



TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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Belief in God as creator of all has practical consequences, pope says

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Professing faith in God as the creator of all human beings, or even simply recognizing that all people possess an inherent dignity, has concrete consequences for how people should treat one another and make decisions in politics, economics and social life, Pope Francis wrote.

"Human beings have the same inviolable dignity in every age of history and no one can consider himself or herself authorized by particular situations to deny this conviction or to act against it," the pope wrote in his encyclical, "Fratelli Tutti, on Fraternity and Social Friendship."

Pope Francis signed the encyclical Oct. 3 after celebrating Mass at the tomb of St. Francis of Assisi, and the Vatican released the more than 40,000-word text the next day.

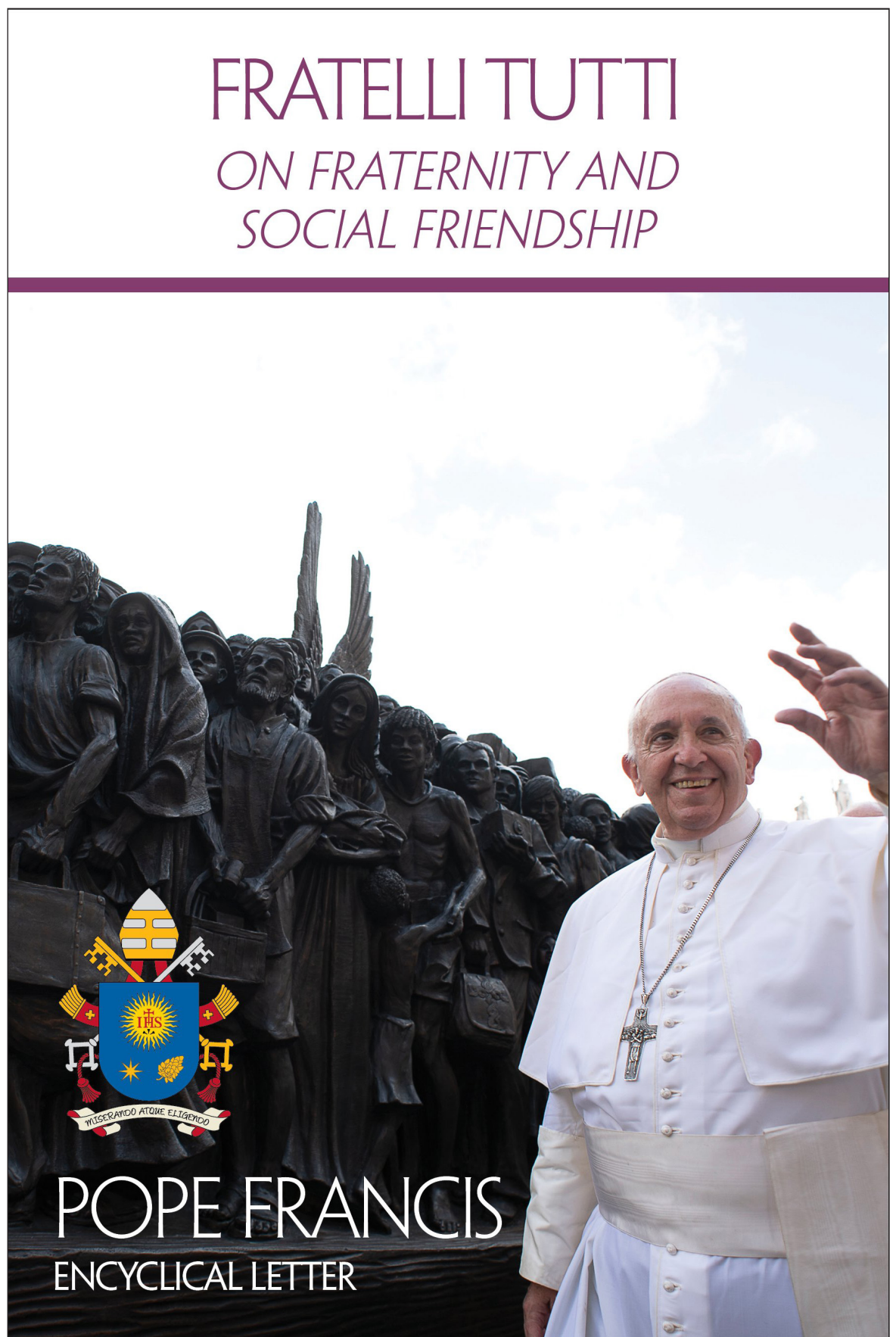
The pope had been rumored to be writing an encyclical on non-violence; and, once the COVID-19 pandemic struck, many expected a document exploring in depth his repeated pleas for the world to recognize the inequalities and injustices laid bare by the pandemic and adopt corrective economic, political and social policies.

"Fratelli Tutti" combines those two elements but does so in the framework set by the document on human fraternity and inter-religious dialogue that he and Sheikh Ahmad el-Tayeb, grand imam of al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo, Egypt, signed in 2019.

In fact, in the new document Pope Francis wrote that he was "encouraged" by his dialogue with the Muslim leader and by their joint statement that "God has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity, and has called them to live together as brothers and sisters."

The encyclical takes its title from St. Francis of Assisi and is inspired by his "fraternal openness," which, the pope said, calls on people "to acknowledge, appreciate and love each person, regardless of physical proximity, regardless of where he or she was born or lives."

FRATELLI TUTTI ON FRATERNITY AND SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP



CNS photo/U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

This is the cover of the English edition of Pope Francis' new encyclical, "Fratelli Tutti, on Fraternity and Social Friendship."

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Death penalty denounced for ignoring inmates' capability to be 'redeemed'

BY NATALIE HOEFER

TERRE HAUTE (CNS) — On Sept. 24, Providence Sister Barbara Battista stood across the street from where her spiritual directee died just two days before.

She had been with him when he was pronounced dead at 9:06 p.m. Sept. 22.

"I can tell you that my experience was of a man who was at peace, eyes clear, face relaxed," she said.

That fact might seem surprising, since her spiritual directee was federal death-row inmate William LeCroy, convicted for the 2001 rape and murder of Joann Lee Tiesler. He had been under the influence of witchcraft and mistook her for a babysitter he claimed had sexually abused him when he was a child, according to The Washington Post.

At a news conference the morning of Sept. 24, Sister Barbara read aloud the letter she had received from LeCroy, who gave her permission to share it after his death.

Also speaking at the news conference was Lisa Brown, the mother of federal death-row inmate Christopher Vialva. He would be pronounced dead less than eight hours later at 6:46 p.m., executed for his involvement in the 1999 murder of Todd and Stacie Bagley.

"This is hard, very hard," she said, her voice breaking as tears welled in her eyes.

LeCroy and Vialva were the sixth and seventh federal prisoners to be executed by lethal injection since July 14 after a 17-year hiatus on federal executions ended.

In a statement read aloud at a Catholic Mobilizing Network virtual prayer vigil prior to LeCroy's execution, Atlanta Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer noted that "we must always leave open the door for redemption and rehabilitation" of convicted killers.

Brown and Sister Barbara said at the news conference they had witnessed such changes in LeCroy and Vialva.

"This is a complex story," said Sister Barbara before reading the letter aloud. "There are lessons in here for all of us."

In the two-page letter handwritten on notebook paper, LeCroy addressed his remorse, but also the "unchangeable" label placed on convicts.

"It is a fact that some (child)



Lisa Brown, the mother of federal death-row inmate Christopher Vialva, speaks during a Sept. 24, news conference near the Federal Correctional Complex in Terre Haute. Her son was executed less than eight hours later that day.

CNS photo/Criterion screenshot from Facebook livestream

abuse — physical, emotional and/or sexual — can stunt emotional growth so that such children are relatively unchanged as adults," he wrote. "We feel that we are what happened to us.

... And we lash out in anger, in frustration ... in revenge for the wrongs we have suffered."

He admitted that, no matter how deep his remorse, there was nothing he could do to reverse the horrific murder he committed.

But people can change, LeCroy noted in the letter, "continually learning, continually

becoming someone better or worse. ... We come into spiritual teachers along the way who provide us with truth and force us to contemplate our lives."

Through the help of such spiritual guides and contemplation, he said, he strived "to attain a level of personal development by

which morality ... is natural."

Yet society seems to believe no convicted murderer is capable of change, he observed, instead passing judgment that "he's a murderer, nothing more." He quoted 19th-century philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, who wrote, "Once you label me, you negate me."

After reading the letter, Sister Barbara acknowledged the violence of LeCroy's actions affected Tiesler, who was "so viciously murdered," and her family and her friends.

But she said she felt LeCroy "can teach us something about forgiveness and growth, and what it means to be reconciled to one's fate."

After pausing to hold back her tears, Brown spoke. She began by apologizing to the family of Vialva's victims.

"My son wants you to know that he is deeply remorseful for the pain he has caused you for your loss," she said.

She recalled that during the murder trial, a statement from Stacey Bagley's mother was read.

"She said she prayed that the boys involved in the death of her daughter would come to know

Jesus," Brown shared. "And I'm here to say that her prayer was answered."

While living out his death sentence, she said, Vialva, who was Black, had a conversion of heart. He embraced his mother's faith, Messianic Judaism, which combines Jewish traditions with belief in the Trinity and Christ as the Messiah.

She said he led the Passover Seder in the prison the last seven years, and that "my biggest blessing is to know that he passed on his faith to others."

Convicted 21 years ago at age 19, her son had become "a new man," she said. "I can't stress that enough. ... He said in his own words he is changed and redeemed."

Not all convicted murderers are capable of such change, Brown acknowledged. But, she said, "these men are not all the same. ... There are different circumstances to every case. What they fail to calculate into the process is that there is an ability to be redeemed and rehabilitated."

Hoefler is a staff writer at The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

"This is a complex story.

There are lessons in here

for all of us."

SISTER BARBARA BATTISTA

ENCYCLICAL, from page 1

The title, which literally means “all brothers and sisters” or “all brothers,” are the words with which St. Francis “addressed his brothers and sisters and proposed to them a way of life marked by the flavor of the Gospel,” the pope wrote.

That flavor, explained throughout the document, involves welcoming the stranger, feeding the hungry, listening to and giving a hand up to the poor, defending the rights of all and ensuring that each person, at every stage of life, is valued and invited to contribute to the community, he said. It also means supporting public policies that do so on a larger scale.

Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, welcomed the encyclical as “an important contribution to the Church’s rich tradition of social doctrine.”

