



March 3, 2013

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Pope Benedict's pontificate marked by teaching, call to return to faith

BY JOHN THAVIS AND FRANCIS X. ROCCA

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — During his almost eight-year pontificate, Pope Benedict XVI impressed the world as a teacher, guiding Catholics to the sources of the faith and urging modern society not to turn its back on God.

Citing his age and diminishing energy, the 85-year-old pope announced Feb. 11 that he would be resigning effective Feb. 28 and would devote the rest of his life to prayer.

As pastor of the universal Church, he used virtually every medium at his disposal — books and Twitter, sermons and encyclicals — to catechize the faithful on the foundational beliefs and practices of Christianity, ranging from the sermons of St. Augustine to the sign of the cross.

Having served in his 30s as an

influential adviser during the 1962-65 Second Vatican Council, he made it a priority as pope to correct what he saw as overly expansive interpretations of Vatican II in favor of readings that stressed the council's continuity with the Church's millennial traditions.

Under his oversight, the Vatican continued to highlight the Church's moral boundaries on issues such as end-of-life medical care, marriage and homosexuality. But the pope's message to society at large focused less on single issues and more on the risk of losing the basic relationship between the human being and the Creator.

He consistently warned the West that unless its secularized society rediscovered religious values, it

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CNS PHOTO/PAUL HARING

Pope Benedict XVI has announced that he will resign Feb. 28. He is pictured during a general audience in St. Peter's Square in this Aug. 4, 2010, file photo.

'The Light Is On For You'

Confessions in all parishes of the diocese on March 6, 6-8 p.m.

BY TIM JOHNSON

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades has designated Wednesday, March 6, from 6-8 p.m., "as the date and time for all the churches of our diocese to be open for prayer and asking all our priests to hear individual confessions during that two-hour time period," he wrote in a letter to priests.

The initiative is called "The Light Is On for You" and will offer Catholics of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend the availability of the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Confession provides an opportunity to set aside sinful ways and to draw closer to the Lord.

"The Light Is On For You" is endorsed by the U.S. bishops and is an invitation to all Catholics of the diocese to stop in church for prayer and provides the opportunity for Confession. The program began

in the Archdiocese of Washington and has been adopted by other dioceses with much success. With this program, all parishes in a diocese open their churches on a particular evening for Confessions.

The U.S. bishops released an exhortation encouraging the faithful to avail themselves to the sacrament of Penance during Lent of 2013.

"The Light Is On For You" is for Catholics who frequent Confession, but is also an opportunity for Catholics who may be reluctant to come to the sacrament, have been away for some time, or just find it difficult to get to a Saturday afternoon Confession time. It is an opportunity for Catholics to reconnect with Christ and His Church.

For those who have been away from the sacrament for some time, churches will have Reconciliation brochures available for

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TODAY'S CATHOLIC LIFE SPRING ISSUE AVAILABLE

The "Spring" issue of Today's Catholic Life is available at parishes across the diocese. Pick up your copy and see what springtime has to offer — rebirth and renewal with gardening and home improvement, Easter traditions and spiritual spring break adventures.



TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Official newspaper of the
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend
P.O. Box 11169
Fort Wayne, IN 46856

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Published weekly except the fourth
Sunday in June, second and fourth
weeks in July and August, the first,
third and fifth weeks of September and
last week in December by the Diocese
of Fort Wayne-South Bend, 1103 S.
Calhoun St., P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne,
IN 46801. Periodicals postage paid at
Fort Wayne, IN, and additional mailing
office.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
Today's Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort
Wayne, IN 46856-1169 or email:
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News deadline is the Monday morning
before publication date. Advertising
deadline is nine days before publica-
tion date.

Today's Catholic may be reached at:

Today's Catholic,
P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN
46856-1169; or email:
editor@diocesefwsb.org

ISSN 0891-1533

USPS 403630



The Light Is On For You



IN TRUTH
AND
CHARITY

BY BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

On Wednesday, March 6th, the churches of our diocese will all be open from 6:00 to 8:00 PM with priests available for the Sacrament of Penance. The light of the confessional will be on for all who seek to receive the Lord's forgiveness in this great sacrament. **THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU!**

This initiative throughout our diocese and also in many dioceses throughout the United States is one that seeks to help people to rediscover the importance, beauty, and value of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI wrote: "We know that the faithful are surrounded by a culture that tends to eliminate the sense of sin and to promote a superficial approach that overlooks the need to be in a state of grace in order to approach sacramental communion worthily. The loss of a consciousness of sin always entails a certain superficiality in the understanding of God's love."

We must overcome this superficiality by a renewed commitment to confession, so necessary in our journey of faith. The Year of Faith is "a summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one Savior of the world." If we are to grow in our life in Christ, we all need to recognize our need for continual conversion. We need to continually turn away from sin and be renewed in our fidelity to the Gospel.

The Lord offers us His forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance, a source of great peace for our souls. We will never find this interior peace unless we first are aware of our need for forgiveness. To receive forgiveness, we must be sorry for our sins and reject them. This is repentance, the very heart of conversion. We must return to the Father, like the prodigal son, with sorrow for our sins, with confidence in the Father's mercy, and with the intention to amend our lives.

To confess our sins to another, in this case the ordained priest, requires humility. The priest confessor acts in the person of Christ, the divine physician. With an honest and integral confession of our sins, we entrust ourselves to the Lord's mercy. The priest, with the power received in his ordination, imparts absolution. At that beautiful moment, we are in contact with the power and mercy of God. Our sins are forgiven; we are restored to God's grace.

The Second Vatican Council taught: "Those who approach the sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from the mercy of God for the offense committed against him and are at the same time reconciled with the Church, which they have wounded by their sins, and which by charity, example and prayer seeks their conversion" (*Lumen gentium 11*).

When we read the parable of the prodigal son, we learn that sin is fundamentally an



CNS PHOTO/NANCY PHELAN WIECHEC

Father Kevin Regan of the Archdiocese of Washington demonstrates the granting of absolution that occurs during the sacrament of Reconciliation. The priest, acting in the person of Christ, can absolve a person of their sins with their contrition, confession and penance.

offense against the love of the Father. We also see how sin harms the son — he loses his dignity. He is reduced to very tragic conditions. However, the good news is that the Father waits for him to return. His arms are open wide to receive his son home. In fact, when his son repents and starts home, the father hurries to embrace him and pardon him. This is what happens in the Sacrament of Penance. Our merciful Father receives us in His loving arms. He forgives us and restores our dignity as His sons and daughters. We are restored to His friendship and regain the joy of being saved.

As Catholics, we are blessed to have received from the Lord the gift of the Sacrament of Penance. Jesus gave to the Church the mission and power of forgiving sins. The power to forgive sins belongs to God. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. God has entrusted the Church with the ministry of forgiving sins in His name. The risen Christ conferred on the apostles and their successors the power to forgive sins: "Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained" (John 20:23).

I wish to encourage all the faithful who are able to go to confession during this Lenten season. Of course, our parishes have regular scheduled hours for confession. Many have Penance services with the opportunity for individual confessions. And we have this unique opportunity on March 6th when all our churches will be open for confession from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. I encourage all to have frequent recourse to this sacrament of mercy, so essential for our spiritual growth.

It is important to make a good confes-

sion by preparing well before receiving the sacrament. This includes making a good examination of conscience. This examination should include an honest look at our lives in relation to the teachings of Jesus and His Church. The Ten Commandments are a good place to start. All should ask themselves about their love of God and neighbor, remembering the two greatest commandments. In reply to the question: "Which commandment in the Law is the greatest?" Jesus said: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

God's desire is always to forgive, to save, to give life, and to transform evil into good. That is why Jesus instituted the Sacrament of Penance. He gives us this possibility to continually convert. He wants us to place our sins before Him through His Church for remission. He wants us to bring our wounds to the doctor so that we can receive the medicine that heals. He wants to restore our dignity as His children by restoring us to His grace.

In this holy season of Lent, may we all, with humble and contrite hearts, turn to the Father who is rich in mercy through Jesus our Redeemer. May the Holy Spirit help us to hate sin and be converted! In God, we find the love that is stronger than sin and death. In the Sacrament of Penance, we encounter that love in a most profound way, the divine love that is revealed as mercy. My brothers and sisters, **THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU!**

As pope, Benedict worked to promote understanding of Vatican II

BY FRANCIS X. ROCCA

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — On Feb. 14, in one of the last public appearances of his pontificate, Pope Benedict XVI spoke to the clergy of Rome about his experiences at the Second Vatican Council, which he had attended as an expert consultant half a century before.

The pope praised some of the council's achievements, including its teachings on the interpretation of Scripture, religious freedom and relations with non-Christian religions. But he also lamented what he described as widespread distortions of the council's teachings. The news media, he said, had presented the council to most of the world as a political struggle for "popular sovereignty" in the Church.

This "council of the media" was responsible for "many calamities, so many problems, so much misery," the pope said. "Seminaries closed, convents closed, liturgy trivialized."

With that speech, Pope Benedict returned to one of the major themes of his pontificate. During his first year as pope, he had explained in a landmark speech that Vatican II could be properly understood only in continuity with the Church's millennial traditions, not as a radical break with the past. He went on to devote much of his papacy to promoting this understanding of the council's teachings.

Under Pope Benedict, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, which as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger he had headed for almost 24 years, continued to censure or criticize theologians whose writings, often invoking the spirit if not the letter of Vatican II documents, deviated from orthodoxy in areas that included sexual morality, the mystery of the incarnation and the possibility of salvation without Christ.

The congregation also issued documents asserting that the Catholic Church is the one true



"Church of Christ" and that missionaries have a duty to preach the Gospel as well as provide charitable assistance to the needy. Both documents, the Vatican said, were necessary to correct misunderstandings of the teachings of Vatican II.

Pope Benedict presided over two major Vatican investigations of women religious in the United States, responding to diminishing numbers and reported deviations from doctrine and discipline in the decades since the council. One of the investigations led to an order of reform of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, intended to ensure the group's commitment to Catholic teaching in areas including abortion, euthanasia, women's ordination and homosexuality.

The pope also tried to correct what he considered overly expansive notions of interreligious dialogue that had blossomed after Vatican II, which he feared could lead to relativism or syncretism. In October 2011, at the 25th-anniversary commemoration of the World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi, Italy, there was no public multireligious prayer of the kind that had distinguished the original event, which then-Cardinal Ratzinger had criticized at the time. Pope Benedict also added agnostic "seekers of the truth" to the guest list, further diluting the interreligious character of the event.

A lifelong teacher, Pope Benedict naturally made Vatican II's continuity with tradition a recurrent theme in his homilies, catechetical talks, papal documents and even in his personal writings, addressing the topic in the first of his best-selling "Jesus of Nazareth" books.

This pedagogical project culminated in the current Year of Faith, which opened Oct. 11, the 50th anniversary of the council.

"The council did not formulate anything new in matters of faith,

nor did it wish to replace what was ancient," the pope told the congregation at Mass that day in St. Peter's Square. "Rather, it concerned itself with seeing that the same faith might continue to be lived in the present day, that it might remain a living faith in a world of change."

For most Catholics, the pope conveyed this lesson most clearly through worship. Following the exuberant and colorful celebrations that had marked the papacy of Blessed John Paul, especially at World Youth Days and on other international trips, papal Masses under his successor became more solemn. Pope Benedict encouraged the use of Gregorian chant and the practice of Eucharistic Adoration, one of the traditional devotions that had fallen largely out of use in the wake of Vatican II.

Most dramatically, Pope Benedict lifted most restrictions on the Tridentine Mass, which had practically disappeared in the post-conciliar reform of the liturgy. He explicitly intended the move to promote reconciliation with the disaffected traditionalists of the Society of St. Pius X, whom he later offered the status of a personal prelature if they would return to full communion with Rome, an effort that did not bear fruit in his pontificate. Yet Pope Benedict also expressed the hope that celebration of the Tridentine Mass would encourage a more reverent celebration of the new Mass, helping to bring out the latter's "sacrality," "spiritual richness" and "theological depth."

If Pope Benedict's service to the liturgical tradition should emerge as one of his major legacies as pope, he would no doubt be content. As he told the priests of Rome three days after announcing his resignation: "I find now, looking back, that it was a very good idea (for Vatican II) to begin with the liturgy, because in this way the primacy of God could appear, the primacy of adoration."



