



Joshua Schipper

**The Catholic Church has generally done whatever is reasonable to prevent the spread of disease and to comply with rational related requests from the government, says Father White.**

# Daughters of Isabella DePaul Circle 434 looking to grow

BY DENISE FEDOROW

The Daughters of Isabella group at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Elkhart is called DePaul Circle 434 and was formed over 90 years ago, according to Local Regent Nancy DeMarco. She'd like to keep it going for 90 more years and beyond.

The motto for the charitable women's organization is "Unity, Friendship, Charity." DeMarco explained that the organization is structured with three levels — international, state and local. The international level includes members from the United States and Canada. Each state circle has a charitable organization that the local organizations help support. In Indiana the charitable organization is the St. Elizabeth/Coleman Center in Indianapolis, which helps unwed mothers with the adoption process or with parenting if they decide to keep their babies.

The local organizations can also act charitably of their own accord. DeMarco said, "We sent \$200 to Tennessee tornado relief for the tornado victims and helped put in wells in Africa."

One St. Vincent parishioner with four children — two of which are babies — has cancer, DeMarco said, so the Daughters of Isabella DePaul Circle donated \$75 for diapers and wipes. In the past, the organization also provided donations when someone experienced a house fire.

"Whenever we hear of someone in need, we present it to the group," she said.

The DePaul Circle currently has 58 members, including women from St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Elkhart and St. Mary of the Annunciation in Bristol. They are looking to increase membership, specifically with younger women.

DeMarco said modern times have made it difficult to get women to join organizations, as many work and have children involved in several activities. To attract younger women, DeMarco said the members strive to "increase the spirituality and prayer aspect to feed their need for spirituality."

She said the meetings are business meetings. They have to



Photos provided by Regie Jackson

**Members of the Daughters of Isabella DePaul Circle 434 in Elkhart, along with family members and friends, made a pilgrimage to the National Shrine of St. Theresa of Lisieux in 2017.**

account for the money in their care, and DeMarco said she tries to impart to women that the time spent on business matters is well worth it.

Prayer is part of their meeting too, something the ladies enjoy and DeMarco said is important when doing charitable work.

"We have to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and be close to Jesus to know what He wants," she said.

The Daughters of Isabella members also plan different activities to reach out to others. They've taken trips to the National Shrine of St. Therese of Lisieux and to the Shrine of Christ's Passion in St. John, Indiana. Family members and friends of the Daughters of Isabella were invited to join them.

"The social aspect is important," DeMarco said.

They also invite prospective members to attend a meeting and apply to join. Once they do there's an induction ceremony. She said the Daughters of Isabella have a lot of traditional ceremonies dating back to the early years of the organization.

As a member of the Daughters of Isabella DePaul Circle, the Elkhart County women "are linked to a larger group of Catholic women and a long

history of Catholic women," DeMarco shared.

The group was started as a sister group to the Knights of Columbus. When circle members go to the biannual conventions, they see how large and diverse the group is. The biannual convention is due to take place in August in Cincinnati.

The regent leader said the circles raise funds to support their charitable giving and one of the biggest fundraising events at St. Vincent is the Daughters of Isabella Rock-A-Thon.

"Members sign up to rock in a rocking chair before or after Mass and we take donations," she explained.

She shared that the effort has consistently raised \$2,500-\$3,000 every year since they began doing it. Members also fill baskets with different items and then conduct a silent auction. A silent basket auction is also done at the state conventions.

DeMarco said the Daughters of Isabella is a diverse group of women in age, ethnicity and where they are in their individual faith walks. Some are cradle Catholics and others are new to the faith, but they have one thing in common.

"We are all believers in Jesus and the Gospel. In Jesus' eyes we're all the same, and that's

what's neat about the Daughters of Isabella — we all have such a great time together. That's what I want to pass on to the younger women," she said.

"We try to tell them when they give time to God, He'll give it back to them," she added.

The Daughters of Isabella DePaul Circle 434 meets the third Tuesday of each month, with a social time starting at 6:30 p.m. The business meeting begins at 7:15 p.m. For more information visit [www.stvincentelkhart.org](http://www.stvincentelkhart.org).