“Pope Francis’ teaching here is profound and beautiful: God our father has created every human being with equal sanctity and dignity, equal rights and duties, and our creator calls us to form a single human family in which we live as brothers and sisters,” the archbishop said in a statement. “God’s plan for humanity, the pope reminds us, has implications for every aspect of our lives — from how we treat one another in our personal relationships, to how we organize and operate our societies and economies.”

Building on the social teachings of his predecessors, Pope Francis’ document once again strongly condemns the death penalty and makes an initial approach to declaring that the conditions once used to accept a “just war” no longer exist because of the indiscriminately lethal power of modern weapons.

St. John Paul II in “The Gospel of Life,” published in 1995, cast doubt on whether any nation needed to resort to capital punishment today to protect its people; developing that teaching, Pope Francis in 2018 authorized a change to the Catechism of the Catholic Church to make clear that “the death penalty is inadmissible.”

Signaling the start of a similar effort to respond to the current reality of warfare, Pope Francis in the new encyclical raised the question of “whether the development of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and the enormous and growing possibilities offered by new technologies, have granted war an uncontrollable destructive power over great numbers of innocent civilians.”

“We can no longer think of war as a solution because its risks will probably always be greater than its supposed benefits,” one of the main criteria of just-war theory, he said. “In view of this, it is very difficult nowadays to invoke the rational criteria elaborated in earlier cen-



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis signs his new encyclical, “Fratelli Tutti, on Fraternity and Social Friendship” after celebrating Mass at the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, Italy, Oct. 3.

turies to speak of the possibility of a ‘just war.’ Never again war!”

At the heart of the new encyclical’s appeal to Catholics is a meditation on Jesus’ parable of the good Samaritan and particularly on how Jesus takes a legal scholar’s question, “Who is my neighbor,” and turns it into a lesson on being called not to identify one’s neighbors but to become a neighbor to all, especially those most in need of aid.

“The parable eloquently presents the basic decision we need to make in order to rebuild our wounded world. In the face of so much pain and suffering, our only course is to imitate the good Samaritan,” the pope said. “Any other decision would make us either one of the robbers or one of those who walked by without showing compassion for the sufferings of the man on the roadside.”

“The parable,” he continued, “shows us how a community can be rebuilt by men and women who identify with the vulnerability of others, who reject the creation of a society of exclusion, and act instead as neighbors, lifting up and rehabilitating the fallen for the sake of the common good.”

Pope Francis used the encyclical “to consider certain trends in our world that hinder the development of universal fraternity” and acting as a neighbor to one another, including racism, extremism, “aggressive nationalism,” closing borders to migrants and refugees, polarization, politics as a power grab rather than a service to the common good, mistreatment of women, modern slavery and economic policies that allow the rich to get richer but do not create jobs and do not help the poor.

“The pain, uncertainty and fear, and the realization of our own limitations, brought on by the pandemic have only made it all the more urgent that we rethink our styles of life, our relationships, the organization of our societies and, above all, the meaning of our existence,” he said.

Anna Rowlands, a British theologian invited to help present the document at the Vatican,

told Catholic News Service the text’s “golden thread” is about discerning “what gives life” and helps everyone to develop their full potential and flourish.

“The whole theme of the document is about the way in which we’re called to attend to the world as Christ attended to the world,” paying attention to reality rather than “evading it and avoiding it,” and praying for the grace to respond as Jesus would.

When people ask, “Who is my neighbor?” often what they really want to know is “Who is not my neighbor?” or “Who can I legitimately say is not my responsibility,” Rowlands said.

He also used the encyclical to strongly reassert a traditional tenet of Catholic social teaching: “the universal destination of goods” or “the common use of created goods,” which asserts, as St. John Paul said, that “God gave the earth to the whole human race for the sustenance of all its members, without excluding or favoring anyone.”

The right to private property, and the benefits to individuals and society of protecting that right, Pope Francis wrote, “can only be considered a secondary natural right.”

“The right of some to free enterprise or market freedom cannot supersede the rights of peoples and the dignity of the poor, or, for that matter, respect for the natural environment,” the pope said. “Business abilities, which are a gift from God, should always be clearly directed to the development of others and to eliminating poverty,” especially through the creation of jobs that pay a living wage.

Pope Francis, Rowlands said, “wants to rehabilitate this idea of social friendship and social peace in the face of an all-pervasive social violence, which he sees running through the economy, running increasingly through politics, running through social media.”

The pope is not despairing, she said, but realistic. “He wants to offer a vision of how you begin from the most local, most everyday and most concrete realities to build a culture of peace at every level.”



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, October 11: 2 p.m. — Wedding Anniversary Mass, St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend
 Tuesday, October 13: 9:30 a.m. — Dignity of Women and Men Classes, Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne
 Wednesday, October 14: 12 p.m. — Meeting of Board of Directors of Exodus 90, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne
 Thursday, October 15: 9:30 a.m. — Lecture, Masters in Divinity Program, University of Notre Dame
 Thursday, October 15: 7 p.m. — Confirmation Mass for St. Joseph Parish, South Bend, at St. Pius X Church, Granger

Catholic officials urge adoption of aid bill

WASHINGTON (CNS) Top officials at seven nationwide Catholic organizations called on congressional leaders and President Donald Trump to unite behind a new legislative package to “address the public health and economic crisis facing our country and the global community” caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Saying that the pandemic is causing widespread economic challenges to families and unemployed individuals as well as their respective agencies, the officials urged Congress and the White House to “put aside partisan politics and prioritize human life and the common good” by advancing talks on a new aid bill.

Their plea came in a Sept. 25 letter to Republican and Democratic congressional leaders and the president as negotiations on the bill have come to a standstill. The text of the joint letter was released midday Sept. 28 by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and other groups that signed on to it.

Disagreement in Congress has emerged over the size and extent of the relief package. The Democrat-controlled House of Representatives passed the \$3.4 trillion Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act, or HEROES Act in May.

Senate Republicans, however, have balked on legislation as extensive as what the Democrats are seeking. Democrats in the Senate blocked a slimmed down \$300 billion Republican relief measure in early September.

The disagreement has led to continuing hardship for about 26.5 million Americans receiving some form of jobless aid and many households struggling to pay rent or other bills.

The letter explained how COVID-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus, has devastated the economy and led to various economic and social challenges for families, workers and students.

Among major concerns are rising hunger, unemployment, deaths attributed to illnesses stemming from spread of the

coronavirus, the closing of parishes, schools and universities to keep people safe, and people around the world who “are falling deeper into despair.”

“We have seen the ugly face of this pandemic and have sought to confront it by expanding our services and aid to those in need, providing education and continuing our prayer and sacramental care and access for our communities,” the letter said.

The letter’s writers also said the staff of their respective organizations “have continued to stand in solidarity to assist those in need” to “provide for the spiritual, health, educational and social needs of millions of unemployed and hungry persons and families.”

“However, all this is not enough,” the Catholic officials wrote. “Millions of American families face uncertainty as unemployment support expires, employer-provided health insurance is lost, missed rent and mortgage payments pile up, food insecurity deepens, and schools struggle.”

The uncertainty people are experiencing “is compounded by the pandemic-related financial challenges faced by charities, hospitals, parishes, schools, universities and the social safety net,” they said.

“Now is the time for our nation’s leaders to do their part to support those in need,” they added.

Signing the letter were Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, USCCB president; Mercy Sister Mary Haddad, president and CEO of the Catholic Health Association of the United States; Sean Callahan, president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services; Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA; Vincentian Father Dennis H. Holtschneider, president and CEO of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities; Ralph Middlecamp, president of the National Council of the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul; and Presentation Sister Dale McDonald, director of public policy at the National Catholic Educational Association.

'Bringing Christ into the public sphere' —

Passion for Church teachings, public policy guide new ICC associate director

BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

Alexander Mingus has joined the Indiana Catholic Conference as associate director. The organization has been the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana for more than 50 years.

In this role, the 24-year-old will help in representing the five Catholic bishops across the state and promoting the Church's position on important issues at the Indiana Statehouse and through various other channels, including traditional and social media.

Mingus comes to the ICC from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Dayton, Ohio, where he served two years as manager of ministry formation.

The Alabama native is a 2018 graduate of the University of Dayton, where he pursued a double major of political science and human rights studies. While at Dayton, Mingus had the opportunity to serve an internship with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Washington, D.C.-based USCCB provided him the opportunity to meet with legislators on Capitol Hill and witness how matters of faith can influence public debate and decision-making at all levels of government.

"It's there that I learned about the work of the Catholic Church in public policy, and where I was first exposed to the idea of Catholic conferences like the ICC in general," Mingus said. "I always had a great interest in my faith, as well as in public policy and government, and this internship helped solidify that bringing these areas together could be a future career path for me."

At age 18, Mingus was named by then-Bishop Robert Baker of Birmingham, Alabama, as one of the first "Catholic Agents of the New Evangelization." The prelate had noted the young man's dedicated service to his parish and zeal for his faith in a state where Catholics represent only 4% of the population.

"This was something totally unexpected but something that I embraced wholeheartedly," Mingus said. "And perhaps it put a mark on me to someday be working with Catholic bishops in some capacity."

Mingus now works under the leadership of Angela Espada, who has served as executive director of the ICC since January.

"I am the parent of a millennial, and I know that this group includes many who are thoughtful, caring and compassionate people who want to do good," Espada said. "Alexander is one of these people who also brings a passion for service to the Church that is both reaffirming and refreshing to see. His desire to combine service with upholding the Church's social teachings in the public square will benefit not just Catholics but countless others in Indiana."

"As a younger person who is comfortable with and adept at utilizing social media, Alexander has already transformed our social media presence," Espada said. "I encourage everyone to go to our website and social media pages to see the exciting changes."

Espada and Mingus also used technology in an entirely new way for the ICC. In a series of live webinars scheduled to take place this week, the two will discuss important considerations for Catholics in this election year.



While interning with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Office of Domestic Social Development, Alexander Mingus participates in a 2017 networking event.

Photos provided by Victoria Arthur

One webinar has already taken place. Two more are scheduled for: 5:30-6:30 p.m. EDT Wednesday, Oct. 7 and 10-11 a.m. EDT Saturday, Oct. 10.

Mingus knows that the polarized and highly charged political atmosphere in the country is likely to last long beyond the November presidential election.



Mingus is the new associate director of the Indiana Catholic Conference.

He says that now more than ever, the Church's timeless teachings on social justice and the common good are critical. And he is eager to do his part to convey those teachings to the faithful as well as those who shape public policy.