PUBLIC SCHEDULE OF BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

- Sunday, March 3, 11 a.m. — Mass beginning Parish Mission, Saint Joseph Church, Roanoke
- Monday, March 4, — Meeting of Indiana Bishops and Superiors of Religious Institutes, Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis
- Tuesday, March 5, 7 p.m. — Little Flower Holy Hour for Vocations, Saint Mother Theodore Guérin Chapel, Fort Wayne
- Wednesday, March 6, 4 p.m. — Meeting of Board of Directors of Catholic Charities, Fort Wayne
- Wednesday, March 6, 6 to 8 p.m. — "The Light Is On For You" Confessions, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne
- Friday, March 8 — Pastoral Visit to Mount Saint Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland

Prayer for Pope Benedict XVI

O God, true shepherd of all the faithful, look with kindness on Your servant Pope Benedict XVI, whom You set as head and shepherd of Your Church.

We give You thanks for Your grace at work in him as he had led us by word and example: In his teaching, in his prayer and in his great love.

Grant him Your strength in frailty, comfort in sorrow, and serenity amid the trials of this world; and guide Your Church, built on the rock of Peter, with the power of Your Spirit as we continue on the path that leads to You. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Prayer for the Election of a New Pope

O God, eternal Shepherd, who govern Your flock with unfailing care, grant in Your boundless fatherly love a pastor for Your Church who will please You by his holiness and to us show watchful care. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

— provided by the USCCB

Changing rules, pope allows cardinals to move up conclave date

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In his last week as pontiff, Pope Benedict XVI issued new rules for conclaves, including a clause that allows the College of Cardinals to move up the date for the beginning of the conclave to elect his successor.

However, the cardinals cannot set the date until after the pope leaves office Feb. 28.

Pope Benedict also defined the exact penalty — automatic excommunication — that would be incurred by any noncardinal assisting the College of Cardinals who failed to maintain absolute secrecy about the conclave proceedings.

The pope laid out the new rules in an apostolic letter issued "motu proprio" (on his own initiative)

Feb. 22, the feast of the Chair of St. Peter. The Vatican released the document Feb. 25.

The changes affect the rules established in Blessed John Paul II's apostolic constitution governing the election of popes, "Universi Dominici Gregis."

Under the current rules, which remain in effect, upon the vacancy of the papacy, cardinals in Rome "must wait 15 full days for those who are absent" before they can enter into a conclave and begin the process of electing a new pope.

However, Pope Benedict inserted an additional provision that grants the College of Cardinals "the faculty to move up the start of the conclave if all the cardinal-electors are present," as well as giving them the ability "to delay, if there are serious reasons, the beginning of

the election for a few more days."

However, the conclave still must begin no more than 20 days after the start of the "sede vacante."

The date of the start of the conclave is to be decided by all the cardinals, including those over the age of 80, who participate in the daily general congregations or discussions that precede a conclave, said Archbishop Pier Luigi Celata, the vice chamberlain. He will assist Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone in the administration of the Church during the "sede vacante."

The cardinals must wait for every cardinal-electors to arrive or to have sent a legitimate excuse for their absence, such as for reasons of infirmity or serious illness, he told journalists.

The date of the start of the conclave will then be determined by

a majority vote, that is 50 percent plus one of the cardinals present, Archbishop Celata said.

The other major change to the rules is that the pope defined the exact penalty incurred by support staff assisting the cardinal-electors during a conclave if they break the oath of secrecy about the proceedings.

The aides must swear to never lend support to or favor any outside interference in the election process. Under the old rules, the penalty for breaking the vow was to be determined by the future pope.

Instead, Pope Benedict has rewritten the oath that staff will take, stating that they are "aware that an infraction will incur the penalty of automatic excommunication."

"The Holy Father wanted to

make things immediately clear and not pass the burden of deciding the penalty on to his successor," said Archbishop Celata.

The penalty for cardinals who break the oath of secrecy, however, remains unspecified.

The apostolic letter included several other minor changes and clarifications, including the addition of the phrase "at least" to a two-thirds majority when defining a valid election of a pope.

"For the valid election of the Roman pontiff at least two thirds of the votes are required, calculated on the basis of the total number of electors present," says the revised rule.

Also added were details about who and how many people outside the College of Cardinals can assist during the conclave.

BIO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

could not hope to engage in real dialogue with Islamic and other religious cultures.

In his encyclicals and in his books on "Jesus of Nazareth," the pope honed that message, asking readers to discover the essential connections between sacrificial love, works of charity, a dedication to the truth and the Gospel of Christ.

The German-born pontiff did not try to match the popularity of his predecessor, Pope John Paul II, but the millions of people who came to see him in Rome and abroad came to appreciate his smile, his frequent ad libs and his ability to speak from the heart.

Although he did not expect to travel much, he ended up making 24 trips to six continents and three times presided over World Youth Day mega-gatherings, in Germany in 2005, in Australia in 2008, and in Spain in 2011.

Talking about aging last March when he met the 85-year-old Cuban leader Fidel Castro in Havana, Pope Benedict told him, "Yes, I'm old, but I can still carry out my duties."

On a historic visit to the United States in 2008, the pope brought his own identity into clearer focus for Americans. He set forth a moral challenge on issues ranging from economic justice to abortion. He also took Church recognition of the priestly sex abuse scandal to a new level, expressing his personal shame at what happened and praying with the victims.

The pope met three times with former U.S. President George W. Bush, including a formal visit to the White House, and the two leaders found wide areas of agreement on pro-life and family issues. When President Barack Obama was elected, the pontiff sent him a warmly worded telegram and a promise of his prayers, but when they met at the Vatican the next year, the pope spoke clearly about the Church's objections to the administration's policies on several life issues, including abortion

and embryonic stem cell research.

Pope Benedict was 78 and in apparent good health when elected April 19, 2005, but was said to have told his fellow cardinals that his would not be a long papacy like that of his predecessor. In an interview with the German author Peter Seewald in 2010, Pope Benedict said: "If a pope clearly realizes that he is no longer physically, psychologically and spiritually capable of handling the duties of his office, then he has a right and, under some circumstances, also an obligation to resign."

As inevitable as his election seemed after Blessed John Paul died in 2005, his path to the papacy was long and indirect.

Joseph Ratzinger was born April 16, 1927, in the Bavarian town of Marktl am Inn, the third and youngest child of a police officer, Joseph Sr., and his wife, Maria. Young Joseph joined his brother, Georg, at a minor seminary in 1939.

Like other young students, he was automatically enrolled in the Hitler Youth program, but soon stopped going to meetings. During World War II, he was conscripted into the army, and in the spring of 1945 he deserted his unit and returned home, spending a few months in an Allied prisoner-of-war camp. He returned to the seminary late in 1945 and was ordained six years later, along with his brother.

In a meeting with young people in 2006, the pope said witnessing the brutality of the Nazi regime helped convince him to become a priest. But he also had to overcome some doubts, he said. For one thing, he asked himself whether he "could faithfully live celibacy" his entire life. He also recognized that his real leanings were toward theology and wondered whether he had the qualities of a good pastor and the ability "to be simple with the simple people."

After a short stint as a parish priest, the future pope began a teaching career and built a reputation as one of the Church's foremost theologians. At Vatican II, he made important contributions as a theological expert and embraced the council's early work. But he began to have misgivings about an emerging anti-Roman bias, the idea of a "Church from below" run on a par-

liamentary model, and the direction of theological research in the Church — criticism that would become even sharper in later years.

In a 2005 speech that served as a kind of manifesto for his young papacy, Pope Benedict rejected what he called a "hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture" in interpreting Vatican II as a radical break with the past. The pope called instead for reading the council through a "hermeneutic of reform" in continuity with Catholic tradition.

In 1977, Pope Paul VI named him archbishop of Munich and Freising, and four years later Pope John Paul called him to head the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, where he wielded great influence on issues such as liberation theology, dissent from Church teachings and pressure for women's ordination. Serving in this role for nearly a quarter century, then-Cardinal Ratzinger earned a reputation in some quarters as a sort of grand inquisitor, seeking to stamp out independent thinking, an image belied by his passion for debate with thinkers inside and outside the Church.

As the newly elected pope in 2005, he explained that he took the name Benedict to evoke the memory of Pope Benedict XV, a "courageous prophet of peace" during World War I, and said he wanted to place his ministry at the service of reconciliation and harmony among peoples.

The new pope spent most of his energy writing and preaching, in encyclicals, letters, messages, homilies and talks that eventually numbered more than a thousand.

Surprising those who had expected a by-the-book pontificate from a man who had spent more than 23 years as the Vatican's chief doctrinal official, Pope Benedict emphasized that Christianity was a religion of love and not a religion of rules.

During the 2010-11 Year for Priests, Pope Benedict held up the 19th-century French St. John Vianney as a model of clerical holiness who struggled against the indifference and hostility of a militantly secular society.

He convened a Synod of Bishops on Scripture in 2008, in an effort to move the Bible back to the center of individual spirituality and pastoral planning. He opened a Year of Faith in October presided over a synod focusing on the New Evangelization and a revival of Christian faith in the secular West, one of the priorities of his pontificate.

Some of Pope Benedict's most memorable statements came when he applied simple Gospel values to social issues such as the protection of human life, the environment and economics.

When the global financial crisis worsened in 2008, for example, the pope insisted that financial institutions must put people before profits. He also reminded people that modern ideals of money and material success are passing realities, saying: "Whoever builds his life on these things — on material things, on success, on appearances — is building on sand."

Pope Benedict's outreach to traditionalist Catholics brought him some opposition and criticism. In 2007, he widened the possible use of the Tridentine Mass and began intro-

ducing touches of antiquity in his own liturgies, including the requirement of kneeling when receiving Communion from the pope.

Then in 2009, in an effort to reconcile with the traditionalist Society of St. Pius X, he lifted the excommunications of four of the society's bishops who were ordained illicitly in 1988.

A storm of criticism erupted because one of the four, Bishop Richard Williamson, had made a number of statements — widely available on the Internet, but unknown to the pope — denying the extent of the Holocaust. The Vatican scrambled to distance Pope Benedict from the bishop's views and reaffirm the pontiff's commitment to Catholic-Jewish dialogue.

The pope himself wrote an unusually personal letter to the world's bishops, defending his efforts to restore Church unity by reaching out to traditionalists and expressing sadness that even some Catholics seemed ready to attack him "with open hostility."

At the same time, he clearly acknowledged mistakes in Vatican communications and said the Holy See would have to do a better job using the Internet in the future. Instead, the mishaps continued, and for most of the year preceding Pope Benedict's resignation, press coverage of the Vatican was dominated by the so-called "VatiLeaks" affair, a scandal over confidential and sometimes embarrassing confidential documents that had been provided to the press, allegedly by the pope's own butler, Paolo Gabriele.

A Vatican court found Gabriele guilty in October and sentenced him to 18 months in jail. Pope Benedict, meeting his former aide outside his cell in the Vatican police barracks, pardoned him just before Christmas.

The pope's 2009 letter to bishops also summarized what he saw as his main mission as the successor of Peter: "In our days, when in vast areas of the world the faith is in danger of dying out like a flame which no longer has fuel, the overriding priority is to make God present in this world and to show men and women the way to God."

The idea that God is disappearing from the human horizon and that humanity is losing its bearings with "evident destructive effects" was a theme Pope Benedict saw as common ground for dialogue between Christians and Muslims. He voiced the Church's opposition to a potential "clash of civilizations" in which religion was seen as a defining difference. But sometimes his words drew as much criticism as praise, particularly among Muslims who felt the pope was unfairly questioning the foundations of their religion.

In a lecture at Germany's University of Regensburg in 2006, the pope quoted a Christian medieval emperor who said the prophet Mohammed had brought "things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached." Following protests in the Islamic world, which included the burning of churches in the Palestinian territories and the murder of a nun in Somalia, the pope said he was sorry his words had offended Muslims and distanced himself from the text he had quoted.

Later that year, visiting a mosque in Turkey, he turned toward Mecca and prayed silently alongside his host. This interfaith gesture generated considerable good will, and over the succeeding years, Pope Benedict continued to meet with Muslim leaders. Yet some Muslims continued to view the pope with suspicion or hostility, such as the prominent cleric who reiterated complaints about the Regensburg speech in the run-up to the pope's trip to Lebanon in September.