## History of the Daughters of Isabella

The first circle of the Daughters of Isabella was founded in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1897 as an auxiliary to the Father John Russell Council of the Knights of Columbus for the purpose of unity of all Catholic women in a sisterhood to achieve the following aims:

- To know one another better
- To extend their circle of friends
- To centralize all their resources to better help one another
- To be a greater force to contend with in pursuit of good in their society.

Today is it one of the largest Catholic women's organizations, with a membership of over 3,000 women from the U.S. and Canada. It has continued to prosper and establish bonds among Catholic women throughout the world. Members encourage each other's total development and foster growth of every aspect of life — spiritual, social and charitable — adding up to a more fulfilling life.

— From the Daughters of Isabella website, [www.daughtersofisabella.org](http://www.daughtersofisabella.org)



Members take their places during the annual Rock-A-Thon fundraising event last year as young parishioners place donations in their donation box.

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# The dynamite of the Gospel

*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God!” (Rm 1:16)*

The Gospel is the very power of God. In the original language, the word used here by St. Paul for “power” is “dynamis,” the similar word we use for dynamite. So, it’s not too far of a stretch to call the Gospel the dynamite of God.

This is precisely what we see in the account of Jesus’ first miracle in the Gospel of Mark. (Mk 1:21-28) At the synagogue in Capernaum, Jesus’ hometown for public ministry, Jesus encounters the kingdom of darkness head on and teaches as one with authority and the ability even to cast out demons.

What Mark doesn’t recount for us is the actual content of Jesus’ teaching, but instead he emphasizes the dramatic details of Jesus commanding the unclean spirit, or demon, to leave. Mark’s whole purpose here is to show the dynamite of Christ’s teaching. His teaching is not something inactive or ineffective. No — instead, the words of Christ are explosive and reveal the in-breaking of the kingdom of God.

Notice the demon does not refer to itself in the singular, but rather says: “Have you come to destroy us?” You see, the demon realizes that the kingdom of God has come in the very words of Jesus, and His teaching is an all-out assault on the kingdom of darkness. Because Jesus Christ is the eternal word of God the Father who took on human flesh, His words have the same

effect as the Word that created the entire universe — from the billions of stars throughout the galaxy to the incomprehensible mystery of the human person; that is, you and me. The demons tremble at this reality, because they recognize that even a single command from our Lord is capable of bringing their destruction.

Is this our own experience with the Word of God and the teaching of Jesus? Do we find the Gospel to be the very dynamite of God that is capable of setting the entire world ablaze? Do we truly believe that the Word of God in itself has the power to do what it says?

Like those early Jews in the synagogue at Capernaum, perhaps we should open our eyes to see the radical newness of the words spoken by Jesus. They are words that have the very effect they speak. After all, this is precisely what we believe about the sacraments.

You see, those words alone, the words of Jesus, are the very power of God. They are capable of truly absolving sins and healing the sick. The same is true of the Word of God found in sacred Scripture — it truly has the power to transform the world.

And so it is — the Word of God, Jesus, is dynamite in us. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews (Hb 12:29) even says that “our God is a consuming fire.” His fame is meant to explode in our homes, cities and nation. After all, that is precisely what those first Jews did after seeing Jesus in the synagogue. And we don’t simply see Jesus like those in the synagogue — in



## A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

BRIAN ISENBARGER

His Word and sacraments we truly become one with Him.

Even in this time when many of us may not be able to physically receive Jesus in the Eucharist, His Word is still living and active — the same Word that makes the Eucharist present is the same Word living in the Bible. It has the real power to transform human hearts.

So, why not present our dry and desolate hearts as a wick to be set aflame with the power of the Gospel?