"I feel so called to this type of work," Mingus said. "This is what the Church is asking for. This is her way of bringing Christ into the public sphere."

To register for the webinars, please visit indianacc.org/events. There is no cost to participate.

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Pope releases apostolic letter on sacred Scripture

BY JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In an apostolic letter dedicated to sacred Scripture, Pope Francis said that even today, Christians can learn new things from the countless translations of the Bible that exist.

The variety of translations of the Bible in the world today “teaches us that the values and positive forms of every culture represent an enrichment for the whole church,” the pope said in his apostolic letter, “*Scripturae Sacrae affectus*” (“Devotion to Sacred Scripture.”)

“The different ways by which the word of God is proclaimed, understood and experienced in each new translation enrich Scripture itself since, according to the well-known expression of Gregory the Great, Scripture grows with the reader, taking on new accents and new resonance throughout the centuries,” he wrote in the letter released by the Vatican Sept. 30.

Earlier in the day, before concluding his weekly general audience, the pope told pilgrims he had signed the document to coincide with the 16th centenary of St. Jerome's death.

“May the example of this great doctor and father of the Church, who placed the Bible at the center of his life, awaken in us a renewed love for the sacred Scripture and the desire to live in a personal dialogue with the word of God,” he said.

The letter itself said that marking the 16th centenary of St. Jerome's death is “a summons to love what Jerome loved, to rediscover his writings and to let ourselves be touched by his robust spirituality, which can be described in essence as a restless and impassioned desire for a greater knowledge of the God who chose to reveal himself.”

Catholics today, he said, must heed “the advice that Jerome unceasingly gave to his contemporaries: ‘Read the divine Scriptures constantly; never let the sacred volume fall from your hand.’”

In his apostolic letter, the pope delved into the history of St. Jerome's life and his love of Scripture. His “monumental work” of translating the Old Testament from Hebrew, as well as his commentary on the Psalms and St. Paul's letters, are an example for Catholics today, he said.

“As an enterprise carried out within the community and at the service of the community, Jerome's scholarly activity can serve as an example of synodality for us and for our own time,” the pope said.

“It can also serve as a model for the Church's various cultural institutions, called to be ‘places where knowledge becomes service, for no genuine and integral human development can occur



CNS photo/Max Rossi, Reuters

Visitors are pictured in a file photo looking at a Caravaggio painting titled “St. Jerome Writing” during an exhibition at the Galleria Borghese in Rome. Pope Francis released “*Scripturae Sacrae affectus*” (“Devotion to Sacred Scripture,”) a new apostolic letter on the Bible, Sept. 30, coinciding with the 1,600th anniversary of St. Jerome's death.

without a body of knowledge that is the fruit of cooperation and leads to greater cooperation,” he said, quoting a speech he gave in 2019 to the pontifical academies.

St. Jerome's life and work also highlight the need for true witnesses of Christ who can faithfully interpret Scripture which often seems as if it is “sealed,” hermetically closed to interpretation.”

“Many, even among practicing Christians, say openly that they are not able to read it, not because of illiteracy, but because they are unprepared for the biblical language, its modes of expression and its ancient cultural traditions,” he said. “As a result, the biblical text becomes indecipherable, as if it were written in an unknown alphabet and an esoteric tongue.”

The pope said that “the richness of Scripture is neglected or minimized by many because they were not afforded a solid grounding in this area,” not even from their families, who often seem unable “to introduce their children to the word of the Lord

in all its beauty and spiritual power.”

Nevertheless, the celebration of the 16th centenary of St. Jerome's death, is a reminder of “the extraordinary missionary vitality” throughout the centuries that has led to the Bible's translation in more than 3,000 languages, he said.

“To how many missionaries do we owe the invaluable publication of grammars, dictionaries and other linguistic tools that enable greater communication and become vehicles for the missionary aspiration of reaching everyone,” Pope Francis said.

“We need to support this work and invest in it, helping to overcome limits in communication and lost opportunities for encounter. Much remains to be done. It has been said that without translation there can be no understanding; we would understand neither ourselves nor others,” he said.



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Summit speakers discuss ongoing efforts to combat religious persecution

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A digital summit sponsored by In Defense of Christians, “Combating Global Christian Persecution,” showed that the fight against all forms of religious persecution continues with a renewing cast of political leaders. Rep. French Hill, R-Arkansas, last year’s winner of the group’s Congressional Champion award for his support of Coptic Christians in Egypt, pointed out in his remarks that while “religious freedom is part of American foreign policy,” attacks on Coptic Christians continue. A House resolution introduced by Hill last year called for the Egyptian government to abolish its “culture of impunity” and to hold local officials responsible. This year’s Congressional Champion, Rep. Dan Crenshaw, R-Texas, a former Navy SEAL, was recognized for advocating for the preservation of Christians in the Middle East. The event took place Sept. 23. “I saw this lack of freedom in my first three deployments” in Iraq and Afghanistan, he said, seeing “firsthand the history of a country run by extremists.”

Notre Dame president tests positive for coronavirus

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Holy Cross Father John Jenkins, president of the University of Notre Dame, has tested positive for the coronavirus. Notre Dame’s student newspaper, The Observer, said the school’s vice president for public affairs and communications announced that Father Jenkins was tested for COVID-19 when he learned that a colleague had tested positive. He is now “entering an extended period of isolation as indicated by university medical personnel and county health officials. My symptoms are mild, and I will continue work from home,” Father Jenkins said in the emailed message. “The positive test is a good reminder for me, and perhaps for all, of how vigilant we need to be,” he added. The college president had received criticism for not wearing a face mask and for shaking hands during a Sept. 26 White House ceremony where President Donald Trump announced Judge Amy Barrett as his Supreme Court nominee. Barrett, a judge with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit in Chicago, also is a law professor at Notre Dame.

City’s new indoor worship limit a ‘victory,’ but effort not over

SAN FRANCISCO (CNS) — As of Sept. 30, the city of San Francisco is allowing attendance for indoor

Tomb of young Italian tech whiz opened for veneration



CNS photo/Paul Haring

People venerate the tomb of Carlo Acutis, who died in 2006, at the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Assisi, Italy, Oct. 3. The Italian teen, who had a great love for the Eucharist, will be beatified Oct. 10 in Assisi. The tomb of the 15-year-old Italian teenager who used his computer programming skills to spread devotion to the Eucharist was opened for veneration before his beatification in Assisi.

worship to be 25% of the capacity of a house of worship, or up to 100 people, which follows the limit set by the state of California. In a message issued late Sept. 29, after the city announced the change, Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco called it “an important victory to savor and celebrate.” However, he told the press, “this movement is not over. Our work and victories have just begun.” He thanked people of faith in San Francisco and “the thousands of others across the nation who are joining us at FreeTheMass.com,” a site where people can sign a petition posted in English and Spanish. To date, it garnered 36,210 signatures. In a video message to Catholics on YouTube, he again thanked the faithful for signing the petition and standing up for faith and God, which are “essential,” he said. Efforts will continue to lift allow more people to worship indoors and to make sure our “right to worship is respected in equality with secular activities,” he added.

Post-pandemic world must not return to selfish ‘normality,’ pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic, the world must aspire to be better and not return to its previous “sickened” normality of injustice, inequality and environmental degradation, Pope Francis said. “The normality we are called to is that of the kingdom of God, where ‘the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor,’” the pope said Sept. 30 during his weekly general audience. It is a situation where “no one acts the fool by looking the other way. This is what we must do to change,” he said at the audience in the San Damaso courtyard of the Apostolic Palace. Continuing his series of talks on “healing the world,” the pope said Christ came to heal both the physical and “social” ailments that plague the world and gave the “necessary

gifts to love and heal as he did, in order to take care of everyone without distinction of race, language or nation.” Applying those gifts today will “renew society and not return it to the so-called ‘normality,’ which is a sickened normality,” he said.

Colorado observes its first Cabrini Day, named for patron saint of immigrants

DENVER (CNS) — St. Frances Xavier Cabrini’s “Christ-like love for others is an inspiring example for all of us to this day,” said a statement from the Archdiocese of Denver issued in advance of Colorado’s new Cabrini Day honoring the patron of immigrants Oct. 5. In February, the Colorado House approved a measure to do away with the state’s observance of Columbus Day, a federal holiday on the second Monday of October, and instead create the Cabrini observance. The Colorado Senate followed suit in early March, and Gov. Jared Polis signed the bill into law. “We commend the state

Legislature for creating the first state holiday honoring a woman, and for choosing an incredible Catholic saint,” the archdiocese said. Popularly known as Mother Cabrini, the saint is revered for her devotion to children, immigrants and the destitute.

Sister Ardeth Platte resisted war through prayer, action for four decades

CLEVELAND (CNS) — Dominican Sister Ardeth Platte long considered herself a peacemaker and devoted nearly 40 years of her life to praying and witnessing to end war and rid the world of nuclear weapons. Her actions led to imprisonment multiple times, including for the 2002 defacement of a missile silo in Colorado in collaboration with her best friend, Dominican Sister Carol Gilbert, and fellow Dominican Sister Jackie Hudson. Sister Ardeth, 84, died in her sleep at the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker House in Washington early Sept. 30. Funeral arrangements were pending Oct. 5 because of the coronavirus pandemic. Sister Carol told Catholic News Service she discovered her friend in bed, still wearing headphones after apparently listening to the radio. The death shocked Sister Carol. “She was fine. Ardeth listened to the (presidential) debate Tuesday night. She usually listened to them laying down in bed,” Sister Carol said.

Al Smith dinner draws presidential nominees for 75th year

NEW YORK (CNS) — The Catholic vote and the coronavirus subtly headlined the annual fundraiser of the 75th annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner Oct. 1, livestreamed from the Manhattan residence of New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan due to COVID-19. Remarks via recorded videos were delivered by President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden, the Republican and Democratic nominees, respectively, in the Nov. 3 presidential election. Nearly six hours after the event, just before 1 a.m. Oct. 2, Trump tweeted that he and first lady Melania Trump had tested positive for the coronavirus. The breaking news brought tweets offering prayers for their quick recovery, including from the cardinal, who after thanking the president and Biden for joining the dinner virtually added: “Please also join me in praying for the President, @FLOTUS Melania Trump, & all who suffer from or are affected by Covid-19.” Cardinal Dolan, in the benediction at the virtual Al Smith dinner, said: “God bless America, land that we love. God bless our two candidates. ... God mend thine every flaw — the sickness, the tensions, the continued challenges to justice, peace, unity, protection of life and international reconciliation.”