Pope Benedict also visited synagogues, in Germany in 2005, in New York in 2008 and in Rome in 2010, and his strong condemnations of anti-Semitism won the appreciation of many Jewish leaders. However, tensions arose in 2008 over the wording of a prayer for Jewish conversion, which the pope had revised for use in the Tridentine-rite Good Friday liturgy.

The pope considered Christian unity one of his priorities, and he took steps to improve dialogue with Orthodox churches in particular. The most visible sign was the pope's decision to accept the invitation of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople to visit the patriarch at his headquarters in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2006. Two years later, the pope invited the patriarch to give a major address at the Synod of Bishops. The Vatican also arranged the resumption of theological talks with the Orthodox in mid-2006 and began new forms of cultural collaboration with the Russian Orthodox Church.

The fate of Christian minorities around the world was one of the pope's major concerns, especially in places like Iraq and other predominantly Muslim countries. The pope strongly defended the right to religious freedom in his speech to the United Nations in 2008.

In early 2007, the pope turned his attention to China, convening a meeting of Church experts to discuss ways to bring unity to the Church and gain concessions from the communist government. A papal letter to Chinese Catholics a few months later encouraged bold new steps to bridge the gap between Catholics registered with the government-controlled Catholic Patriotic Association and the so-called underground communities, whose leaders were frequently harassed or imprisoned by the authorities.

The pope's letter also issued a broad invitation to government authorities for dialogue on the appointment of bishops and other topics. A number of bishops were subsequently ordained with both papal and government approval, before the government returned to the practice of choosing bishops without the Vatican's approval.

One of the most important documents issued under Pope Benedict, and with his explicit approval, was a doctrinal congregation instruction on bioethics in 2008. The document warned that some developments in stem-cell research, gene therapy and embryonic experimentation violate moral principles and reflect an attempt by man to "take the place of his Creator."

The pope's own writings frequently explored the relationship between personal faith in Christ and

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social consequences.

His first encyclical, "Deus Caritas Est" ("God Is Love;"), issued in 2005, reminded all people that God loves them and called on them to share that love in a personal and social way. It won high praise, even from quarters typically critical of the Church.

Two years later, his second encyclical, "Spe Salvi" (on Christian hope), warned that without faith in God, humanity lies at the mercy of ideologies that can lead to "the greatest forms of cruelty and violations of justice."

His third encyclical, "Caritas in Veritate" ("Charity in Truth") was released in 2009 and said ethical values are needed to overcome the current global economic crisis as well as to eradicate hunger and promote the real development of all the world's peoples.

Several months ago, the Vatican said Pope Benedict had completed work on another encyclical, this one on the virtue of faith, and its publication was expected in the first half of this year. The Vatican has not said whether or not the letter would come out before the pope's resignation takes effect Feb. 28.

His three-volume work, "Jesus of Nazareth," published between 2007 and 2012 in several languages, emphasized that Christ must be understood as the Son of God on a divine mission, not as a mere moralist or social reformer. The books argued that while Christ did not bring a blueprint for social progress, he did bring a new vision based on love that challenges the evils of today's world — from the brutality of totalitarian regimes to the "cruelty of capitalism."

The pope spent much of his time meeting with bishops from around the world when they made "ad limina" visits to the Vatican to report on their dioceses.

Some of Pope Benedict's longest and most-revealing encounters were with priests, in Rome and elsewhere. He frequently spoke of the importance of the quality formation of priestly candidates, and in 2005 he approved the release of a long-awaited document barring those with deep-seated homosexual tendencies from the priesthood.

In a few areas, Pope Benedict asked Church experts to engage in careful study and reflection:

- He asked Vatican agencies to consider the moral and scientific aspects of condom use in AIDS prevention, after some theologians argued that condoms were acceptable for married couples in which one spouse is infected with HIV. At the same time, his own statement in 2009 that condom-distribution campaigns aggravate the problem of AIDS prompted widespread criticism.

In his 2010 interview for the book "Light of the World," Seewald asked Pope Benedict about the use of condoms in AIDS prevention and the pope's answer made headlines around the world. While continuing to insist that condoms were not the answer to the AIDS pandemic, he allowed that in particular circumstances — for example, a prostitute seeking to reduce the risk of infection — using a condom might represent a step toward moral awareness.

- He convened scientific and theological scholars for private discussions about the theory of evolution. In his own remarks on the subject,



CNS PHOTO/PAUL HARING

Pope Benedict XVI and Cardinal Agostino Vallini, papal vicar of Rome, walk together as they leave the pope's audience with priests of the Diocese of Rome in Paul VI hall at the Vatican Feb. 14.

he emphasized that the acceptance of evolutionary theory should not mean the exclusion of a fundamental divine purpose in creation.

One of the pope's most notable actions came in May 2006, when

he approved a decision saying that Father Marcial Maciel Degollado, the founder of the Legionaries of Christ, should not exercise his priestly ministry publicly. Father Maciel, who enjoyed favor for many years

at the Vatican, had been accused of sexually abusing minors. In 2009 the pope approved an apostolic visitation of the late priest's order.


Although he was expected to reverse a trend set by Pope John Paul, Pope Benedict did not slow the Vatican's saint-making machinery, but he did immediately announce he would not preside over beatifications. The pope's decision was meant to highlight the difference between a beatification and a canonization, but, in effect, the pope's decision lowered the profile of beatification liturgies. Pope Benedict did make two exceptions to his new rule: the first to beatify Cardinal John Henry Newman during a September 2010 visit to England; and the second to beatify Pope John Paul in May 2011.

While Pope Benedict asked Vatican experts to be more selective in picking candidates for sainthood, he ended up canonizing 44 new saints, including the Native American Kateri Tekakwitha and Mother Marianne Cope of Molokai.

Pope Benedict named 90 new cardinals; 67 of those he named are still under the age of 80 and therefore eligible to vote in the conclave to elect his successor. As of Feb. 28, the day his papacy ends, Pope Benedict's appointments will represent just over 57 percent of the 117 cardinals under 80 that day.

In mid-2007, the pope made an important change in the conclave procedure, restoring the traditional rule that requires a two-thirds majority for papal election. In doing so, he reversed a modification made by Pope John Paul, who had allowed the possibility of moving to a simple majority vote in the case of a deadlocked conclave.

Contributing to this story was Cindy Wooden at the Vatican.




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Pope Benedict: I am not abandoning the Church

BY FRANCIIS X. ROCCA

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In one of his last public appearances, Pope Benedict XVI told an overflow crowd in St. Peter's Square Feb. 24 that his upcoming retirement does not mean he is abandoning the Church, but that he will be serving it in a new way, through prayer and meditation.

At noon, the pope appeared at his window in the Apostolic Palace to pray the Angelus, a papal Sunday ritual that will not be repeated until after the election of a new pope.

Despite the blustery weather, turnout was several times the usual for such occasions — easily more than 150,000, with some estimates as high as a quarter of a million. The crowd filled the square, except where prevented by barricades, and spilled out into the Via della Conciliazione. Many groups held signs expressing gratitude and affection — “You are not alone,” one read — and national flags from countries as far away as Brazil.

Benedict was the “the rock: solid, strong and unwavering and yet kind and compassionate and loving at the same time,” said Balthazar Aguirre of Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Daly City, Calif. He and his two sisters took time off from work to come to Rome for the pope's last week as the head of the universal Church.

“Prayer doesn't mean isolat-

ing one's self from the world and its contradictions,” the pope said, in his commentary on the day's Gospel reading (Lk 9:28-36). “Prayer leads one back to the path, to action.

“Christian existence,” he said, “consists in a continuous climbing of the mountain for an encounter with God, in order to descend again bearing the love and strength derived from it, so as to serve our brothers and sisters with the same love of God.”

If the relevance to his Feb. 28 resignation was not already clear, the pope made the connection explicit:

“I feel that this word of God is directed in particular to me, in this moment of my life. The Lord calls me to ‘climb the mountain,’ to dedicate myself even more to prayer and meditation. But this does not mean abandoning the Church; on the contrary, if God asks this of me it is precisely so that I may continue to serve (the Church) with the same dedication and the same love with which I have done so till now, but in a way more suited to my age and strength.”

Speaking these words, Pope Benedict was interrupted twice by applause, and afterward received an ovation 30 seconds long. He smiled broadly, thanked the crowd, and added, “Let us thank God for the bit of sun he has granted us.”



CNS PHOTO/L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO VIA REUTERS

Pope Benedict XVI leads his final Angelus as pope from the window of his apartment overlooking St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Feb. 24. His papacy will officially end Feb. 28 at 8 p.m. Rome time.

A bill to regulate chemical abortion, improve informed consent advances

INDIANAPOLIS — A bill to regulate chemical abortion in Indiana and another to improve informed consent law for abortion cleared its first hurdle Feb. 20, when the Senate Health panel passed the proposals. The Church supports both measures.

Sen. Travis Holdman, R-Markle, author of SB 371 said his bill is intended to ensure women's safety. The bill requires facilities that dispense abortion-inducing drugs to meet the same medical standards as those that provide surgical abortions. The proposal requires a doctor who prescribes the abortion-inducing drugs to examine the woman in person, and schedule follow-up care.

“We're just trying to control and regulate abortion-inducing drugs, which are not regulated in the state of Indiana,” said Holdman.

“We're talking about the life of the mother and of the child. I don't believe what we are asking for is an unreasonable request,” said Holdman. “We are not prohibiting physicians or abortion clinics from continuing the practice they are engaged in.”

Senate Bill 489, authored by Sen. Mike Young, R-Indianapolis, changes Indiana's informed consent law for abortion requiring a

woman seeking abortion to see an ultrasound and hear fetal heart tones unless she certifies in writing that she declines. It requires the Indiana Department of Health to provide color illustrations, rather than black and white, showing fetal development stages for abortion centers to provide to abortion clients.

Glenn Tebbe, ICC executive director, who serves as the official spokesman and public policy watchdog on state and federal issues for the Catholic Church in Indiana, testified Feb. 20.

Tebbe said, “We rise in support of both bills under consideration because human life has dignity and value. We believe it is important that women be fully-informed before making an important life-changing decision. We believe it is in the best interest of the state to protect the health of the mother as well as the life of the unborn child.”

Dr. Hans Geisler, retired OBGYN of Indianapolis, told the Senate panel, “I believe it is important to treat chemical abortions the same way we treat surgical abortions. An examination should be required by a physician, and an ultrasound given before any chemicals are given to rule out an ectopic pregnancy; that a person administering the chemical

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abortion has hospital admitting privileges and surgical privileges, in case they are needed; and that the clinic where this is being carried out should be a licensed medical facility, the same as other licensed surgical abortion facilities in Indiana.”

Geisler provided a litany of data demonstrating that chemical abortion when compared to surgical abortion is riskier. Geisler noted a chemical abortion has a 15.6 percent risk of hemorrhage compared to a 2.1 percent risk from a surgical abortion.

“This is statically significant,” said Geisler. “I am not advocating surgical abortions, I'm merely pointing out chemical abortions are somewhat riskier.”

Sue Swayze, legislative director for Indiana Right to Life told lawmakers, “Due to the rapid use of RU 486 in Indiana, we believe Indiana law must begin to recog-

nize, define and regulate its use. The reason we want to regulate chemical abortion is because we can statistically predict the probability of failure rates, which are much higher for chemical abortions than with surgical abortion.

“A woman who encounters complications a few days after she takes the abortion-inducing drugs, will likely return to the place where she got the pills for treatment,” said Swayze. “That center needs to be equipped to do so, with medical facility equipment, wider doorways for use of a gurney in case the woman needs to be transported to another medical facility.”

Mark Tuttle, president, Right to Life of Indianapolis, said, “It makes sense that given the higher complication rates of chemical abortion that the state should require the same licensure and oversight that surgical abortions have.”

Ryan McCann, of Indiana Family Institute, said, “We rise in support of these bills to help women get the information they need and protect them through the law.”

Abortion advocates who testified in opposition of the proposals cited concerns regarding limiting access to abortion would harm Hoosier women who would go

to the Internet to find cheaper, more dangerous abortion inducing pills. Some who testified in opposition to the bills include: Dr. John Stutsman, an Indiana University School of Medicine professor and OBGYN who serves as the medical director for Planned Parenthood in Indiana; and Rev. Linda Dolby, pastor of the United Methodist Church in Lafayette, and board member for Indiana Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.