**Brian Isenbarger** is a seminarian of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. He is studying at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

# SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for April 26, 2020

Luke 24:13-35

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Third Sunday of Easter, Cycle A: a walk of bread and fire. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

VILLAGE	SEVEN MILES	JESUS
THEIR EYES	RECOGNIZING	CLEOPAS
CHIEF PRIESTS	THE TOMB	MORNING
A VISION	ALIVE	FOOLISH
CHRIST	STAY	MOSES
TABLE	BREAD	BROKE IT
HEARTS	ELEVEN	SIMON

## A WALK

C H R I S T H E T O M B  
 L H V M O R N I N G R R  
 E A I H J E L E V E N O  
 O Y L E D T M F C H O K  
 P A L A F U J O I D Y E  
 A V A R A P G O S A A I  
 S I G T L N R L U E T T  
 I S E S I E N I S R S A  
 M I K Z V T A S E B V B  
 O O I R E T N H J S K L  
 N N S E Y E R I E H T E  
 G F S E L I M N E V E S

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# We encounter the Lord in the breaking of the bread



## THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

### Third Sunday of Easter Luke 24:13-35

The Acts of the Apostles again furnishes the first biblical reading. Almost every Sunday in the Easter season features a reading from this book of the New Testament.

In this reading, Peter again preaches to the crowds in Jerusalem. Catholics are quite familiar with preaching. All Americans are very accustomed to impassioned preaching. They hear it in their own churches. They hear it on the radio. They hear it on television.

Preaching, by definition, is not simply lecturing or speaking aloud. At its best, it is speaking

in the very name of God.

Those who preached, by ancient Jewish standards, were privileged people in this sense. None chose to be a preacher. Rather, God selected each preacher. Peter stood before crowds after having been called to preach, but, most importantly, he spoke in the place of Jesus. He preached the words of Jesus, in behalf of Jesus.

This reading makes three points. First, it establishes the identity of Peter. He is an Apostle. Second, he is the chief of the Apostles. He speaks in the names of them all.

Finally, through Peter and the other Apostles, the salvation given by Jesus still reaches humankind. The Apostles continue the Lord’s work.

The First Epistle of Peter provides the second reading. It is an admonition, direct and clear, firm and explicit. In effect, it calls upon Christians to put first things first, to love the Lord above all things, and to follow the Lord regardless.

It calls a spade a spade, so to speak. The Christian life is

wanting, unworthy of the name, if it is occasional, quailed or half-hearted.

St. Luke’s Gospel provides the last reading. It is another Resurrection Narrative, and it looks back to the Emmaus story. (The Emmaus story reports the walk to a small town outside Jerusalem by two disciples and by the Risen Lord, and the disciples’ recognizing Jesus in the “breaking of the bread,” or Eucharist.)

As this group of disciples was talking, Jesus stood in their midst. He was no longer bound by location or time. Risen from earthly life, victorious over sin, Jesus now lived in the fullness of eternity, but still in the incarnation, true God and true man.

He showed them the pierced hands and feet. Indeed, these disciples were encountering the crucified, but, the crucified had overcome death and had lived!

This reading is a magnificent testimony to the divine reality of the Eucharist, the “Breaking of the Bread.” In the Eucharist, in actual communion with Jesus, the disciples find clarity.

## Reflection

The Church continues to summon us to the joy of Easter celebration. He lives! The readings once more this week exclaim the Church’s great trust in, and excitement about, the Resurrection. Jesus is not history. He is now.

In all these readings, the Church calls us to the fact that our redemption is in Jesus. He rescues us from death, from the living death of sin and hopelessness, from eternal death.

As did the Lord, all people, even all believers, must live and eventually die. As Jesus rose, they too will rise if they do not relent in their love of, and obedience to, God. Thus, all believers can anticipate, and provide for, eternal life in God.

Christians further can rejoice in the fact that salvation did not pass away when Jesus, who lived for a time on earth, ascended into heaven. His mercy and power remain. His words endure. God has provided for us, so that we too may have salvation. We may encounter Jesus.

We reach the Risen Jesus, and we learn of Jesus, from the Apostles. We encounter the Lord in the Eucharist, in the “Breaking of the Bread.” In communion with Jesus, we solve the riddles of life.