October is Respect Life Month

USCCB campaign corresponds to 25th anniversary of 'Evangelium Vitae'

BY JENNIFER BARTON

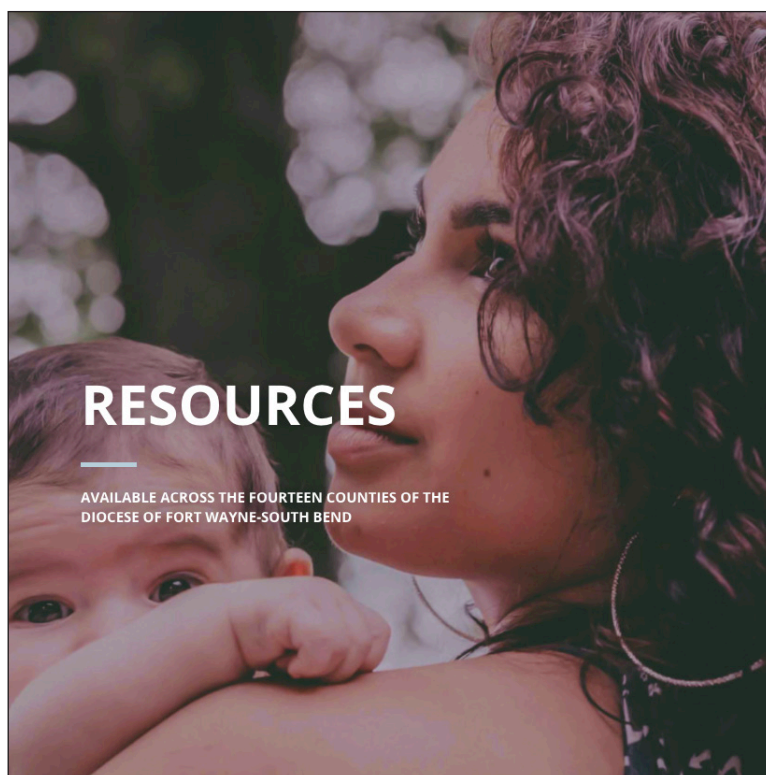
Expecting a child is a beautiful thing, a wondrous occasion to celebrate; but for some women, the celebration is muted. Money or job woes, relationship issues, health crises and emotional struggles can put a damper on what should be joyful news. That's why the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, in conjunction with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, launched an initiative this year called Walking with Moms in Need: A Year of Service.

"We were preparing for Walking with Moms in Need before we had any idea about a coronavirus pandemic. Now we can see that it's even more necessary than we previously thought," said Caty Burke, associate director of Marriage and Family Ministry. She cited how more women than ever are seeking the assistance of local pregnancy centers and charitable organizations for necessities for their babies, as well as financial aid to help pay their rent.

With no end to the pandemic in sight, Burke pointed out the critical need for this kind of assistance. "The goal is to make this program a permanent part of parish life."

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades sent letters to parishes in the diocese in mid-February, asking them to participate in the campaign and help identify vital resources for mothers. Marriage and Family Ministry Director Lisa Everett serves as the liaison

to the parishes as they complete the parish inventory included in the bishop's letter. The diocese also created a webpage in both English and Spanish specifically for this initiative, filled with



www.walkingwithmomsfwsb.com

nearly every kind of resource for mothers, from where to buy diapers to how to obtain medical care and how to access financial services.

"Once COVID-19 hit and normal parish life shut down, we decided to forge ahead with the diocesan website and start to get the word out not only to the parishes, but also through social media platforms like Facebook so that pregnant and parenting moms in need in our communities could access the resources directly," Everett stated.

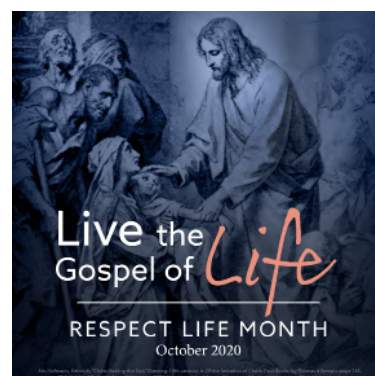
This year marks the 25th anniversary of Pope St. John Paul II's encyclical "Evangelium Vitae," which reaffirms the dignity of all human life. In it, the saint speaks of increasing

threats to human life, going beyond abortion and euthanasia to include "poverty, hunger, endemic diseases, violence and war," as well as "new threats ... on an alarmingly vast scale." While the pope likely did not foresee a worldwide pandemic, if he had he probably would have sounded an alarm about its devastating impacts.

"I think the novel coronavirus has opened people's eyes to the needs in their communities and turned them outward toward those needs," Burke said. "That's the beauty of the campaign. Everyone has a role to play — not just the priest, not just the parish pro-life coordinator, not just the diocesan office. Everyone has something to offer, everyone can do something. No deed is too small to make a lifelong impact."

Anne Koehl, director of the Women's Care Center in Fort Wayne, shared that since the pandemic began, the attitudes of many of the women who come to the center in crisis has changed.

"Overall, I would say that women are a little more anxious than normal — less sure that



it's a good time to have a baby." There is a great need to aid these women through the additional stress that COVID-19 has laid on them, she confirmed.

Pope St. John Paul did see the threat of abortion increasing during his lifetime and his papacy. "Evangelium Vitae" speaks of God's calling for all the faithful "to defend and promote life." That is what Walking with Moms in Need hopes to do through prayer and action.

Though each parish contributes in its own way, the effort is not meant to end at the diocesan or parish level. Hopefully, said Everett, it will trickle down to the hearts of individuals.

"The purpose of the Walking with Moms in Need initiative is to more intentionally equip parishes to identify and communicate resources so that everyone in the parish knows where to refer a pregnant or parenting mom in need."

She hopes this will embolden Catholics to live out the Gospel message in a practical way: "the willingness to come alongside someone, lend a listening ear and perhaps provide a lift to a doctor's appointment or food bank or meeting with a Catholic Charities case manager. To surround pregnant and parenting moms in need with loving support is an essential expression of our belief in the sanctity of every human life."

The timeline for the campaign has continually changed because of COVID-19 restrictions, and many dioceses in the U.S. have fallen behind on the initiative's planned timeline. Because of the delays, Everett does not want to close the initiative next March. Rather, she intends for the outreach and coordinated website to become a "permanent feature of our pro-life ministry in the diocese."

"Let us respect and love human life."

~ Pope Francis, Twitter, May 2013

Respect Life



Saint Pius X
Catholic Church
Granger, Indiana

StPius.net/
RespectLife



Queen of Angels pastoral visit celebrate



A message of welcome greets the special guest in Virginia Simpson's kindergarten classroom at Queen of Angels School, Fort Wayne, Sept. 29.

A fourth-grade student and Bishop Rhoades share a COVID-19 approved gesture: an elbow bump. Bishop Rhoades celebrated Mass and spent time in several classrooms during a pastoral visit to the school.



The bishop talks geography with third grade students at Queen of Angels School, Fort V

BY JENNIFER SIMERMAN

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrated a Mass on the feast day of the great Archangels, Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, on Tuesday, Sept. 29, at Queen of Angels School, Fort Wayne. This was the bishop's first pastoral school visit of the academic year, and he stated he couldn't think of a better place to be on their feast day, with the school and parish being under "the patroness of Mary, Queen of the Angels."

The homily started a little differently than that of past pastoral visits. "When I celebrate school Masses, I usually come down and ask questions, but I won't do that because we have to stay physically distanced," bishop said as he joked with the students that they could relax. But surely they would have answered all the questions correctly had they been given the chance, he said.

In the first reading from the prophet Daniel, Daniel had a vision of heaven in which he saw thousands upon thousands ministering to God, praising Him. Those ministers praising God, the bishop said, were the angels. Then in the Gospel, Jesus told Nathaniel that he would see heaven and the angels of God

ascending and descending on the son of man.

"There are many other passages in the Bible where we hear about the Angels of God," he continued, "and we know the names of three of the archangels from Scripture: Sts. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. Every one of the archangels had a mission from God. They were sent by God down here to earth with a mission." Raphael's mission was to guide Tobias and to bring healing to Tobit, his father.

The bishop then spoke of the mission of St. Gabriel, sent by God to be His messenger. Gabriel announced various messages, including the "greatest news ever broadcast in the history of the world, when he appeared to Mary and announced to her that she would conceive by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Son of God, in her womb Jesus."

The third archangel, St. Michael, had a mission to defeat Satan and overcome evil. "He still has that mission today. We pray to St. Michael, to defend us from the power of the evil one. We call him the prince of the heavenly hosts," said the bishop.

Bishop Rhoades concluded his homily by encouraging the school community to consider that, just as each archangel was given a mission by God, so too

each one of us has the same missions: to accompany and guide others like St. Raphael, to bring God's good news to the world like Gabriel and to battle and overcome evil and temptation like St. Michael.

"The three archangels help us to fulfill our mission as disciples of Jesus. So, as we celebrate today's feast of Sts. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, we ask them to help us in our Christian lives. And now as we celebrate the Liturgy of the Eucharist, it's good to remember the angels of God see us and they're praising God in heaven, and when we offer Mass, we are praising God, together with all the saints and angels."

Queen of Angels community

Queen of Angels Parish was established in 1951 at the direction of Bishop John F. Noll to serve the overflow crowd at Most Precious Blood. Today, people "come from far and wide in the city because they have roots here. Even though the parish is only 70-some years old, there's a lot of identity here," said pastor Father Zachary Barry. "There's great love for the parish and they're eager to grow and to learn about the faith."

There's a dedication and a hunger here."

As the shepherd of this parish, Father Barry works to lead, teach and feed that hunger. The parish community has started the Family of Faith formation program, from the Sophia Institute, which aims to have the family studying together. This year, the school community has also started praying the Angelus at noon every day. Students and teachers are learning the prayer and the tradition behind it, bringing the school community together and helping to build them up, Father Barry continued.

Guiding students as children of Mary and disciples of Christ

Queen of Angels School serves 166 children in grades pre-K through eight. With a new pastor and principal in the past two years, the primary focus for the school has been to build Catholic identity.

The school's mission is "Guiding students, as children of Mary, to be Disciples of Christ through Faith, Knowledge, and Service."

"Our No. 1 goal is to build saints," said principal Dennis

Wiegmann, "to help them be better disciples as they move along in the Catholic school experience. Our education is important but bringing students to the faith is just as important if not greater."