Sen. Jean Breaux, D-Indianapolis, who serves on the Senate Health panel and voted against both abortion proposals, said, “We are narrowing the circumstances and locations available to women who seek reproductive services and in particular abortions ... and I strongly vote no.”

Swayze sums-up the problem this way.

“Today, chemical abortion is flying under the radar in our state, and the abortion industry is not held to standard medical marketplace expectations for patient care and safety,” said Swayze. “Let's face it. Women who get abortions aren't going to file complaints or seek justice when their care is subpar. They assume that the clinic they go to is safe.”

Free USF lecture explores subject of stigmata of St. Francis

FORT WAYNE — The University of Saint Francis School of Arts and Sciences and Department of Philosophy and Theology will sponsor a free public lecture, "The Stigmata of St. Francis of Assisi: Fact, Fiction or Fallacy?" on Sunday, March 3, at 3 p.m. in the North Campus auditorium.

Inconsistent accounts of the wounds of Christ — the stigmata — appearing on St. Francis' body are found in 13th century Franciscan sources. Were the stigmata authentic? Sister Anita Holzmer, a Sister of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration and instructor in theology and Franciscan studies, will use those sources to explore the mysterious and mystical phenomenon.

Human trafficking education, training event March 8 at Victory Noll

HUNTINGTON — Human trafficking is a global, national, state and local issue. Just as it happens around the world, it happens in our own hometown.

Victory Noll Center hosts "Service Provision Through Their Eyes," a human trafficking education and training event Friday, March 8.

This program is for criminal, civil and human service providers. It is for teachers, hotel managers and personnel and for anyone who works with young people. Those attending are encouraged to come and learn the community impact of global human trafficking, and understand the dynamics of sexual victimization. Criminal, civil and human service providers can learn how to improve success in service provision and how to address issues of compassion fatigue.

There is no cost for the event, but registration is required. Anyone interested is encouraged to preregister by March 1.

Registration will also be open the morning of the event beginning at 8:30 a.m. at Victory Noll Center, located at 1900 W. Park Dr. in Huntington. The event runs from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and includes a continental breakfast and lunch.

For more information about Victory Noll Center or to register for the program, call (260) 356-0628, ext. 174, or visit www.olvm.org/vncenter.

Saint Mary's College honors two faculty with newly established awards

NOTRE DAME — Saint Mary's College announced the inaugural honorees of two new faculty awards for excellence at a luncheon hosted by President Carol Ann Mooney '72 and the board of trustees. These awards, made possible by the generosity of two alumnae and their spouses, recognize faculty members who are deeply dedicated to their students,

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Catholics On A Mission teens Brenna Gill, Alé Krudop, Katie Killen, Kathryn MacDonald, Emma MacDonald, Michael McGovern, David Landrigan, AJ Gill and in front, Anna Doctor, will offer a presentation of their mission trip to Costa Rica in December of 2012, at the Knights of Columbus Council 451 at 601 Reed Rd. in Fort Wayne on Friday, March 22, at 7 p.m. A potluck dinner with cash bar will follow. Please bring a dish to share. Greg and Colleen Mitchell and family, missionary hosts, will be available for questions as well. For more information visit www.CatholicsOnMission.wordpress.com or Facebook "Catholics On A Mission."

their scholarship and their communities.

"An exceptional education begins with exceptional faculty, and Saint Mary's is proud of its many talented, passionate faculty members who engage students, enliven the campus, and advance their fields," said Saint Mary's College President Carol Ann Mooney.

Mary Ann Merryman, professor of business and accounting, was presented The Donald R. (ND '73) and Nora Barry Fischer '73 Faculty Award for Teaching Excellence. This award recognizes excellences in discipline-specific teaching by a faculty member in upper-division courses in a major.

At the presentation of the award, Provost and Senior Vice President Patricia Fleming noted Merryman's ability to "teach technically challenging subjects in a way that makes her students want to learn."

Her content expertise has enabled Saint Mary's students to consistently score above the national average on the Uniform CPA examination. Many of Merryman's students have gone on to become partners at "Big Four" international accounting firms. She has had a clear hand

in shaping the expertise of these young professionals.

Jayne Kendle, associate professor of nursing, was presented The Kevin J. (ND '77) and Marijo Rogers Kelly '77 Service Award. This award recognizes a faculty member who demonstrates exceptional commitment to local, regional, national or international service to his or her academic field.

Fleming cited Kendle's work on the health and well-being of medically fragile children and their families. Kendle created the Time Out Pediatric Respite Care program that provides palliative care for children where she, along with her students, dedicate time in service to these special families.

Pope Benedict appoints Archbishop Blume as representative to Uganda

KAMPALA, UGANDA — Pope Benedict XVI has posted a new apostolic nuncio to Uganda, replacing Korean-born Archbishop Paul Tschang In-Nam who has served in the country since 2007.

Archbishop Michael A. Blume's appointment took effect on Feb. 2, according to a com-

munication from Father Philip Odii, the national executive secretary of social communications at the Uganda Catholic Secretariat, Nsambya.

Until his posting to Uganda, Archbishop Blume has been apostolic nuncio to Benin and Togo. Born on May 30, 1946 in South Bend, he was ordained a religious priest for the Society of Divine Word on Dec. 23, 1972. He grew up in Our Lady of Hungary Parish in South Bend.

The pope's new ambassador to Uganda, aside from English, is also fluent in Italian and French. A nuncio is the top most apostolic envoy of the Holy See (pope) and also serves as the ambassador of the Vatican wherever posted.

'Ignited, enter the fire!' youth retreat scheduled

FORT WAYNE — Youth throughout the diocese are invited to attend a retreat experience like no other. "Ignited," a retreat specifically for high school teens, will be held March 8-10 at Bishop Dwenger High School.

Sponsored by the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, diocesan high schools and various parishes,

this retreat is designed to bring hundreds of high school teens together before the Eucharist for conversion through music, talks, sharing and prayer.

Visit www.ignitedretreat.com for retreat information and registration. Teens won't want to miss this epic weekend!

Prayer support is very important for the success of this retreat. Please pray for the teens who will be attending and all those who are involved in preparing for Ignited.

Please RSVP with the number of people who will be praying to Kathleen Fogarty, fogartykd@frontier.com.

St. Joseph and St. Catherine parishes join for mission

ROANOKE — St. Joseph and St. Catherine of Alexandria Churches will join for Mission 2013 — Year of Faith.

On Sunday, March 3, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will open the mission at the 11 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph. At 6 p.m. a soup dinner will be served in the hall at St. Catherine, followed by Msgr. Bernard Galic who will speak on faith at 7 p.m.

On Monday, March 4, at 6 p.m. a soup dinner will be served in the hall at St. Catherine. At 7 p.m. Deacon Jim Fitzpatrick will speak on prayer.

On March 5, at 6 p.m. at St. Joseph a soup dinner will be served in the hall followed by Father Drew Curry who will speak on Penance at 7 p.m. Opportunity for Reconciliation will follow.

On Wednesday, March 6, at 6 p.m. Pastor Father Dale Bauman will close the mission with a Mass at St. Joseph. A reception will immediately follow Mass in the St. Joseph Parish hall.

Day of reflection celebrating Black Catholic faith and culture

SOUTH BEND — The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend Office of Evangelization and Special Ministries is sponsoring a Day of Reflection on Saturday, March 16, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at St. Augustine Parish, 1501 W. Washington St. "Be Not Discouraged: We've Come This Far by Faith" will feature special guests, Ansel J. Augustine, Black Youth and Young Adult Ministry in the Archdiocese of New Orleans, LA., Father Christopher Rhodes, St. Augustine and Holy Name of Mary Parishes in the Archdiocese of Louisville, Ky., and Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, who will celebrate 4 p.m. Mass. SANKOFA — Celebrating Black Catholic faith and culture will feature ancestors in faith Sister Thea Bowman, a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration, and Daniel Rudd, founder of National Black Catholic Congress. Registration fee of \$15 includes lunch and must be received by March 12. Register online at www.diocesefwsb.org/snakofo or at (260) 399-1458.

Series of talks, Mass, enshrinement honors St. Gianna Beretta Molla

BY ANN CAREY

MISHAWAKA — Most Catholics can relate to St. Gianna Beretta Molla, for she lived the ordinary kind of life many Catholics live: She had a spouse and children and also held down a job. St. Gianna opted to continue a high-risk pregnancy rather than undergo treatment that would harm her unborn child and died in 1962, one week after giving birth to a healthy daughter. She was survived by her husband and three other children.

Canonized in 2004, the International Year of the Family, St. Gianna was the last saint to be canonized by Pope John Paul II.

During the weekend of Feb. 22-24, St. Gianna also became a special saint for the diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Her picture and relic were enshrined in a Feb. 22 ceremony at the diocese's only Catholic hospital, St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in Mishawaka.

Introducing the enshrinement was Tom McKenna, founder and president of the St. Gianna Physician's Guild. The guild was started in 2006 to uphold and promote Catholic values in the lives and practices of medical personnel and help them defend those values in the public square. St. Gianna, a pediatrician, is the guild's patroness.

At the enshrinement ceremony in the hospital's lobby outside the entrance to Our Lady of Fatima Chapel, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades noted that the St. Gianna shrine was appropriate for the hospital, for her work as a doctor exemplified what Catholic healthcare is about.

"She is a beautiful model — especially in our culture today — of



PHOTOS BY KEVIN HAGGENJOS

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades holds a relic of St. Gianna Beretta Molla during an enshrinement to the saint at Our Lady of Fatima Chapel at St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in Mishawaka on Feb. 22. Bishop Rhoades blessed the picture and enshrined relics at the hospital chapel, and on Sunday, he celebrated a Mass for couples struggling with infertility at the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis in Mishawaka.

witness to the Gospel of Life," Bishop Rhoades said, adding that St. Gianna saw her profession to treat sick children not just as work, but as a vocation, just like her vocation to marriage and motherhood.

He also praised St. Joseph Regional Medical Center as "an institution and family that stands for life as part of the core of its truly Catholic mission." That mission provides care of the whole person, he said, which includes spiritual and pastoral care for the patient and the families.

"People who come here experience the compassion of Christ," he said, "and that is what distinguishes a place like St. Joseph Regional Medical Center from other places where much, much good takes place as well. But what is the inspiration

here is Jesus Himself and His self-giving love for us. So, St. Gianna reflected that like a mirror."

Albert Gutierrez, president and CEO of the hospital, told *Today's Catholic* that the hospital was "proud" to host the saint's relic.

"Her legacy has united, inspired and encouraged countless mothers, physicians and other healthcare providers," he said. "We invite our community to learn her amazing story and to visit our hospital to see this beautiful display in her honor."

Indeed, the St. Gianna enshrinement came to the diocese because a member of St. Matthew Parish had developed a devotion to the saint after learning more about her. Barb Fralish, a wife, mother and nurse, told *Today's Catholic* that Gianna's



A photo of St. Gianna Beretta Molla was enshrined with relics at the Our Lady of Fatima Chapel.

story of an ordinary person doing extraordinary things helps inspire her in the care of her own disabled son.

Fralish said she had attended a pro-life conference in Kansas City in 2011 where she heard Gianna's youngest daughter speak and met Tom McKenna. Fralish subsequently wrote Bishop Rhoades a letter suggesting that he consider increasing devotion to St. Gianna in this diocese. Bishop Rhoades approached St. Joseph Regional Medical Center about hosting the St. Gianna shrine, and the hospital responded enthusiastically.

Franciscan Sister Laureen Painter, the hospital's vice president for Mission Integration and Ministry Formation, told *Today's Catholic* that the sanctity of life is "critical" to the hospital as a faith-based organization. Thus, the enshrinement of St. Gianna is a "manifestation of this founding conviction," she said.

"As we share this relic with those who come through our doors, we invite them to pray for St. Gianna's intercession for expectant mothers here in Michiana who experience difficulties during pregnancy or while giving birth."

McKenna also spoke about St. Gianna at the University of Notre Dame the day of the enshrinement and gave another presentation the evening of Feb. 23 at Little Flower Parish Center in South Bend. On Sunday, Feb. 24, he spoke at the Mishawaka motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, following a 1 p.m. special Mass for couples struggling with infertility.