## READINGS

**Sunday:** Acts 2:14, 22-33 Ps 16:1-2, 5, 7-11 1 Pt 1:17-21 Lk 24:13-35  
**Monday:** Acts 6:8-15 Ps 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30 Jn 6:22-29  
**Tuesday:** Acts 7:51—8:1a Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 7b, 8a, 17, 21ab Jn 6:30-35  
**Wednesday:** Acts 8:1b-8 Ps 66:1-3a, 4-7a Jn 6:35-40  
**Thursday:** Acts 8:26-40 Ps 66:8-9, 16-17, 20 Jn 6:44-51  
**Friday:** Acts 9:1-20 ps 117:1bc, 2 Jn 6:52-59  
**Saturday:** Acts 9:31-42 Ps 116:12-17 Jn 6:60-69

# Seminarians' website helps families build domestic church

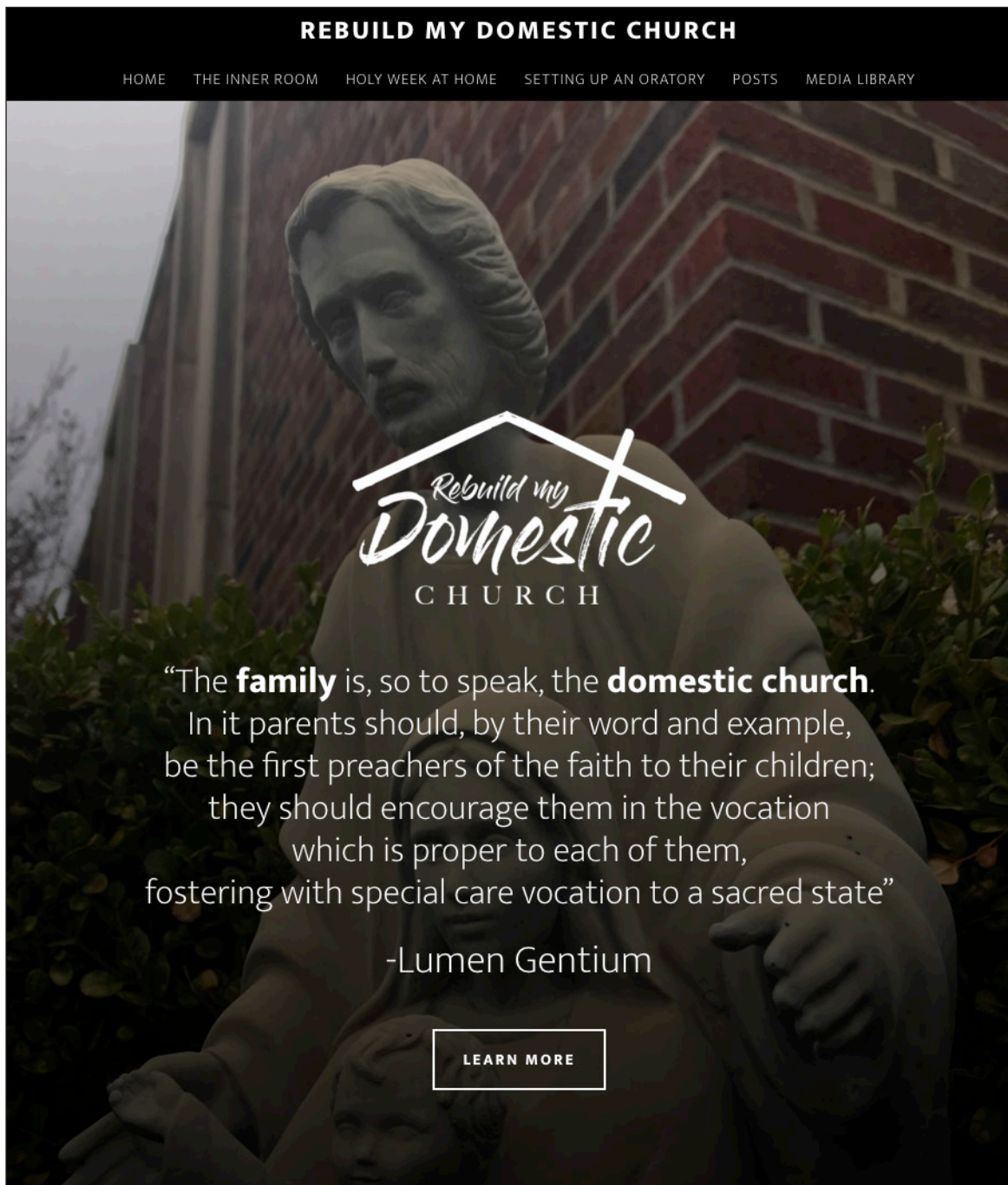
BY JENNIFER BARTON

In the early Church, worship was held in the home. During the Protestant Reformation, when countries like England outlawed Catholicism, devout Catholics had to learn how to maintain their faith in secret within the home. Now the idea of the domestic church is coming back in a big way, and seminarians Brian Isenbarger and Mark Hellinger have created a website with tips and hints to help reestablish it in the modern world.