One way the school is doing this is through the Virtue = Strength program, from a company called Sports Leader. Queen of Angels is one of 13 schools using the program that provides a weekly curriculum about the virtues and includes prayers, videos and activities. The school uses the program to provide a weekly special in Catholic Identity. Father Barry also hopes to supplement the program with praise and worship, adoration, confessions and more.

Additionally, principal Wiegmann ends his daily school announcements with the words, "Let us remember what Pope Benedict the XVI tells us: 'The world offers you comfort, but you were not made for comfort, you were made for greatness.' Take today and every day to strive for greatness. Have a blessed day."

Students learn what it is to strive for greatness, every day, through the example of their teachers. "I think every

s heavenly hosts



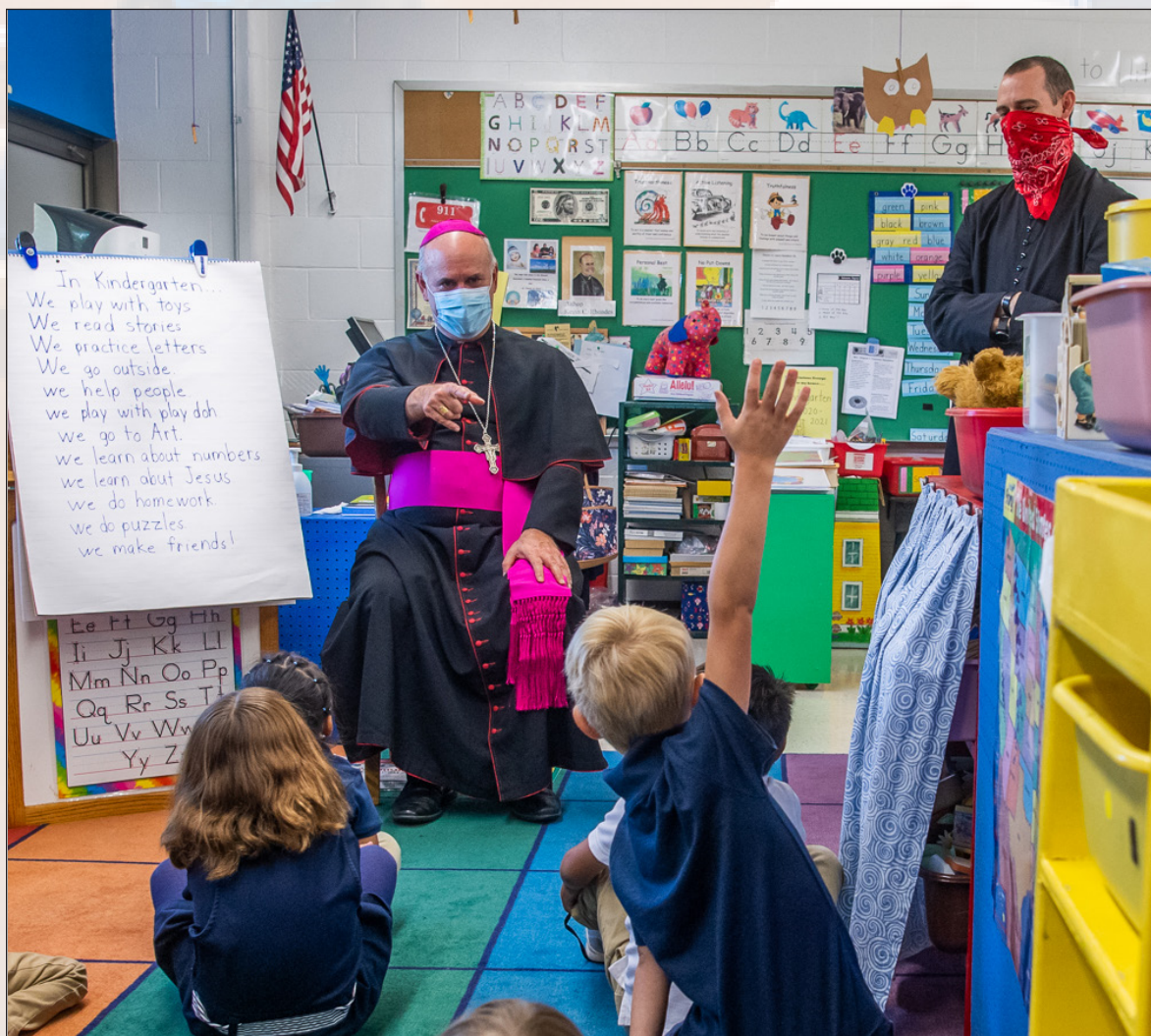
Wayne.



A portion of the student body prepares to celebrate Mass with the bishop during his pastoral visit to the school Sept. 29.



The bishop takes a moment with Queen of Angels pastor Father Zachary Barry, left, and principal Dennis Wiegmann.



Photos by John Martin

Kindergarteners engage in a question and answer session with Bishop Rhoades and, at right, Father Barry.

ANGELS, from page 8

teacher in the diocese works extremely hard," Weigmann said. "Teaching is not the same as it has been, the vocation has changed due to the pandemic. It makes you have to ask the Lord for more guidance and help." He expressed that the hard work of the teachers, support from the Catholic Schools Office and the support of diocesan principals for one another help guide the students on that journey for greatness.

School tour

As Bishop Rhoades joined principal Wiegmann and Father Barry for a tour and classroom visits, he took a moment to bless the crucifix at the school entrance. "May all who gaze upon this crucifix be moved by the Love of Christ," he prayed.

The tour highlighted several upgrades and renovations including new wall paint, adding to the stair railing and tearing out an old stage for safety, and building new columns, to name a few. "The worst part about the pandemic was, we had to shut down school," said Wiegmann. Thanks to parent and church volunteers, however, shutting down "allowed us to get a lot of projects done that we normally wouldn't have. Ultimately, we all need to be together as one, celebrating the Lord, witnessing and experiencing Him, and one way is through service."

Classroom visits

Bishop Rhoades' classroom visits included much talk of the feast of the Archangels. They also discussed Bishop's job in shepherding the diocese and the people who help him as shepherds of the individual parishes, like Father Barry. Likewise, first grade students listened and asked questions about his job as a bishop. They joined him in praying the Angel of God prayer, and like the other classes, they received a blessing.

The second graders greeted Bishop Rhoades with cards and drawings. Second grade student

Andy asked about the bishop's "hat." Minutes later, Andy was wearing the zucchetto and, while giggling, the class concurred that Andy would indeed make a good priest someday.

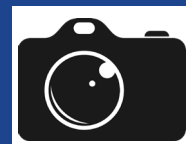
The third grade students, having just received the sacraments of reconciliation and first holy Communion last year, came to the bishop with many questions about angels and the souls in heaven. "A very inquisitive class," Bishop Rhoades admired.

He spoke to an eighth grade student, who said that she had chosen St. Gregory the Great as her confirmation name in anticipation for the upcoming sacrament. Bishop Rhoades shared with the class the story of his time in Rome when he would often visit the San Gregorio al Celio Church. This church, which once used to belong to the family of St. Gregory the Great, is home to the Missionaries of Charity, the religious sisters of St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata. In his visits he would sometimes get to see St. Mother Teresa, he said.

When asked how he knew that he wanted to be a bishop, Bishop Rhoades answered, "I never really thought about becoming a bishop. You discern becoming a priest, so I discerned that God was calling me to be a priest."

"It's something that the pope decides. So, the only decision on my part was to say yes or no; Now, you really don't say no to the pope. I got a phone call from the pope's ambassador to the United States saying that he had appointed me. That was St. John Paul II. I was one of the last bishops he appointed before he died. I had great love and admiration for Pope John Paul II, so that was special."

Principal Wiegmann concluded the day by saying, "Today was not only about the feast of the archangels, but it was an opportunity for Bishop to see the students and the teachers. I can tell them every day how much the work they are doing is appreciated, but to have the shepherd of our diocese come and tell that to them, it just reaffirms the work that they are doing."



More photos
available at www.todayscatholic.org.

www.queenofangelsfw.org

Women support women at first Kingdom Builders conference

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Around 250 women were encouraged to “Claim your peace and joy” at the Kingdom Builders conference Oct. 3 in Fort Wayne. Featuring three female Catholic speakers as well as adoration and Mass with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, the conference was the first of its kind to take place in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Because of its success, Kingdom Builders founder Mary Jo Parrish plans to make it an annual event.

The talks focused on the uniqueness of every woman and the gift of God the Father’s love for each one of them. Parrish, who begins each monthly Kingdom Builders gathering with humorous stories of her life, put participants at ease with a story that demonstrated her own imperfections. She then launched into three basic requirements for women to reclaim their inheritance as daughters of the King: relationship, identity and mission. “When we embrace the beauty of our design and identity, then we are fully alive,” Parrish said.

Giving examples of saints who, while imperfect, still ful-



At left, Kingdom Builders founder Mary Jo Parrish leads the group in praying a rosary and visualizing the events of Jesus’ life through Mary’s eyes. Above, attendees pray during Mass.

Photos by Jennifer Barton

Women at the first Kingdom Builders conference celebrate Mass with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and concelebrants Father Paul Maina Waithaka and Father Andrew Curry Oct. 3 in Fort Wayne.

filled the missions that God set before them, she continued, “God will use anyone. ... Stay small; let God be big.”

She called them to seek out what God has planned for each of them, and to rely on God rather than their own power. “The Father will never lead you anywhere except to that which brings you the most peace and joy,” she reassured.

During her talk, Catholic author and dynamic speaker Amber DeMatte repudiated the idea of a model one-size-fits-all Christian woman. “There is no mold,” she boldly declared. “The Father needs you. The Father is breaking molds today.” She empowered the women present to reject the lies and negative thoughts others have placed on them and instead look to the Good Shepherd for the truth of who they are in Christ. “It’s not about what we do, but who we

CONFERENCE, from page 10

are. We can't undo what Jesus has already done for us."

The readings at Mass were specifically chosen to speak to women's hearts, particularly the story of Martha and Mary from the Gospel of Luke. In his homily, Bishop Rhoades referenced the story in relation to St. Mother Theodore Guerin, whose feast fell on the same day as the conference.

"Mother Theodore lived a busy life and drew strength from prayer, from conversations with God, with Jesus, and with the Blessed Virgin Mary. Through years of hardship and sacrifice, her faith remained strong because she knew in the depths

of her soul that God was with her and always would be with her; a constant companion.

Like Mary in the Gospel, she chose the better part: the 'unum necessarium,' the one thing necessary.

"I pray that as Catholic women, you are inspired by the example of St. Theodore and also assisted by her prayers. Through her intercession, may you continue to grow in your trust in Divine Providence and your love for Jesus."