In his homily at that Mass, Bishop Rhoades said he had read that many couples struggling with infertility had been aided by the intercession of St.



Tom McKenna, the founder and president of the St. Gianna Physicians' Guild, who is also a personal friend of St. Gianna's family, speaks on the life of St. Gianna as part of the enshrinement ceremony. McKenna also made presentations on Feb. 23 at St. Therese, Little Flower Church in South Bend and after Mass on Feb. 24 in the chapel of the Sisters of St. Francis in Mishawaka.

Gianna, who herself had suffered two miscarriages as well as other difficult pregnancies. In both her personal life and in her medical practice caring for children and their mothers, she gave strong pro-life witness, he said.

"St. Gianna is also an example of great faith and courage in the face of adversity and suffering," he continued. "She refused to turn away from her faith in God and would not participate in any medical procedures that were immoral, that did not respect the dignity and sacredness of human life."

This pro-life witness, he said, helps couples struggling with infertility realize that any infertility treatment must respect the right to life of the human embryo and aid the conjugal act, not substitute for it.

"Today we ask for St. Gianna's intercession for couples struggling with infertility, that the Lord may bless them with children," Bishop Rhoades said. "And, we also pray for those who will not be blessed with the gift of children, that they may remain firm in faith and their married lives may be blessed with much spiritual fruitfulness. Their embrace of the cross is a means to great growth in holiness."

Bishop Rhoades also asked the many Sisters of St. Francis who were at the Mass to hold the couples struggling with infertility in their prayers and to ask the other sisters at their motherhouse to do the same. Noting that the Sisters of St. Francis maintain perpetual adoration, he called them a "powerhouse of prayer."



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Marian welcomes Bishop Rhoades for pastoral visit

BY JODI MAGALLANES

MISHAWAKA — Six days before the top leadership position in the Catholic Church becomes vacant, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades spoke about the unusual situation with students at Marian High School, Mishawaka, during his annual pastoral visit Friday, Feb. 22.

The visit got underway with a Mass in the Bishop Crowley Activity Center, where Bishop Rhoades expressed contentment at being back at the school and at being able to celebrate Mass with the young people.

Lent's traditional vestment color, purple, gave way to white for the all-school liturgy: the reason being, the bishop explained, that Friday was the feast of the Chair of St. Peter.

"On this feast day we are reminded that the pope is the prince of the Church, the visible heart of our faith, and that his ministry continues now in the 21st century," he said.

As Pope Benedict's impending resignation draws near, Bishop Rhoades encouraged worshippers to remember how he served the Church with zeal and bore "a beautiful witness to Christ. On the Mass of the Chair of St. Peter, we pray for his successor."

Friday's Gospel reading, Matthew 16:13-19, clearly establishes the Church's leadership and would have had also had a great impact on the residents of Caesarea Philippi, where the disciples and Jesus found themselves at that time. Worship of the pagan god Pan was pervasive in that region, and Pan's temple was even thought to house the gate to the netherworld.

"So when Jesus said that not even the gates of the netherworld would prevail against His Church, that's a reference that they would have taken very, very seriously," Bishop Rhoades said during the homily.

By confessing that Jesus was the Son of God and not just a prophet, as some thought, Peter proclaimed something that gets to the very heart of the Catholic faith.

"Remember, people were waiting for a Messiah ... they still remembered that promise. When he said 'You are the Christ' and then, 'You are the Son of the Living God,' he really was inspired to say that. And then Jesus said something just as incredible: You are Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church."

With the changing of Peter's name, Bishop Rhoades continued, Jesus made Peter the foundation of a new building. That building is the Church, and that Church is the body of Christ.

By establishing Peter as His successor here on earth, Jesus also established the Church's Tradition of apostolic succession. The throne of St. Peter represents the pope's and, in local dioceses,



PHOTOS BY KEVIN HAGGENJOS

After an all-school Mass at Marian High School in Mishawaka on Feb. 22, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades greets students and answers questions.

the bishops' ecclesial authority.

"There are 1.2 billion Catholics in the world. How do we stay united? It's because Jesus set up this succession. Jesus gave us the means to preserve that unity in our faith.

"In six days that chair will be vacant. That's a tough time. We're used to having a pope," he admitted.

In detail, Bishop Rhoades laid out for students the nuances of the process of choosing the person who will take Pope Benedict's place as the keeper of the keys to the kingdom; pausing after the homily to take questions from the student body about resignation and the upcoming election. Afterwards, he continued the celebration of the Holy Mass with concelebrants Father Barry England of St. Bavo Parish and Mishawaka Catholic Schools, Father Bill Sullivan of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish and school in Elkhart, and with Father Jacob Runyon, Marian High School chaplain and parochial vicar of St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend.

Prior to the final blessing, Bishop Rhoades took additional questions of both a spiritual and entertaining nature from the students. One young man took the opportunity to ask if he intended to maintain a tradition established by former Bishop Emeritus John M. D'Arcy of allowing all the students of a school whose team won a state championship to have a day off in celebration. The request met with riotous applause because Marian's girls soccer team recently dominated the IHSAA state soccer champi-



Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades meets Marian student council members on his pastoral visit to the Mishawaka high school on Friday, Feb. 22.

Below, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades meets with Marian students and school chaplain Father Jacob Runyon in the school library.



From left, Marian High School Principal Carl Loesch, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and Father Jacob Runyon, chaplain, pose for a photo in the school library.

onship. He received the bishop's promise that the request would be considered.

Several other Marian students were recognized Friday morning as well, including National Merit Scholarship finalists Andrew Guinan, Rachael Hoffman, Stephen Rice and Stacie Skwarcan; and National Merit Scholarship commended scholars Eddie Hunckler and Matt King. Principal Carl Loesch used the opportunity of the special occasion to announce that the school's 2013 valedictorian will be Stacie Skwarcan, with Rachael Hoffman serving as salutatorian. Among additional recognitions Loesch noted that student Stephen Rice would compete in state diving competition finals that same day.

As a token of respect and appreciation for his visit, Brendan Short presented the bishop with



a spiritual bouquet, Marian spirit wear and a photo of him with students who participated in a recent March for Life. Representatives of First Source Bank were in attendance as well and gave the school a check for \$25,000 to

support its mission.

Before concluding his pastoral visit, Bishop Rhoades met with Marian High School theology classes and with students who are considering religious vocations.

Stewardship — Connection of spiritual and material

BY HARRY VERHILEY

A Christian steward recognizes that the material world can never be separate from the spiritual world. God's creation communicates something to us. All that we see and experience (excluding sin) is an expression of His love for us.

As a proper response to our Creator and Redeemer, we must express our thanksgiving to God. Our expression should be one of gratitude and praise, affirmed with our words at Mass. "It is right and just." This thanksgiving expressed back to God is a natural response. God gives and we say thank you. God gives us something awesome, like life and all it contains, and we say, "Thank you Lord, this is awesome! You are awesome! I thank You and praise You!" This is the natural order — the rhythm of creation, a flow from God returning to God in thanksgiving.

To thank God for all that He has provided is to remember God. It is important for us to remember God because God is our life source. The early Church understood this through the Greek word "amnesia" — to remember. Many of the Church Fathers taught that to remember God is to live, to forget God is to die. This seems like an obvious

teaching, so why would we have to be taught this? Because of the fall of man, humanity is inclined to forget; we are inclined to take without remembering the source, inclined to receive without saying thank you. And for us to take and not remember to express our gratitude to God is to break the natural order of creation. This is what happened when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. Our gaze is taken from God and directed on the self.

Through the Paschal mysteries Jesus expresses the most perfect expression of praise and thanksgiving to God the Father and invites us to join with that expression of praise and thanksgiving by living a sacramental life.

A sacramental life is one that requires us to be good Christian stewards — to remember that all that we have comes from God. Notice that the sacraments themselves require elements of the material world (water, oil, bread, wine).

The Christian steward recognizes that the material world and the spiritual world are connected. There is a

right response for receiving; thus, participating in the rhythm of creation. The material world must be used to express something to God, that is, how grateful we are for our material gifts.



Remember your Church in your will

BY HARRY VERHILEY

The Christian steward knows that it is important to share what we have with those who do not have what they need, as well as share a portion of what we have by investing it in our Lord's Church.

All throughout Scriptures sharing is taught. In the parable of the good steward, Jesus reminds us that to be a good steward of God's gifts we must give freely to our neighbor in need. A bequest to your parish is one way of giving an eternal gift to our neighbors in need.

A bequest is designations in our will — a gift left to a person or charitable organization, like your parish. The Church should be thought of as our spiritual family, a family that has been there for us at significant events (Baptisms, Confirmations, weddings and funerals) and most notably, weekly and daily Mass — giving us food for our life's journey.

There are many reasons to leave a bequest to the Church. Here are just a few:

We make a spiritual impact on others: The Church's central mission is to evangelize. Evangelization is telling people the Good News of Jesus Christ and invites others to participate in that Good News. When the Word is spread, lives change, neighborhoods change and society changes. Your bequest becomes an influence of good in the world and will help people grow spiritually.

Bequests clarify our priorities: A drafting of a will and the identification of bequests forces us to clarify what is important in



our lives. Bequests allow us to express our gratitude to those organizations, and/or people, that have contributed meaning to our lives.

We can direct how our gift will be used: Many people like to have a say about how their donations will be spent. The technical term for this is a "restricted gift." A restricted bequest is a direct response to the question — What does my parish need? You can decide how your parish will use your bequest by restricting it to a specific need such as tuition assistance, or a youth minister or new boiler.

We can continue to give when we have left this temporal world: The Catholic Community Foundation of Northeast Indiana receives planned gifts to support more than 120 endowments. These are investment funds supporting various needs of our parishes, schools and charities, as well as specific diocesan efforts. The principal of each endowment is never spent; only the earnings generated each year support the identified cause. In a way, a bequest to your parish endowment in support of your Sunday offertory long after your death.

We fulfill our need to give: That's right, we have a "need" to give, because we find fulfillment in sharing, and our need to share far

outweighs the Church's need to receive our gifts. Sharing demonstrates our willingness to look beyond our own needs and to travel lightly through the journey of life. By sharing we also act God-like, since God is the ultimate giver.

Bequests are an act of love: Our Lord expressed that we should love God with our whole heart, soul and mind, and our neighbor as ourselves. There are infinite ways of expressing love for God and fellow humans. A bequest in our will is one way of expressing love.



We embrace the teachings of our Lord: Matthew 25 describes the last judgment according to how each one of us responded to those who were unable to care for their own needs. A bequest actually continues our efforts to care for the least of our brothers and sisters long after our death.

Talk to your Estate Attorney about leaving a bequest to your parish. If you would like further information about the Catholic Community Foundation, or leaving a bequest to your parish, send an email to stewardship@diocesefwsb.org or call (260) 399-1405 in Fort Wayne or (574) 258-6571 in South Bend.



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When children die, where is God?

On Oct. 18, 2012, we lost our six-year-old grandson Noah after a long and often brutal battle with a rare autoimmune disease called familial HLH (Hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis). Less than two months later, on Dec. 14, 2012, 20 children around our Noah's age along with other victims — were viciously gunned down at Sandy Hook Elementary School by a disturbed young gunman. While the Sandy Hook tragedy affected the whole country and Noah's death affected a smaller group of family and friends, I kept hearing the same question: Where is God or does He even exist?

The answer is that God is where He always has been when we grieve and suffer: with us and even carrying us through the roughest times, as the famous "Footprints in the Sand" poem depicts. But what does that really mean?

Almost 44 years ago, I witnessed my first death of a child as a student nurse. Thirty years

ago, my baby daughter Karen, who had Down syndrome, died from complications of pneumonia. Three years ago, my oldest daughter Marie died by suicide. And now, there are Noah and the Sandy Hook victims. Personally and professionally as a nurse, I have also been with countless parents and others who have lost loved ones. I would like to share what I discovered as my personal "survival guide" for coping with grief as a Catholic woman. It consists of three decisions I made years ago.

I choose to live

All death is hard because it involves loss, but the death of a child seems especially cruel whether the death resulted from violence, accident or illness. No parents expect to outlive their child. When the supposed "natural order" of life and death is breached, it shakes all of us to the core even when the child is not our own. Especially in today's

GUEST COMMENTARY

NANCY VALKO, RN

secular world, even people of faith can feel lost and helpless.