"Rebuild My Domestic Church" is the name of a project that the two second-year seminarians created. Hellinger explained that Father Andrew Budzinski, vocations director for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Fort Wayne had begun preaching about the necessity of the domestic church and wanted to develop a tool for rethinking it. During a 14-day quarantine after returning from Rome this spring due to COVID-19, Hellinger began work on the project.

The idea behind the domestic church includes finding a sacred space within the home to dedicate to God. Isenbarger and Hellinger encourage families to create what are known as "oratories." Oratories are different from churches, which contain the Eucharist; they can be any space that is dedicated to prayer. Most Catholics have pictures of Jesus and Mary, crucifixes and candles, in which case it's simply a matter of organizing these sacramentals into a sacred space.

The website Hellinger and Isenbarger created is filled with various resources to help, including instructional videos and podcasts, examples of religious playlists and visual aids that could be incorporated into a home prayer space. People who have taken some of these ideas into their homes have shared



their personal photos, which are posted on the website. One shows a young boy's home oratory, including stuffed animals gathered for prayer time.

In a short, three-minute video, both seminarians are seen

putting together a home oratory. They encourage viewers to "get creative," making use of whatever religious memorabilia speaks to them such as pictures of saints to whom they have a special devotion. "Not every spirituality is the same; not every domestic church is the same," Hellinger said.

Not only do Hellinger and Isenbarger preach the domestic church, they live it. After the closure of their seminaries, both men are living at St. John the Baptist during the stay-at-home order. With two priests and two seminarians at the rectory, the seminarians said they find themselves living in community in ways that they hadn't before.

Isenbarger stated, "Personally, we pray together more often here than at seminary." He shared that the four of them have dinner together nightly, and they celebrate livestreamed Masses and rosaries. They also hosted a livestreamed Q&A session that racked up over 500 views. "We're modeling the life we're proposing for people," Hellinger added.

Both men admit to not having a deep background in domestic

churches before beginning this project. Hellinger had read a book based on C.S. Lewis's four loves within a Catholic perspective: From that, he was able to explore the teachings of Pope St. John Paul II regarding human love and family life. Isenbarger had previously taken a class on iconography with Dr. Adam DeVille at the University of Saint Francis in which he developed a love of saintly icons. Prior to building the website, he had already created his own oratory with various icons.

Though neither of them has an overarching vision for the website's future at this time, they plan to continue adding at least one podcast a week along with blog posts and photos. In the works is a plan to add introductions to various styles of prayer, such as the Liturgy of the Hours. There is also a section on the website that was dedicated to bringing the celebration of Holy Week into the home.

"Pastorally, I've been surprised by how many people are interested," Isenbarger stated. He and Hellinger both hope that people use this time of physical isolation as an opportunity for spiritual growth.

"Hopefully people can leave (their oratories) up after this is done," said Isenbarger. In addition to a place for personal prayer, he believes that the home oratory makes a good conversation starter when hosting visitors to the home.

The website for the project is [Rebuildmydomesticchurch.com](http://Rebuildmydomesticchurch.com).



These images from Art Cislo are among those offered on the Rebuild My Domestic Church website to lead family members into prayer in a home oratory.

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# FEMA guidelines to ensure 'equal protection' for all COVID patients

WASHINGTON (CNS) — National Right to Life April 16 praised the Federal Emergency Management Agency for issuing guidelines to ensure equal protection for all patients with COVID-19 to prevent rationing of health care.

"We thank President (Donald) Trump and FEMA Administrator Phil Gaynor for efforts to protect the most vulnerable in our society," said Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life, adding that the guidelines "will help ensure that regardless of ability or disability, age, origin or chronic health issues, patients are treated equally."