The final speaker of the day was Sister Bethany Madonna of the Sisters of Life in New York, whose talk was intended to be a preparation for adoration. Because of current travel restric-

tions she was unable to attend in person; instead, she recorded her talk, which was shown on two large screens.

Sister Bethany imparted touching stories of her order's work with post-abortive women and how they minister to moms in crisis. She emphasized that women need to "rest in His love" and "find your peace in His mercy."

Only a short time after the first parish-based Kingdom Builders meetings were launched, Parrish came up with the idea for a women's conference but did not know how to make it happen. She stated, "The men have a conference and they have for over a decade. Our women, they need to be fed; they're hungry, they're thirsty for the Lord."

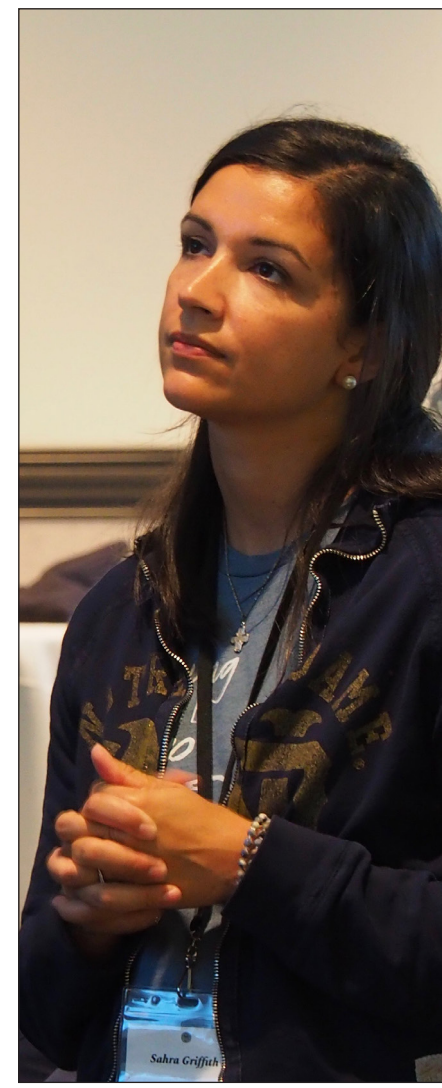
Parrish mentioned her idea to Allison Rowe, a member of the team, who jumped on board to bring it to fruition. With the aid of the diocese, along with a group of women with different talents, they were able to plan the conference within a year. Rowe said, "I feel like I was in the right place at the right time, or the Holy Spirit brought it together."

An immense amount of work went into pulling the plans together and beautifying the space to make women who constantly sacrifice their own time "feel cherished and loved," said Parrish.

The reaction of the participants was Rowe's reward for the team's efforts. "I feel like the evil one tells me that I'm unworthy a lot, so throughout the process many times I felt like I shouldn't



Conference planners tried to consider every physical need that might arise for those attending the conference — so a mother's station with toys and blankets was prepared. At right, a participant listens to one of the day's speakers.



be doing this, that I was unworthy. Leading up to this week, it was like, 'I can, and it's worth every sacrifice to see it come together.'"

The entire event was centered in prayer. Members of the Kingdom Builder prayer team prayed over each seat the night before the conference, asking God's blessings on the woman who would occupy it. An adoration tent was set up outside the conference hall, staffed throughout the day by members of a new men's group called Armor of God, who wrapped the women in a constant blanket of prayer. Many of the participants said this was incredibly meaningful.

Though the conference had originally been planned for 1,500 women, COVID-19 restrictions limited the number to 250. Sara Hammon was one of the attendees from outside the diocese. A stay-at-home mother of three, Hammon traveled from Ohio at the suggestion of her parish deacon's wife to see what Kingdom Builders had to offer. She longs to start a women's prayer group in her own parish.

"I've never been to anything like this. It's amazing," Hammon said. "My husband goes every year; he comes to Fort Wayne-South Bend to the men's conference. He's loved it, and I'm like, 'I don't know what that is.' I've never felt that; I've never felt on fire. So to come here, I just feel this is for me."

Like many of the women, Hammon was grateful for the opportunity to connect with other women on a spiritual level.

"These women are just like

me in that we love Jesus Christ and we love the Eucharist and we just want to get closer to heaven; we want to be those saints someday."

In attendance were moms with babies, older women, college students, single women and grandmothers. More than 30 parishes throughout Indiana, Ohio and Michigan were represented, including at least four Protestant churches.

"Kingdom Builders is absolutely life-changing," said Judi Ueber, who attends monthly meetings at St. Charles. "It just fills all the voids, all the gaps in terms of faith life and explodes it. The opportunity for adoration,

the fellowship with the women; it's just full of prayer, praise and worship."

Tasha Williams has been a member of the apostolate for several months and eagerly awaited the conference. "I look forward to Kingdom Builders every month, so I was excited to have that feeling for the entire day." She loved the experience and the similar messages of the speakers. But most important of all was spending time with God. "Part of it for me is just taking a day to just be focused on the love of the Father and the faith. Sometimes it's hard to carve out time, so it's just exciting to have that time."



Saying she considers herself more preacher than speaker, Amber DeMatte's dynamic talk at the Kingdom Builders Oct. 3 conference in Fort Wayne was about becoming the unique person God created each woman to be.



Kingdom Builders

FALL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

St. Vincent de Paul, FW	Sept. 10	CONFERENCE Sold Out	Nov. 12	Dec. 10
7-8:30 p.m.				
St. Charles, FW	Sept. 16		Nov. 18	Dec. 9
7-9 p.m.				
Sacred Heart, Warsaw	Sept. 22		Nov. 24	Dec. 15
7-8:30 p.m.				
Little Flower, SB	Sept. 17	Oct. 15	Nov. 19	Dec. 17
7-8:30 p.m.				

VISIT: www.buildingthroughhim.com for details

Two kinds of feminism

“Today, our nation mourns the loss of a trailblazer, not only in the field of law, but in the history of our country.”

So begins President Donald Trump’s proclamation on the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, ordering the American flag to be flown at half-staff around the world in her honor.

The proclamation notes that Ginsburg was a devoted wife and mother when she entered law school. She had a distinguished career as a law professor, litigator and judge, and became the second female Supreme Court justice. She worked tirelessly against barriers to women’s equality that many women today do not realize once existed.

Sometimes legal stereotypes about men as providers and women as homemakers were unjust to men. In 1975, she persuaded the Supreme Court to invalidate a Social Security policy that allowed widows but not widowers to collect special survivor benefits when caring for minor children.

More troubling was her reasoning on abortion. As an expert on making incremental changes in law, she did think the Roe v. Wade decision took the country too far too quickly, giving rise to a pro-life movement that fights the decision to this day.

But she also regretted that the court treated abortion as a matter of “privacy” rather than sex discrimination. Privacy would not create a positive obligation for public funding and encour-

agement of abortion. An argument based on equal protection for women would ultimately achieve more.

Other Supreme Court justices balked at her approach. Having based the right to abortion on “privacy” in 1973, then on “liberty” since 1992, perhaps they worried that yet another shift in rationale would expose legalized abortion as a policy goal in search of a legal argument.

But in dissenting from the court’s 2007 decision upholding a ban on partial-birth abortion, she wrote that “legal challenges to undue restrictions on abortion procedures do not seek to vindicate some generalized notion of privacy; rather, they center on a woman’s autonomy to determine her life’s course, and thus to enjoy equal citizenship status.” Her dissent was joined by three other (male) justices.

Without abortion, are women second-class citizens? Yet abortion often most benefits men who want to avoid responsibility for their behavior. They decide that the height of chivalry is not to marry a pregnant partner, or accept their own parental obligations, but to pay for an abortion. If the woman declines, it is “her choice” and her problem.

The woman nominated to succeed Ginsburg, Amy Coney Barrett, is among those with distinguished careers who can see her predecessor’s life story as making her own possible.

Married, like Ginsburg, to another attorney, she has seven children, including two adopted children born in Haiti and a son



A MORE HUMAN SOCIETY

RICHARD DOERFLINGER

with special needs. She graduated at the top of her class at the University of Notre Dame Law School and has taught there; all her faculty colleagues and hundreds of former students urged her confirmation as an appellate judge in 2017.

But this working mom is a Catholic and is said to be pro-life. Which raises a question about feminism.

If men and women should have equal rights, which of them must change? Do we teach women that they can abandon their children as readily as irresponsible men? Or as Ginsburg argued in 1975, do we help men to support and protect the children they engender? In other words, do we accept women’s gift of being able to nurture new life, and change male society to accommodate and support that gift?

Perhaps public servants like Amy Coney Barrett could help our society understand this second and richer meaning of feminism.

Richard Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He writes from Washington state.

How to be a witness to the truth

In the Scriptures, the Devil is called “Diabolos,” which by the time of the New Testament comes to mean “Slanderer,” but derives from the Greek verb “to divide.” The Devil is the great Divider.

The world — the society and culture in which we live — is increasingly divided and seems daily more polarized, and there is little doubt in my mind that there is a diabolical dimension to what we are living through. Politically, culturally and even within the Church, the divisions seem deeper than ever, and far too often good folks are at each other’s throats. Nerves are raw and on edge, and a deep sense of just how broken and upside down the world is seems to be everywhere right now.

The 24-hour news cycle and an endless engagement with social media only make this worse. Add a world under the grip of COVID-19 and the responses it has evoked, and it only magnifies our weaknesses and exacerbates what is already wrong with us.

Don’t get me wrong. Many very important questions and issues are at stake. I do not suggest for a minute that they should not invoke strong, at times passionate, responses. Nor do I mean that we should not speak clearly about our convictions and beliefs. We must stand with and in the Truth. But I also am deeply convinced that the Evil One has taken advantage of our current situation to



THE HUMAN CONDITION

MSGR. MICHAEL HEINTZ

drive wedges in our lives: in our nation, in our communities, perhaps in our parishes or even our families.

My invitation — and I speak as much to myself as to anyone else — is to resist the urge to buy into and to feed that division. Again, my point is not to say, “can’t we all just get along?” Clearly, regardless of where one is on any spectrum, there are real differences of view and opinion. It’s not a matter of surrendering conviction, but of being able to speak the truth in love. To be honest with one another, but without demonizing one another. To differ, but to assume, in charity and in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the best motivations in others, rather than assuming what those motives or intentions are, since none of us can see the heart of another.