When a child dies, shock, denial and even alcohol and drugs can cushion the crushing grief for awhile. But eventually reality sets in. It is hard to even consider facing years and years of living without that precious person. Life is totally disrupted and even the routine of being at a hospital or bedside feels like a loss. In my case when I lost my daughters, I had to remind myself that my husband, children, and others needed me. But at times even that thought seemed

VALKO, PAGE 12

Quenching a thirst — God's surprising gifts even in Lent

Our oldest son lives in southern California. A detriment to this is that he is so far away. A benefit of this (particularly in February) is that from time to time we get to visit him ... and enjoy warm weather in the winter.

Last week, my husband David had a business conference in Palm Desert, Calif., just two hours from our son in Los Angeles. Had it been in Oklahoma or Seattle, I'm sure I wouldn't have jumped so readily, but when David asked, "Do you want to come too?" I nearly bowled him over with a hug and enthusiastic "yes!" What's better than to see your loved and missed son and enjoy sunny weather in February? I'll tell you — not much!

It just so happened we could bring the five girls still at home with us. Perfect! And I found it providential that when I checked online, airline tickets were cheaper than normal. Next, my husband reminded me that I had an American Airlines credit that would cover the cost of my flight. Bingo! I immediately went down to the basement to dig out bathing suits, humming happily.

We flew four hours to summer, in February, landing at 8:30 p.m. at the Sonny Bono Palm Springs Airport. It was a chilly 48 degrees, as it tends to be in the desert, but that was nothing compared to the 20 degrees we had left behind. The next four days were a blessed blur of relaxation and rest, sitting on a sunny patio under God's gorgeous mountains, watching the girls enjoy some miniature golf, splashing in the pool with my daughters (the temps rose to almost 80 during the day — hurrah for the desert climate!) and exploring the local zoo, called appropriately, the Living Desert with our son and his girlfriend, who drove down for a Saturday visit with us. I didn't mind at all that our cuisine was limited two days to no meat, and a day of fasting, on account of us traveling on Ash Wednesday and on a Friday. I felt guilty for the pleasure during Lent only for about a minute. God provided this opportunity without me even looking. I gratefully accepted.

Our flight home was scheduled to leave Sunday morning at 8 a.m., early as most West Coast flights are. Therefore, our family attended Mass at Sacred Heart Parish in Palm Desert at 5:30 on Saturday night. We scooted into the pew after a busy day, and I wasn't as mentally prepared and focused as I usually am.

After a few moments, in the presence of God, however, my soul was calmed. I looked down the pew at my girls and was suddenly grateful for the vocation of motherhood, for my wonderful husband, and for the unique opportunity for this travel to see our son and enjoy some warmth and sunshine. Then came the homily, and I was blown away by it.

It was one of the few times in my life that I wished I had a record-



EVERYDAY CATHOLIC

THERESA A. THOMAS

ing device to have documented the words top to finish. I'm not going to be able to do it justice here, but I'll share some highlights — some of the main ideas, which are not earth shattering, yet are profound, at least they were to me. They weren't ideas that most of us don't already know, but somehow they spoke to me deeply. Here they are:

- Nothing else matters in this world more than serving God and loving others.
- Loving others begins first and foremost with our own family.
- Activities should revolve around the *family* and not just the children.
- Family is more important than most anything else in life.
- We are all broken in some way and need God's grace.
- We are not to worry if we have not discovered that until now. The important thing is to recognize now that God loves us and calls us to Him, and begin to live the way we should have been living all along. Whether we are 80, 60, 40 or 20, or somewhere in between, we can begin *today* with the simple act of loving others.
- When we love people we don't have time to judge people.
- We sometimes don't realize the saving grace that simply loving someone can do to his soul.
- We can convert hearts and change lives with simple acts of love.

I'm sure Father had no idea how much his homily affected me. I had gone with my family to Palm Desert so my husband could attend a business conference, so I could see my son, and enjoy some relaxation with my children. But, in the desert, I also found sweet consolation for my soul, which quenched a thirst I didn't know I had. I offer it now to you, in case you too, need a drink.

I wish you a happy rest of Lent, this penitential season. Don't miss the joy and love and gifts God offers here and now during it. Joy is not an oxymoron during Lent. God's surprise gifts are *everywhere* and in *every time*. I hope you take them when He gives them to you. Happy, *yes happy* and penitential Lent!

Theresa Thomas is the wife of David and mother of nine children. Watch for her newest book "Big Hearted Families" (Scepter) and read more on her blog: <http://theresathomas.wordpress.com/>

Jesus warns reform or face doom



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

3rd Sunday of Lent Lk 13:1-9

In the first reading, from the Book of Exodus, Moses encounters God. Moses was tending his father-in-law's flock when suddenly an angel appeared and led Moses to a bush. The bush, although on fire, did not burn. Then God spoke, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. His identity was clear.

God, always with the people, knew of their plight. He was intervening in the situation to give the people relief. As events unfolded, Moses was the instrument of this relief by leading the people out of Egypt.

The reading reveals intimacy, immediacy, in God's relationship with the people. He is almighty and above all. Moses cannot stand to look upon God's face. Moses, by removing his footwear, shows respect even for the ground upon which he meets God. Yet, God speaks the divine name to Moses. It was a supreme revelation. In the Hebrew tradition, names carried the very being of the person. To know a person's name was to be given access to the person's identity. God freely spoke this name.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians provides the second reading. Corinth's Christian community challenged Paul since

the city was a reservoir of excesses and moral outrages, and Christians were vulnerable. Not surprisingly, Paul warned the Corinthians of the temptations surrounding them, bombarding them. He encouraged them, taught them and sought to inspire them.

Recalling the history of God's people, Paul insists that without God's guidance, without the nourishment provided by God, the people will die. What they had from earthly resources will not protect or sustain them. With God, they will live and live forever.

St. Luke's Gospel furnishes the last reading. This reading gives one of the rare glimpses of Pontius Pilate in the Gospels outside the Passion Narratives. It is hardly complimentary to him. The Roman governor who sentenced Jesus to death was ruthless and unmerciful. (An ancient tradition is that he was recalled to Rome because of his brutality, a brutality too vicious even by accepted standards of Roman imperial governance.) He had no regard for the God of Israel, or for the religion of the people who worshipped the God of Israel.

Jesus said that the victims of Pilate's impetuous cruelty did not deserve what they received. Jesus referred then to an accidental disaster, when 18 people were killed by a falling tower in Siloam. He noted that they too were innocent.

However, all those to whom Jesus referred in the end died, innocent or not. They could not control evil decisions of others or mishaps of nature or invented things. He warns the audience to reform, or else they too will face doom.

Then, Jesus tells the parable of the barren fig tree. The owner wants to destroy the tree, but the

vinedresser pleads for another year, for enough time to nourish the tree in the hope that it will bear fruit.

Reflection

In these Lenten readings, the Church is very frank. As Paul said, abandoning God reaps a whirlwind of calamity, sweeping into its wake even the innocent. We well may be victims of human coldness and human evil, as were the victims of Pilate's outrage. We may be victims of nature, as were those killed when the tower fell.

It is hard, but humans must face the fact that very often they expose themselves to calamity if they rely upon themselves alone. They cannot always withstand human power as great as Pilate's. They cannot control nature.

God alone is their sure support. Lovingly, God provides guidance, support and eternal life in Jesus. The question is whether or not we humbly will turn to God and obey God. God will not overwhelm us. He will not entrap us as if we were prey. We must decide.

READINGS

Sunday: Ex 3:1-8a, 13-15 Ps 103:1-4, 6-8, 11 1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12 Lk 13:1-9

Monday: 2 Kgs 5:1-15b Pss 42:2-3; 43:3-4 Lk 4:24-30

Tuesday: Dn 3:25, 34-43 Ps:25:4bc-5ab, 6-7bc, 8-9 Mt 18:21-35

Wednesday: Dt 4:1, 5-9 Ps 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20 Mt 5:17-19

Thursday: Jer 7:23-28 Ps 95:1-2, 6-9 Lk 11:14-23

Friday: Hos 14:2-10 Ps 81:6c-11b, 14, 17 Mk 12:28-34

Saturday: Hos 6:1-6 Ps 51:3-4, 18-21b Lk 18:9-14

VALKO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

totally overwhelming rather than motivating.

Recently Cesar Millan, the famous “dog whisperer” talked about his suicide attempt after a number of losses and how he learned to cope with bereavement from his experience with dogs. When dogs grieve, he recommends three things: exercise, discipline and affection. He said he found this also helped him.

Looking back, I found that these three techniques had helped me. Exercise decreased my anxiety and pain. Discipline meant appreciating even the most mundane routines of life or work and embracing the distraction. Hugging my loved ones and friends gave me a renewed sense of connection with the world and even with God.

However, I know that life will still contain many challenges. For example, while Noah’s two and a half-year-old brother Eli is free of HLH, we recently discovered that Noah’s unborn baby brother Liam, who is due in April, does have the disease and will also need a bone marrow transplant. We pray that he will achieve the cure that eluded Noah as we face the future with our confidence in God intact. I will never be a cockeyed optimist, but I do know that storms can be weathered and that we can be better rather than bitter as a result.

I choose to be happy

This is perhaps the hardest decision that I or any other bereaved parent has made. But it is crucial. Years ago I was with a young mother who tragically lost her two-year-old son. We spoke almost daily for a long time. Finally, she told me that she couldn’t see ever getting past her grief. I asked her if she had laughed yet. Embarrassed, she said she was watching a TV comedy show the night before and realized that she thought she heard a sound resembling a laugh come out of her. I told her that any laughter was the beginning of healing. I reassured her that she would laugh again and have moments of pleasure more and more in the future and that she should celebrate those moments rather than feel guilty. Life may never be “normal” in the old sense, but life still had the potential to be good, perhaps even great.

From other bereaved parents who helped me, I learned that you don’t have to hold onto the grief to hold onto the love you feel for your child. That beloved child would not want your life to be blighted by his or her death any more than you would want your children to be forever sad after your death. And, in our rich Catholic tradition, we honor Jesus’

mother Mary as Our Mother of Perpetual Help, not Our Mother of Perpetual Mourning.

I now look at working toward happiness and fostering a generally cheerful outlook as a tribute to my daughters and grandson. This doesn’t mean that I am immune from being blindsided by grief and longing when I accidentally hear certain songs, see another person their age, witness another death, etc. Like probably everyone else I still have what my husband kindly refers to as my “moments” when life seems like a long, hard slog. But I continuously strive to foster an attitude of gratitude for what — and especially who — I have left. I don’t want the children’s legacy to be one where their deaths destroyed a family.

There is no set timeline for grief and bereaved parents and other relatives need to be patient with themselves and those around them. I remember the old days in medicine when grieving relatives were immediately offered a tranquilizer. I knew even then that this often just delayed the process instead of helped. There is no “good” or “bad” way of grieving. Everyone has his or her unique journey although it is not a sign of weakness to ask for or offer professional help when necessary.

I was surprised by the depth of grief felt for the Sandy Hook victims and their relatives. I found it excruciating to watch the relentless TV coverage of the tragedy, but I also found it hard to turn away. However, in watching the story unfold, I was struck by the fact that although I have spoken with many other bereaved parents over the last three decades, I never met a parent who said they wished their beloved child had never been born rather than to have faced the grief the parent endured. Obviously, you can never lose when you truly love and I was so glad that the Sandy Hook parents were surrounded by loving, supportive people in their community and countless other caring people throughout the country who wanted to help.

Pain is an inescapable part of the grief journey, but we may hope that we all can eventually get to the point where it is the *life*, not the *death*, of our beloved child that is the most important to us.

I choose not to reject God

I’ll never forget reading about a famous and outwardly successful man who said he gave up on the idea of God when his little sister died. This gentleman wound up with a series of failed marriages and despite his millions of dollars is bitter and unhappy.

There is no question that faith is often challenged when tragedies like the death of a child happen. But rejecting God means rejecting the greatest source of love and healing that we so desperately need at our worst times.

I eventually realized that I never did and never will have total control over my or anyone

else’s life and that this is tolerable because God has a Divine Plan. I’ll never forget the wonderful Visitation nuns who taught us that life is like a tapestry that is large, beautiful and intricate. However, on this earth we see the tapestry only from the back. We see dark colors, chaos and loose threads that seem to go nowhere. Nothing in the tapestry appears to make sense, much less beauty. It is only when we die that God turns the tapestry around and we can finally see the amazing result. God doesn’t cause tragedies but rather brings good out of the evil we see.