Titled "Ensuring Civil Rights During the COVID-19 Response," the FEMA guidelines for its "state, local, tribal and territorial partners" were issued in its Civil Rights Bulletin. They state:

"Make medical treatment decisions, including denials of care under crisis standards of care and allocation of ventilators, after an individualized consideration of each person, free from stereotypes and biases, including generalizations and judgments about the individual's quality of life or relative value to society, based on the individual's disability, age, race, income level or any protected basis.

"This individualized consideration should be based on current objective medical evidence and the expressed views of the patients themselves as opposed to unfounded assumptions," the guidelines said.

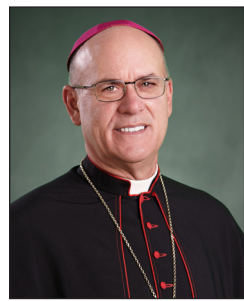
A couple of weeks before the FEMA guidance the Office of Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued its own.

Across the country, a critical shortage of personal protective equipment for medical personnel who are treating patients who have the highly contagious virus as well as a lack of equipment such as ventilators has prompted some U.S. hospitals to consider instituting a blanket DNR, or "do not resuscitate" order, for COVID-19 patients despite their wishes or those of their family.

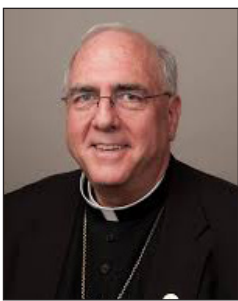
"Our health care system is designed to save lives," Tobias said in her statement. "No one facing the serious health issues from a coronavirus diagnosis should worry about whether they will receive the care they need because of their age or disability."

On April 3 the chairmen of three committees of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a joint statement on the fear the coronavirus pandemic is creating about limited resources for treating patients, especially the most seriously ill.

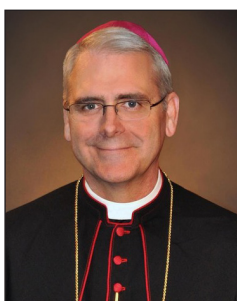
But "this is not a time to sideline our ethical and moral principles," the bishops said. "It is a time to uphold them ever more strongly, for they will critically



**BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES**



**ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH F. NAUMANN**



**ARCHBISHOP PAUL S. COAKLEY**

assist us in steering through these trying times."

The statement was signed by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Doctrine; Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities; and Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

"Foremost in our approach to limited resources is to always keep in mind the dignity of each person and our obligation to care for the sick and dying," the prelates said. "Such care, however, will require patients, their families, and medical professionals to work together in weighing the benefits and burdens of care, the needs and safety of everyone, and how to distribute resources in a prudent, just and unbiased way."

Bishop Rhoades and Archbishops Naumann and Coakley praised hospitals and medical personnel for their courage and compassion in treating the nation's COVID-19 patients.

"Hospitals and health care systems are the true epicenter of this pandemic and our health care professionals — doctors, nurses, technicians, administra-

tors and support staff — have all demonstrated courage, compassion, and truly remarkable professional care in a time of growing crisis," the statement said.

They acknowledged the difficult decisions about care confronting these health care workers, and urged them to read a number of important statements from Catholic health care and medical ethical organizations reminding them — and the general public — of ethical and moral principles to be applied in these difficult circumstances.

"The Catholic Health Association of the United States, the Catholic Medical Association, the National Association of Catholic Nurses-USA, and the National Catholic Bioethics Center have all published excellent reminders of these principles and guidelines," they said. "We ask people, especially medical professionals, to read these documents and apply them appropriately in their work."

The statements they cited can be found online at these organizations' respective websites: Catholic Health Association, <https://www.chausa.org>; Catholic Medical Association, <https://www.cathmed.org>; National Association of Catholic Nurses-USA, <https://nacn-usa.org>; and National Catholic Bioethics Center, <https://www.ncbcenter.org>.