I believe we have witnessed a significant cultural shift even within my own lifetime. I am honored to be a graduate of Marian High School. One of my classmates and closer friends was (and still is) something of

HEINTZ, page 13

Let us accept the Lord’s invitation to share in His riches



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time Matthew 22:1-14

The first part of the Book of Isaiah provides this weekend’s first reading at Mass.

Understanding the cultural, social, political and economic context surrounding the composition of biblical texts always helps to capture their meaning.

As a general rule, times were not good for the chosen people. Aside from bursts of prosperity and peace under David and Solomon, they usually had to cope with war, invasion, want or worse.

Also, usually, the prophets saw little that they could truly applaud. Invariably the prophets wrote that human sin, not divine revenge,

not divine indifference to human distress, was the cause of trouble in the world. So, frequently the prophets demanded that people always be true to God.

This passage was written when times were not all that bad, but dark storm clouds lay on the horizon. The people, generally speaking, were lukewarm in honoring God. Isaiah loudly protested that this religious sluggishness surely would be their downfall.

Isaiah also insisted that if the people were faithful to God, all would be right. Peace and security would reign. Prosperity would prevail. Tears would be wiped away. Fears would be stilled. People would rejoice that God had saved them. God would be in their hearts.

The second reading is from the Epistle to the Philippians. On several occasions recorded in Acts or in the Pauline epistles, Paul was imprisoned, having been convicted for preaching against the establishment or simply for disturbing the peace. This passage from Philippians was written while Paul was in prison.

Jail, humiliation and abuse were Paul’s plight. Nevertheless, he said that his faith in God never wavered. His commitment to proclaiming the Gospel always led him. Nothing else mattered to him, not even his comfort or personal well-being. God gave Christ to the world. Paul felt that he had to extend this gift far and wide.

St. Matthew’s Gospel furnishes the last reading. The reading is a parable, with three developments.

First, a “king,” who represents God, invited guests, familiar and even privileged, to a wedding banquet for his son. These people rejected the invitation. Next, the king invited other guests. They also ignored the invitation, distracted by other concerns. Finally, the king invited outcasts and strangers to the feast. They came.

As all celebrated, the king saw a guest at the banquet improperly dressed. He ordered this guest to be removed.

The king’s servants represent the prophets. The privileged guests who spurn the invitation

represent the people of Israel. The invited with other interests are those who think themselves without need for God. The outcasts and strangers represent gentiles and the sinful.

God’s mercy extends to everyone. Even so, God drags no one into the kingdom of heaven. Sinners must reform to be worthy of God’s invitation.

Reflection

These readings call us to several basic facts. First, God’s mercy never fails. He does not disown the promise spoken long ago through the prophets, and then emphatically by Christ, to guide people to everlasting life by revealing to them the way of righteousness and by strengthening their resolve to be holy.

The second fact is simple and constant throughout history. Humans reject God’s goodness. They sin. Original sin always weakens them and blinds them. Their priorities are twisted. They are confused. They exaggerate their own powers and insights. They discount their need for God.

They may wish to be at the banquet, but they do not prepare themselves. They arrive without truly giving themselves to God.

Humans always can come to the conviction that drove St. Paul to proclaim the Lord in spite of everything. Nothing matters other than to be with God. Nothing genuinely good is apart from God. Everything other than life with God is fickle and impermanent, empty and a mirage.

READINGS

Sunday: Is 25:6-10a Ps 23:1-6

Phil 4:12-14, 19-20 Mt 22:1-14

Monday: Gal 4:22-24, 26-27, 31—5:1 Ps 113:1b-5a, 6-7 Lk 11:29-32

Tuesday: Gal 5:1-6 Ps 119:41, 43-45, 47-48 Lk 11:37-41

Wednesday: Gal 5:18-25 Ps 1:1-4, 6 Lk 11:42-46

Thursday: Eph 1:10 Ps 98:1-6 Lk 11:47-54

Friday: Eph 1:11-14 Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 12-13 Lk 12:1-7

Saturday: Eph 1:15-23 Ps 82:3b, 4-7 Lk 12:8-12

For which imperfect candidate should I vote?

Elections invite us to cast our vote as citizens and choose the best possible public leaders to meet the exigencies of our present time and circumstances.

Whether voting for president of the country or for school board members in our cities and towns, citizens want public leaders who are decent, hard workers, committed to the common good, respectful of human life and dignity at all times, devoted to truth and justice, knowledgeable and able to work with others. As a father of two youngsters learning life's ways, I want public leaders who inspire and give good example.

The order is tall but not impossible. Anyone with some discipline can embody these traits. We teach them in our homes and schools. We hear about them in our churches. We assure our children and grandchildren that they are attainable.

We cultivate these traits to ensure civility. We honor those who live them exemplary. When people cultivate them to bring others to Christ, explicitly proclaiming the Gospel and relying on God's grace, we speak of holiness.

Holiness, however, is not a requirement to run for public office. Neither is perfection. Candidates for public office excel at extolling their accomplishments and strengths. We also learn about their imperfections. After all, they are human like anyone else.

Acknowledging the human side of political leaders is important. Treating them as mes-

sianic characters is idolatrous. Expecting flawlessness is naive.

It is common to frame political campaigns in "good vs. evil" language. Not surprising. This motif permeates much of our literary, religious and pop culture imagination. However, such dualism becomes toxic, even dangerous, when it reduces people to one or the other.


The Catholic tradition affirms that every person is intrinsically good, and yet as finite beings we must contend with our imperfections and limitations. For which imperfect candidate should I vote?

No candidate for public office will match the noblest expectations of religious groups, and that is fine. No one has ever done so. At the very least, we trust that candidates who subscribe to any religious tradition would draw from its wisdom for the good of all.

The U.S. political system is not a theocracy but a democracy. Not perfect, yet still a system that in principle guarantees that anyone may elect or be elected without religious litmus tests or coercive forces, secular or religious.

U.S. Catholics understand this. About 150 years ago, many in this nation doubted that Catholics could participate actively in public life. Well, we have, and have done it well.

For which imperfect candidate should I vote? The answer to this question lies ultimately in each individual's conscience, "the most secret core and sanctuary" of a human person, according to the Second Vatican Council.



JOURNEYING TOGETHER

HOSFFMAN OSPINO

In their document, "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship," the U.S. Catholic bishops affirmed with utmost clarity: "The responsibility to make choices in political life rests with each individual in light of a properly formed conscience." Here the bishops treat Catholic voters as adults.

As a Catholic planning to vote as a faithful citizen, I will heed the bishops' recommendation to inform my conscience. I will also exercise my personal responsibility to study comprehensively the candidates, their actions and their platforms.

I pray for wisdom to vote for public leaders who, despite their imperfections, I can deem in good and informed conscience closest to being decent, hard workers, committed to the common good, respectful of human life and dignity at all times, devoted to truth and justice, knowledgeable and able to work with others. People I can present to my children as inspirational and exemplary on matters of public service.

Hosffman Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College.

HEINTZ, from page 12

a strident atheist; he's highly intelligent, well-read, and today a very successful and nationally respected lawyer. We spent four years (and beyond) arguing and debating one another: and yet all the while we respected and truly cared about one another. In short, our differences did not lead to anger, resentment, or hatred. I could say to him, "I think you're dead wrong; and I still love you."

Sadly, in our current context, disagreements about important things (and even unimportant ones) are far too often personalized: if you disagree with me, then we must be enemies. We feel compelled to vilify and abuse our opponents. That is precisely the attitude that the Divider wants to foster in us. And such an attitude only feeds and kindles those tensions, divisions, resentments, and anger that are coming to mark our culture.

Christ came to free us from the grip of the Diabolos, the Divider. Jesus, who is Truth, is the only one who can truly liberate us from him. Christ

spoke with what the Evangelists describe as "parrhesia," a boldness, confidence, and candor. But he also spoke always with love.

Yes, sometimes love does indeed mean speaking the "hard truths." But one litmus test of our own moral condition is whether we take pleasure in disagreeing with another, whether we take delight in correcting another, whether we find satisfaction and self-vindication in arguing with another, as if the aim is merely to "win" rather than to bright the truth to light.

The virtuous person will correct another with regret, he will engage in an argument reluctantly, not with zest.

The Evil One will use our good will, distort it and then allow such disagreements to become an opportunity for self-assertion and for what St. Augustine calls "libido dominandi," the lust for power, the desire to dominate others (so thus the Devil has us, unwittingly, playing his game and by his rules). We may stand with the truth. Our convictions may be correct. We may be right. Our arguments may be spot-on. And yet, the Devil still finds a

way of subverting our best intentions to undermine our own efforts, and thus has us defeating ourselves by inducing pride and self-righteousness, only driving a further wedge between us and those with whom we disagree.

Jesus, Truth-in-the-flesh, looked with mercy and tenderness even upon those who mocked and ridiculed Him. He looks with the same mercy and love upon us, who so often fail Him as well. And He invites us to follow Him, and not to buy into the Divider's rebellion. May we stand with the apostles and the saints, recommit ourselves to Him, speak the truth in charity, and learn to love as He loves.

Msrgr. Michael Heintz is on the faculty at Mount St. Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Md.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for October 11, 2020
Matthew 22:1-14

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A: shadows of heavenly judgment. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

HEAVEN	A KING	HIS SON
TELL THOSE	INVITED	READY
FARM	MISTREATED	ENRAGED
TROOPS	DESTROYED	BURNED
CITY	STREETS	GATHERED
FOUND	GUESTS	FRIEND
DARKNESS	TEETH	CHOSEN

UNWORTHY

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

Saint of the Week



Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher
Feast October 6

Eulalie Durocher was the youngest of 10 children in a pious Quebec family; three brothers became priests and two sisters also became nuns. Because of ill health, Eulalie attended school sporadically and was rejected by several religious orders. For 12 years she helped one of her priest-brothers in his parish, organizing charitable works and the first Confraternity of Mary in Canada. In 1843, with two friends and episcopal permission, she founded the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary to educate poor youths, especially in the countryside. As Mother Marie-Rose, she led the congregation until her early death; she was beatified in 1982. Holy Names' sisters serve today in Canada, the United States, Lesotho, Peru and Brazil.

'Pray: The Story of Patrick Peyton'

BY JOHN MULDERIG

NEW YORK (CNS) — "The family that prays together stays together." Although he popularized rather than originated that pithy saying, the sentence aptly sums up the message of Holy Cross Father Patrick Peyton (1909-92), who advocated it both tirelessly and with great success.

The moving documentary "Pray: The Story of Patrick Peyton" (ArtAffects) lucidly chronicles its subject's life and feels imbued with his warm and fervent spirit.