It was when my Karen was born that I discovered that God is communicating with us all the time. It was then that I started noticing what I call the “miracles of grace” that God seems to send at some of our most heart-searing times. Over the years there have been some great ones: The depressed friend intent on suicide who was saved at the last moment by a smile from Karen. The young person who came back to the Church when Marie died. The many people who have volunteered to become bone marrow donors in honor of Noah and to help others like his little brother Liam.

The big miracles of grace also taught me to look for and appreciate the smaller mercies that comforted me and let me know that God is there: The woman who told me that baby Karen had done more good in her short life than most 80 year olds. Visits from Marie’s friends who told me wonderful stories about her that I never knew before. Great friends who seemed to call at exactly the right moment when Noah was so sick.

When I was a little girl, I was often irritated by my mother’s admonitions to “offer it up for the poor souls in purgatory” when I was hurting either physically or emotionally. It took years for me to understand that offering up my pain for such souls or any other good intention for others often acted as a kind of pain reliever and, at the same time, made my pain meaningful in a good way. I also learned that even little acts of kindness performed in memory of a loved one were great forms of honor and gratitude for those lives that are still joined to us in God’s community of love.

Today, I would ask those of you who read this to consider offering up a frustrating situation or performing some small act of kindness in honor of Noah, Karen, Marie and the Sandy Hook victims.

Those children are now in God’s hands. The world is still in ours and we can make it better.

Reprinted from Women for Faith & Family’s *Voices* magazine, Lent-Eastertide 2013. Used with permission.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH

Gospel for March 3, 2013

Luke 13:1-9

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Third Sunday of Lent, Cycle C: a warning to be prepared for the end. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

SOME	GALILEANS	BLOOD
MINGLED	SACRIFICES	THINK
REPENT	PERISH	EIGHTEEN
TOWER	SILOAM	FELL ON THEM
JERUSALEM	PARABLE	A FIG TREE
FRUIT	GARDENER	THREE
YEARS	SOIL	IF NOT

ANOTHER CHANCE

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 J K L W Y E A R S O M E
 E I G H T E E N L E L A
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 U E A N L L P T I U R F
 S E R A M I N G L E D F
 A R A D O O L B C H O C
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 I F N O T I P E R I S H
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‘I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it’

This week we visit the Rametsi family, who live in Lesotho, a tiny country surrounded by South Africa. Although it has a population of only 2 million people, Lesotho has the third-highest HIV prevalence rate in the world. As a result, the number of orphaned children continues to rise and outpace communities’ ability to care for them. Chronic poor harvests and high prices mean most people struggle to feed their families.

Pray

In your prayer this week, consider the people who have cultivated and nurtured you through times of learning, failure or dry periods. Take stock of the gifts that you have been given — the good fruit that comes from your life of faith. These gifts were not meant to stop with you. Really, they are meant for others. As Christians we believe in our responsibility for the well-being of others, especially when their basic human rights are being compromised. Offer these gifts to God as your Lenten sacrifice, and in your prayer, ask that they be nurtured, tended to, graced and returned so that you can bear fruit in the world.

Fast

Fasting is often about giving something up. This week, consider reconfiguring your time to support an educational program in your community. You might give up a

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

MELISSA WHEELER

lunch break to read to children in a literacy program, volunteer at a school, give up some evening media time to tutor a child or adult, or help a recent immigrant who is learning English.

Give

Education is such a basic right, and the earlier it begins, the better a child’s chance for a promising future. Count up the schools that you have attended since you were a child. Did you attend a preschool, a child care or a kindergarten? Have you gone to college or achieved a post-graduate degree? Make a donation to your Rice Bowl for each grade you have attended over your lifetime.

Also, consider visiting the Catholics Confront Global Poverty Action Center to send a message to elected officials on behalf of your brothers and sisters in need.

For CRS Rice Bowl simple meals visit www.crsricebowl.org.

Sports

HOLY CROSS COLLEGE'S JELICIC SIGNS WITH OTTAWA FURY Holy Cross College's men's soccer captain, Niko Jelacic (Sucuraj, Croatia), has continued to garner praise and attention after an exceptional junior season in which he was named a First Team All-Conference member while helping lead the Saints to a school record nine wins and first ever conference tournament berth. Jelacic received invitations to try out for the Ottawa Fury and Michigan Bucks of the Premiere Development League (PDL) — the top-level men's soccer competition in the United States. He decided to take the opportunity to return to Canada, and signed with the Ottawa Fury, where he will report to training camp on May 1.

CYO St. Vincent boys win fifth-grade tournament

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — In junior varsity Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) action, the St. Vincent boys capped off a great season by winning the fifth-grade tournament. In their first game on the road to the championship, the Panthers beat St. John, Fort Wayne. Led by Hunter Burns with eight points, terrific rebounding by Josh Scrogam and tremendous team defense, St. Vincent was able to build an early lead and pull off a 43-18 victory.

In the semifinals, the Panthers were matched up with a very strong St. Joseph, Decatur, team. Sam Pesa was the leading scorer with eight points. Again, team effort and defensive pressure were keys to the win with Howard Steele and Jordan Watercutter providing swarming coverage.

Earning a spot to the championship, the Panthers faced their rivals, St. Charles, on their home court. The two teams struggled to a 1-0 score at the end of the first quarter. Shaking off their nerves, things picked up in the second quarter, and St. Charles held a 13-10 lead at the half. The Cardinals held onto their lead for the majority of the game and with 2:30 left in the game had built their lead to eight. At that point, Pesa made a long-range trey for the Panthers to cut the lead to five. St. Vincent applied their tenacious full court press, creating turnovers, which allowed Griffin Eifert to score six quick points. The Panthers clawed their way to a late game lead and went on to win by a score of 27-19.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

The St. Vincent de Paul CYO basketball team consists of the following: front row, standing, from left, John Smeltzley, Jordan Watercutter, Hunter Burns, Griffin Eifert, Cory Ryan, Conley Fourman, Sam Pesa, Drabecki, Jordan Roy and Cash Reuille; back row, Coach Ryan, Ben Schreck, Noah Wilder, Mason Coffee, Alex Marshall, Josh Scrogam, Jack Miller and Coach Meyer. Jonathan Craw was not available for the photo. The cheerleading squad kneels in front.

Top scorers were Burns with eight, Eifert with six and Pesa with five. St. Charles got six points each from Patrick O'Keefe and Drew Lytle in the loss.

During the season, Coach John Ryan challenged his team to treat practices and games like homework and studying for a final exam.

He told them, "Work hard on your skills at practices and study your opponents during games. Then, at the end of the season will come the big exam to see who worked and studied the hardest to win the championship."

However, for the tournament, Ryan handed the reigns over to Coach Zach Meyer as the final game fell on his Air Guard drill day.

Ryan explained, "Even though we could only fit 16 players on the bench for the tournament, all 31 members, two managers and four coaches helped get us to the championship and all deserve to be called champions."

In the end, Ryan was allowed to leave work early and see his team's hard work pay off.

For the seventh-eighth-grade leagues, three new champions were crowned at the St. Charles Hession Center on Saturday, Feb. 23. In the White League battle, St. Vincent topped St. Charles, 45-29, while St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel beat Queen of Angels, 41-25, for the Blue League title. Finally, it was St. Vincent again in the Gold League with a championship win over St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth, 46-32.

Representing the Fort Wayne side of the diocese, St. Vincent, St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth and Hessen Cassel will go up against the best from South Bend in the annual CYO vs. ICCL showdown on Saturday, March 2. All games will be played at Hessen Cassel this year.

Email Michelle Castleman at mmcastleman@aol.com to see your scores and highlights in *Today's Catholic* next week.

Trevor Carroll repeats as state champion in swimming

BY CHUCK FREEBY

INDIANAPOLIS — Saint Joseph senior Trevor Carroll already knew he had what it took to be a state champion. Saturday, he wanted to prove he was one of the best the area had ever seen.

Carroll repeated as state champion in the 200 freestyle, took second in the 500 free and anchored two medal performances in relays to lead the Indians to a 10th-place team finish at the IHSAA Boys Swimming and Diving championships here at the IU Natatorium.

Carroll missed a state record in the 200 free by just .08 seconds, posting a remarkable time of 1:37.10. He followed by setting a personal record in the 500,

finishing second to Bloomington North's Max Irwin.

"I'm happy with my times," said an elated Carroll afterwards. "I wanted that state record (in the 200), but I'm pretty proud of my time in the 500."

For Carroll, the proudest moment came in sharing the podium with teammates Nicholas Miller, Andre Marin and Anthony Kolbus for their sixth-place finish in the 200 relay and seventh-place result in the 400 relay.

"To get two relay medals in my senior year is one of the highlights of my career," said Carroll, who will leave Saint Joseph as one of the most decorated swimmers in school history.

Marian diver Stephen Rice was the only member of the Knights to place, finishing seventh.

SAINT JOSEPH WRESTLER PLACES SIXTH IN STATE TOURNEY



PROVIDED BY PAUL TINCHER

Ryan Jankowski, a student at Saint Joseph High School in South Bend, earned a sixth-place award in the Indiana State Wrestling Tournament held Feb. 15-16. He was the first Saint Joseph student to earn a sectional title in over a decade. Jankowski was defeated in a fall to Dakota Thacker of Bloomington South in overtime.

FREELANCE WRITERS WANTED

Today's Catholic is expanding its pool of freelance writers who would be able to cover diocesan, parish and school events in the South Bend area. News writing experience necessary. Must be able to turn over stories quickly to meet strict deadlines. Must have email access and able to send copy in Microsoft Word. Knowledge of the Catholic faith is necessary. Please email two published news articles with a letter of interest to editor@diocesefwsb.org.

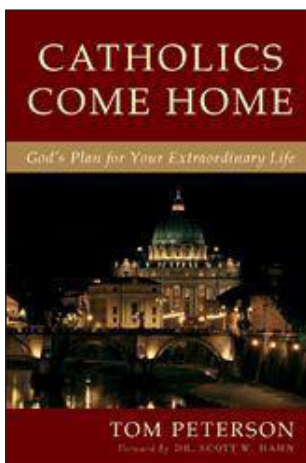
Author, founder of Catholics Come Home talks about new book

A growing number of Catholics are leaving the Church, which spurred Tom Peterson to begin CatholicsComeHome.org aimed to bring people back to the Church and keep those who are practicing. Peterson draws from Scripture, his own struggles with Catholicism and his work with converts to explain the importance of practicing the faith in his new book Catholics Come Home.

Question: What are you trying to accomplish with "Catholics Come Home?"

Answer: I want to inspire readers to go deeper in living and sharing their Christian faith in order to change our world for the better, and find true happiness in our own vocations. Our lives are getting busier and busier and we are losing focus on the most important goal in life ... heaven. Secularism is rampant and families are suffering. "Catholics Come Home" is an invitation to experience the peace that only comes from God, and encourages others to share God's love with those we meet.

Question: This book has the same name as your multimedia apostolate, "Catholics Come Home," a nonprofit organization dedicated to promot-



ing Catholic evangelization. In what ways does the book mirror the mission of the Catholics Come Home organization? In what ways does it go beyond that mission?

Answer: The book promotes the New

Evangelization, but goes beyond by helping to teach and encourage others to share their Catholic Christian faith with those they meet.

Question: Many people may already be familiar with the Catholics Come Home message having watched your television commercials or visited your website. How does your book tie-in with the television campaign?

Answer: Our world is in need of hope and answers. Once we understand Christ's love for us, and God's plan for our lives and everlasting happiness, we must then share this Good News with others. The "Catholics Come Home" book is an exciting and motivational collection of inspiring stories and life-lessons, to

help the reader go deeper in their faith lives.

Question: It seems quite fitting that this book is being published during the Year of Faith, a time deemed by Pope Benedict XVI as an invitation to "an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord." In what ways will this book help readers respond to that call?

Answer: Theodore Roosevelt said, "Nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care." "Catholics Come Home" helps motivate the reader to see the needs of others, and feel much more comfortable and excited about helping others by sharing the faith.

Question: How did you draw from your own personal experience of reversion to the Catholic faith when laying the groundwork for this book? How did rediscovering your faith help lead to the founding of "Catholics Come Home?"