## REST IN PEACE

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Gerald J. Couture, 87, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Robert Lindeman, 88, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

**Notre Dame**  
Sister M. Jacinta Millán, CSC, 90, Chapel of Loretto

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## REMINDER: CHANGES TO FORT WAYNE TV MASS TIMES

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# 'God knew I needed this little extra time'

BY CHRISTOPHER LUSHIS

While the customary joy of entrance into full communion with the Church has been postponed for the present time, some candidates have been able to receive this additional period of preparation with optimism and gratitude.

For 82-year-old Jane Zartman, the journey toward full communion in the Catholic faith had been a long-awaited process even before the government safety measures brought about delays. During last year's Easter Vigil, Zartman joyfully watched her daughter and three grandsons receive the sacraments of initiation at Queen of Angels Church, Fort Wayne. Baptized as an infant but raised in a Methodist home without significant religious instruction, Zartman was deeply inspired to witness her family take this courageous step. "I was very excited and proud

of them," she shared. "It got me thinking that I needed to do it, too." After talking to Father Zachary Berry, pastor of Queen of Angels, she was admitted to the next class of candidates for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. "I asked Father Zak if I was too old to do this, but he assured me that I wasn't!"

As parents, Zartman and her late husband, Vance, had given minimal emphasis to providing faith formation for their two children. She revealed, "Neither of them were baptized. My husband and I discussed that when they were old enough to decide for themselves what they wanted, that's when they should be baptized." However, given her recent experiences, she now feels differently. "If I had to do that over, I would not go that route again. But that's what I did then."

Her daughter Gretchen took an active and intentional step in faith when she chose to enroll her sons in Queen of Angels

School, given its proximity to their home. This cultivated a new awareness of Catholicism for the entire family, including Zartman. She shared, "the boys have been there since kindergarten, which led them to see the faith and become attracted to it, leading to their getting baptized last year. The religious education they receive has helped me, too. I've been a part of their Queen of Angels experience for eight years, and throughout the last three I often picked them up and brought them to my house to help with homework. By helping them with their religion I learned it more in-depth for myself."

These experiences allowed her to become more acquainted with both the school and parish. "I knew a lot of the staff, I felt very comfortable, I felt at home. I began going to Mass occasionally and then after the Easter Vigil I started attending weekly. When my daughter and her boys entered the Church last year, I thought it was about time for them. She probably thinks the same about me this year."

Zartman also shared that conversions to Catholicism seem to run in the family, as both of her sisters entered the Church over 30 years ago. They did so on the same day and in the same year, yet in different states and completely unbeknownst to each other. She also has a cousin who, initially ordained an Episcopal minister, is now a Catholic priest.

Zartman shared that her RCIA instructions have been captivating, illuminating and inspiring. "I owe most of what I have learned to Father Zak. He started with salvation history and got me hooked. Additionally, this has made me closer with my family, as the boys now help me with my homework, too. I think this means a great deal to them."

Although the date of her confirmation and reception of first



Provided by Marilyn Benedict

**Jane Zartman, left, stands with her sister and confirmation sponsor Linda Trowbridge at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, following this year's Rite of Election ceremony. Zartman will enter into full communion with the Catholic Church when public Masses resume.**

holy Communion are currently unknown, she is grateful for the additional weeks to deepen her awareness of the mysteries she is preparing to enter into. "This time between now and whenever it is, I'm going to get confirmed, I am still doing a lot of reading and watching videos on Formed.org. I also watch Masses online and I enjoyed watching Bishop Rhoades' Easter Sunday liturgy." She continued, "God knew

I needed this little extra time. I can study some more, as there are still things I don't totally understand, but I'm working hard to learn what I need to know. I'll continue to read, watch videos and listen to talks. I'll get there!"

She also expressed her gratitude for those who have aided her along the way and for the prayers and support in this time of anticipation, as she and many others eagerly wait to receive and be received by the Lord Jesus in the coming weeks.

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THE BLESSING OF

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In honor of Mother's Day on May 10, Today's Catholic will feature a section that shares one of your memories of how your mother practiced her Catholic faith or made the faith meaningful to you.

If you'd like to share a memory, send an email (200 words or less) and attach a high-quality photo to [editor@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:editor@diocesefwsb.org) no later than April 27.

*It may not be possible for Today's Catholic to publish all memories.*

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