Filmmaker Jonathan Cipiti uses archival recordings and footage as well as interviews with collaborators, friends and those influenced by Father Peyton's legacy — former major league baseball player Mike Sweeney and his wife, Shara, among them — to trace his remarkable biography.

As Matthew Donlan and Megan Harrington's script explains, Father Peyton's attachment to the rosary began early. Living in impoverished circumstances in Attymass, a small village in Ireland's County Mayo, his family would gather to recite the devotion daily throughout his childhood.

Strongly influenced by his father's piety, the future clergyman wavered between a sense of priestly vocation and the desire to be a husband and dad. Following his emigration to the United States, however,



Jonathan Cipiti interviews Holy Cross Father David Guffey at the Family Theater Productions offices in Los Angeles in 2018 during the making of the 2020 documentary "Pray: The Story of Patrick Peyton." The Catholic News Service classification is A-II — adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association rating is PG — parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.

CNS photo/Family Theater Productions

he entered the seminary and, despite the inadequacy of his earlier education, proved an outstanding student.

As he progressed toward ordination, though, he was struck down by a near-fatal case of

tuberculosis. Attributing his seemingly miraculous recovery to Mary, Father Peyton was motivated to spread love of the rosary and to promote the idea that marital and familial ties can be strengthened through prayer

of all kinds.

A naturally shy man, Father Peyton nonetheless managed to corral the elite of Hollywood to support his cause. Informed that Bing Crosby was the biggest name in Tinseltown, broadcast-

ing neophyte Father Peyton simply cold-called him and invited him to appear on his new radio show. And, remarkably, Der Bingle said yes.

In the decades that followed, the Family Rosary movement that Father Peyton had founded used film, television and even billboards as well as radio to reach the public. Massive rallies also were organized. A contemporary newsreel account of one held in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park describes its audience as the largest crowd ever assembled in the City by the Bay.

Changes in society during the 1960s and '70s led to a decline in Father Peyton's influence. Yet many credit a successful rally he held in Manila in 1985 with contributing to the peaceful overthrow of Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos in February of the following year.

This fine account of Father Peyton's many achievements — he was declared venerable in December 2017 — can be recommended for all but the smallest viewers. It can also serve as a valuable catechetical tool in parish or school settings.

The film contains mature themes. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II — adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association rating is PG — parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.

Mulderig is on the staff of Catholic News Service.

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Battle of the Bishops



Provided by Dr. Joseph Brettnacher

Bishop Dwenger and Bishop Luers high schools in Fort Wayne played each other in football Oct. 2 at Bishop Luers. Pictured at the game, from left, are Bishop Luers principal Jim Huth, Superintendent Dr. Joseph Brettnacher, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and Bishop Dwenger principal Jason Schiffli.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

Harvest meal at Blessed Sacrament Church planned

ALBION — Knights of Columbus and the Blessed Sacrament Rosary Sodality will offer a harvest meal on Saturday, Oct. 10, at Blessed Sacrament Parish, 2290 IN-9, from 4-7 p.m. Cost is \$7 with proceeds going to Women's Care Center NEI. Cash or check only. Contact Kevin Vangessel at 260-318-5735 or kdvangessel@gmail.com for information.

Our Lady of Fatima rosary

AUBURN — An Our Lady of Fatima 15 decade public rosary will be prayed Saturday, Oct. 10, on the north side of the Auburn courthouse starting at noon. The intention is for our country. Bring a lawn chair. Masks and social distancing required. For questions call Alice at 260-925-9252.

Friday Night Praise

NEW HAVEN — Friday Night Praise, will move indoors Friday, Oct. 9, to The Orchid event and catering facility on 11508 Lincoln Hwy. E. The Orchid will have food and drinks, including beer and wine, available for purchase beginning at 5:30 p.m. Praise and worship is from 6:30-8 p.m.

White Mass

FORT WAYNE — Bishop Rhoades will celebrate a White Mass for healthcare workers with the Fort Wayne Catholic Medical Guild at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 27. Anyone is invited, especially healthcare workers. There will be no meeting afterwards. Visit www.fortwayne.cathmed.org or contact Julie Bryan at 260-222-6978 or fortwayne.cathmed@gmail.com for information.

Memorial Mass for those who have lost a child

FORT WAYNE — Those who have lost a child before or after birth — whether recently or long ago — are invited to a special Memorial Mass on Friday, Oct. 23, at St. John the Baptist Fort Wayne, celebrated by Father Andrew Budzinski. Contact Caty Burke 260-422-4611 or cburke@diocesefwsb.org for details.

Fish and tenderloin fry hosted by Knights

BLUFFTON — A fish and tenderloin fry, drive-thru only, will be from 4-30-7:30 p.m., Friday, Oct. 16 at St. Joseph Parish, 1300 N Main St. Adult meals \$10; child meals \$6.

The Marriage Course Online

MISHAWAKA — The Marriage Course Online is based on a

beautiful, brand-new film series featuring couples and relationship experts from around the world, this free, seven-week program will take place online over Zoom on Thursday evenings from 8-10 p.m. from Oct. 8 through Nov. 19. There is no group discussion, but rather, time built into each session for spouses to discuss the topic in the comfort and privacy of their own home using prompts from The Marriage Course journal. The program is hosted by Deacon Frederick and Lisa Everett, and registration is open. For more information or to register, please go to www.diocesefwsb.org/marriage-course.

REST IN PEACE

Fort Wayne

Mark Piekarski, 58, St. Vincent de Paul

Conda Schenkel, 80, St. Vincent de Paul

Huntington

Sister M. Margarita Moreno-Patino, OLVM, 85, Archbishop Noll Memorial Chapel

New Haven

Margaret E. Aubrey, 66, St. John the Baptist

Jane L. Ternet, 96, St. John the Baptist

Nancy I. Winters, 80, St. John the Baptist

South Bend

Dianne Campiti, 75, St. Matthew Cathedral

Robert Foster, 80, St. Matthew Cathedral

Kerry Koller, 79, Christ the King

Theresa A. Matthys, 65, Holy Family

Marcella Pynaert, 88, Holy Cross

Wabash

Dr. Robert Rauh, 93, St. Bernard

Walkerton

Suzanne M. Chase, 73, St. Patrick

Warsaw

Bonnie Jagodzinski, 93, Sacred Heart

Father Vincent Coppola, CSC

St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Toms River, New Jersey. Father served at Holy Cross Parish, South Bend.

Check out all the happenings
www.TodaysCatholic.org/event

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CNS photo/Thomas Mukoya, Reuters

Displaced people are seen in a file photo along a road near Goma, Congo.

Trump administration drops refugee cap to historic low

BY RHINA GUIDOS

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The steep slope, appearing almost as a vertical line, is a stunning mark by the Trump administration on what was once a refugee program recognized around the world as a model to welcome the tyrannized and persecuted masses.

Late Sept. 30, the administration announced it would bring the refugee cap — the maximum number of displaced people the country decides to resettle in a federal fiscal year — to a historic low: 15,000.

The average during presidencies of both Republicans and Democrats had been around 95,000. But the announcement on the new cap doesn't mean the bad news for refugees, or organizations that help them, ended there.

"It's not official, the president still has to sign it," so no refugees can enter the country until that happens, said Ashley Feasley, director of policy for Migration and Refugee Services at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. "I have no idea when he'll sign it."

Feasley said there's a "pause" until Oct. 26, which means nothing will happen until then.

In a joint statement released Oct. 2, Archbishop José H. Gomez

"These decisions have a tangible impact on those fleeing religious persecution and other vulnerable families in need of refuge."

— Joint statement released Oct. 2 by Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington

of Los Angeles, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington said they "continue to be disappointed by the Trump administration's diminishment of the U.S. refugee resettlement program."

"These decisions have a tangible impact on those fleeing religious persecution and other vulnerable families in need of refuge," they said. "While refugees will thankfully be allowed to seek refuge here in the United States in 2021, the low number of admissions, given the global need and the capacity and wealth of the United States, is heartbreaking."

They called on Congress to "seriously examine the administration's proposal and strongly encourage the president to increase the eventual presidential determination significantly."

"Welcoming refugees is an act of love and hope. By helping to resettle the most vulnerable, we are living out our Christian faith as Jesus has challenged us to do," Archbishop Gomez and

Bishop Dorsonville added, pointing to Pope Francis' words to Congress during his U.S. visit 5 years ago: "Let us remember the Golden Rule: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' ... The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us."

"In the same spirit," the USCCB leaders said, "we urge the administration to continue to offer welcome to refugees to our country. We can and must lead by example in the defense of all human life, including those fleeing persecution."

The low refugee number was a gut-punch to those who already were bracing for bad news, but now they worry the administration's stalling action could put even more lives in danger as people who need refuge will be left out.

"The number is terrible," said Feasley, in an Oct. 1 interview with Catholic News Service. "It's a continued cutting of refugees allowed to come to the U.S. in a moment of global need. We're seeing increase refugee flows from a number of places

including places that the administration is very much taking an active policy role in, like Venezuela."

Though a media note released around midnight late Sept. 30 mentions Venezuela, and "our support for the legitimate government of Venezuela in the face of the illegitimate Maduro regime's tyranny," it says nothing about how the U.S. will help the 4 million who have been displaced from the South American country, which finds itself in conflict.

"There's a mention but no action to help," Feasley said.

The announcement is a continuation a downward trend, one starkly visible in a graph by the Migration Policy Institute that shows the ebbs and flows of the 40-year-old program, with a steep drop starting in fiscal 2017, when President Donald Trump took office.

The cut was a further blow to agencies, such as Catholic Charities, who along with secular and other faith organizations, including the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and Lutheran

Immigration and Refugee Service, have for decades helped populations under siege resettle in the U.S.

"This is just a further death by a thousand paper cuts in terms of the capacity of a great network," Feasley said. "Not just Catholic but interfaith and secular groups in partnership with the federal government that was recognized as model around the world."

Feasley also said it cuts programs that had allowed the church to practice its long tradition of helping the stranger.

"It means a lot for Catholics as our faith tradition has a long history, a noted history, of being forced to be on the move, being refugees but also of a people who are welcoming, of accompanying others who are forced to leave," she said.

"From Jesus onward, we see stories of this in the Bible," she continued. "Additionally, Pope Francis has mentioned this as one of his issues of great focus and understanding ... recognizing those who have been forced out of their homes, fleeing persecution or circumstances beyond their control."

The announcement came after the Catholic Church celebrated Sept. 27 as the 2020 World Day of Migrants and Refugees.