Answer: A person can't give what they don't have. In other words, by growing deeper in my faith, I began to understand why growing closer to God mattered in my life, and how a Christ-centered life was a huge benefit and blessing in my life. Having been there before, I can now share this with others, to encourage them to seek and share Christ with others.

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Tom Peterson is the founder of VirtueMedia.org and catholicscomehome.org. "Catholics Come Home," Image Books, ISBN: 978-0-385-34717-4; eBook 978-0-3853-4718-1

CYO GIRLS' BASKETBALL WINNERS



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ST. CHARLES

St. Charles CYO girls was the Gold League winners.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, NEW HAVEN

St. John the Baptist, New Haven, was the CYO White League winners.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ST. JOSEPH-HESSEN CASSEL

St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel was the CYO Blue League winner.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

WHAT'S HAPPENING carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. Send in your announcement at least two weeks prior to the event. Mail to: Today's Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne 46856; or email: fhogan@diocesefwsb.org. Events that require an admission charge or payment to participate will receive one free listing. For additional listings of that event, please call our advertising sales staff at (260) 456-2824 to purchase space.

FISH FRY

Fish fry
Roanoke — St. Joseph Parish will have a fish fry on Friday, March 15, from 5-7:30 p.m. at the American Legion, 1122 N. Main St. Adults are \$8, children 4-12 are \$4 and children under 4 are free.

St. Charles fish fry benefits athletics
Fort Wayne — St. Charles Parish will have a Dan's fish fry Friday, March 1, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. in the cafeteria — door No. 9. Carry outs available, door No. 8. Tickets for adults are \$8.50; child, 6-12, \$4.50; grilled cheese, \$4, under 5, free. Proceeds benefit the St. Charles Athletics Association.

Fish fry
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 553 will have a fish fry each Friday of Lent from 5-7 p.m. at the Knights' hall, 553 E. Washington St. Tickets are \$9 for adults, \$4 for children under 12 and children under 5 free.

Fish fry
South Bend — Our Lady of Hungary, 735 W. Calvert, will

have a fish fry Friday, March 1, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. in the school gym. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$4.50 for children 6-12 and children under 6 free. Carry out available.

Fish fry
Fort Wayne — St. Vincent Venture Scouts will have fish fries on Fridays, March 1 and 15, from 5-8 p.m. Adult tickets are \$9, children 6-11 \$4 and children under 6 are free. Carry out available.

Holy Name Society Lenten fish fry
New Haven — The Holy Name Society of St. John the Baptist Parish will have a fish fry Friday, March 1, from 4-7 p.m. Adults \$7.50, children 5-12 \$4 and children under 5 free.

Little Flower Men's group to meet
South Bend — The Little Flower Men's breakfast group will host Holy Cross Brother James Kozak to speak on "Male Spirituality." The Saturday, March 2, Mass at 8 a.m. in the chapel will be followed by a buffet breakfast in the parish center at 8:45 a.m. The topic "Male Spirituality," is also the theme of

Brother James' class at Forever Learning on Thursdays beginning March 7 at Little Flower.

Fish fry
Clear Lake — St. Paul's Chapel, 8780 E 700 N, will have a fish fry on Friday, March 1, from 5-7 p.m. Tickets are \$7.50 for ages 12 to adults, \$4 for those 6-11 and children under 5 are free.

MISC. HAPPENINGS

Catholic Business Network Group
Fort Wayne — The Catholic Business Network Group will meet Friday, March 1, beginning with Mass at 7 a.m. in the St. Mother Theodore Guérin Chapel. Mass will be followed in the Cathedral Center by guest speaker Father James Bromwich of the Sons of St. Phillip Neri, who will speak on the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI. Refreshments will be provided.

Winter carnival planned
Yoder — St. Aloysius School, 14607 Bluffton Rd., will have a Winter Carnival Saturday, March 2, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the school gym. Purchase game tickets for 25 cents each or six

REST IN PEACE

Decatur Gerald J. Martin, 91, St. Mary of the Assumption	James Trahin, 68, St. Charles Borromeo	Notre Dame Sister M. Francis Helen Fox, CSC, 87, Our Lady of Loretto
Elkhart Edward Leo Ginter, 92, St. Vincent de Paul	Irene Freistroffer, 91, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception	Percy Reid Staffelbach, 92, St. Joseph Chapel
Fort Wayne Delores A. Hofer, 89, St. Jude	Genevieve Nagel, 92, St. Peter	South Bend Wilma Aitchison, 76, St. Jude
Geraldine M. Keipper, 87, Our Lady of Good Hope	Granger Dorothy H. Smith, 87, St. Pius X	Sophie A. Wiczorek, 95, St. Casimir
Naomi Ruth Harber-Bobilya, 87, St. Jude	Huntington Alfred T. Campbell, 93, Ss. Peter and Paul	Joseph Kambol, 76, Corpus Christi
James R. Morrow, 44, St. John the Baptist	Kendallville Joseph Yuska, 90, Immaculate Conception	Betty Thielka Spehar, 86, St. Patrick
Richard A. Sordelet, 78, St. Vincent de Paul	Mishawaka Daniel Anthony Thornton, 71, St. Bavo	Emercine A. Shubert, 85, Holy Family
Diana Sullivan, 69, St. Mary	Anthony P. Schnapp, 88, Queen of Peace	Stanley H. Zablocki, 89, St. Anthony de Padua
Dorothy M. Anderson, 95, St. Peter	New Haven Rosalie T. Mathieson, 81, St. Louis Besancon	Joan A. Zwierzynski, 76, St. John the Baptist
Robert A. Keitzer Jr., 71, St. Joseph		Warsaw Bernice M. Erow, 86, Sacred Heart
Dick E. Lehman, 88, St. Jude		

for \$1. Full concessions, Moon Walk, and door prizes for adults and children.

Chastity speaker Jason Evert to speak
South Bend and Fort Wayne — Jason Evert will speak on Wednesday, March 6, at 7 p.m. at Holy Cross College in the Pfeil Center and Thursday, March 7, at 7 p.m. at the University of Saint Francis in the North Auditorium. Jason Evert presents the truth and power of the gift of human sexuality in an honest and direct way, challenging young people to maintain their sexual purity or begin again if they've made mistakes in the past. The event is free. Co-sponsored by the Office of Family Life and the Office of Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry. For information visit www.diocesefwsb.org/YM or call (260) 422-4611.

Bake sale for Easter
South Bend — The St. Adalbert Sisters' Auxiliary Bake Sale will be Saturday, March 23, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Heritage Center. Lamb Cakes will be available on a \$15 prepaid, pre-order basis only with a deadline of Friday, March 15. Sweet-sour cabbage, Polish noodles, homemade Pierogi and baked goods for Easter will be available. Lunch will be served. Call (574) 288-5708, ext. 203 for information.

MoonTree Studios plans opening
Donaldson — MoonTree Studios will hold an opening reception for "Nature: Amplified" on Saturday, March 2, from 1-3 p.m. The work of Laurie Balla, a watercolor artist who specializes in larger-than-life flower studies, will be featured. The show will be on display through April 14.

TV MASS SCHEDULE FOR MARCH

2013	Feast Day	Fort Wayne 10:30 a.m. WFFT-TV, Ch. 55	South Bend 10:30 a.m. WNDU-TV, Ch. 16
March 3	Third Sunday of Lent	TBA	Msgr. Michael Heintz St. Matthew Cathedral South Bend
March 10	Fourth Sunday of Lent	Father Tom Shoemaker St. Jude Fort Wayne	Father Dave Ruppert St. Anthony de Padua South Bend
March 17	Fifth Sunday of Lent	Father Andrew Budzinski St. Vincent DePaul Fort Wayne	Father William Schooler St. Pius X Granger
March 24	Palm Sunday	Msgr. Owen Champion Our Sunday Visitor Huntington	Father Steve Lacrois, CSC Notre Dame
March 31	Easter Sunday	TBA	Father James Kendzierski, OFM St. Francis Friary Mishawaka

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PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

Saint Joseph Parish, a vibrant, Catholic, faith community of nearly 900 families and a large K-8 grade school in South Bend, seeks a full-time **Director for the newly established Saint Joseph Preschool**. This position advances the mission of the parish by providing a clear vision and strong leadership for the new preschool program that will serve 3- and 4-year old children. Saint Joseph Preschool will open in August 2013, and the Director will be responsible for the initial set-up and ongoing administration of this new preschool program.

Qualified applicants will be practicing Catholics with strong leadership skills and experience as an early childhood teacher or early childhood center director. Applicants must possess a bachelor's degree and have direct experience with or a strong understanding of early childhood programs and curricula. The successful candidate will also possess strong organizational skills, communicate clearly with internal and external stakeholders, work well independently in order to meet important deadlines, have high attention to detail, and will be able to lead and supervise others. Salary is commensurate with education and experience.



Visit www.stjoeparish.com for a complete position description.

Qualified candidates should send a cover letter and résumé with references to Saint Joseph Parish, 226 N. Hill Street, South Bend, IN 46617.

Questions may be directed to Fr. John DeRiso, C.S.C., Pastor, at 574-234-3134, ext. 20 or jderiso@stjoeparish.com



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Pope Benedict has made 24 trips outside Italy during pontificate

BY CAROL ZIMMERMANN

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Although traveling the globe was a hallmark of Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, who when elected was not expected to do too much traveling, logged a lot of miles during his own pontificate.

The pope, who announced his resignation Feb. 11, made 24 trips to six continents outside Italy in his eight years as pope. Pope John Paul made 104 trips over a 27-year span.

Pastoral visits to Catholics worldwide, a key aspect of the

pope's role as shepherd of the Church, were taxing. According to the pope's brother, Msgr. Georg Ratzinger, the pope's doctors had advised him to discontinue transatlantic trips.

"His age is weighing on him," Msgr. Ratzinger told The Associated Press Feb. 11. "At this age, my brother wants more rest." Pope Benedict will turn 86 in April.

In announcing his resignation, the pope said: "After having repeatedly examined my conscience before God, I have come to the certainty that my strengths, due to an advanced age, are no longer suited to an adequate exer-



CNS PHOTO/TONY GENTILE, REUTERS

Pope Benedict XVI embraces a group of children during his visit to a Franciscan-run drug rehabilitation center in Guaratingueta, Brazil, May 12, 2007. It was the first of two trips outside Italy the pope made in 2007. In September he visited Austria, celebrating Mass at the Shrine of Our Lady of Marizell.

At left, Pope Benedict XVI is shown at his last public liturgy — Ash Wednesday Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Feb. 13.



cise of the Petrine ministry."

In October 2011, Pope Benedict began riding a mobile platform in liturgical processions. At the time, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, said it was "solely to lighten the burden" of processions, although he acknowledged the pope had been experiencing the kind of joint pain normal for a man his age.

A few months later, the pope began occasionally using a cane.

Father Lombardi told reporters Feb. 12 that the pope had a pacemaker put in several years before he became pope and went to a private health clinic in Rome about

three months ago for a routine procedure to have the pacemaker's batteries changed.

The pope's last trip outside Italy was to Lebanon last September, visiting the region during a time of heightened tension with a civil war under way in neighboring Syria and violent protests taking place in several Muslim countries. Last year, he also visited Mexico and Cuba. In Mexico, he addressed a crowd of more than 600,000 at an outdoor Mass.

This year, his only scheduled trip was to Brazil in July for World Youth Day. During his pontificate, he presided over three World Youth Day gatherings, in Germany in 2005, in Australia in 2008, and in Spain in 2011.

In 2011, he also visited Croatia, Germany and Benin. The previous year he visited Malta, Portugal, Cyprus, England, Scotland and Spain. In 2009, he visited Jordan, Israel, the Palestinian territories as well as Cameroon and Angola.

In 2008, the pope traveled to the United States, visiting Catholics in Washington and New York City. He presided at World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia, and also visited France, where he spoke in Paris and Lourdes.

In 2007, Pope Benedict traveled to Brazil and Austria. The previous year he visited Poland, Spain, Germany and Turkey.

During the first year of his pontificate, he visited his home country of Germany for World Youth Day in Cologne.

Contributing to this report was Cindy Wooden in Rome.

The Light is ON for You.

Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation



This Lent, every Catholic parish in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will have confessions available on **Wednesday, March 6, from 6-8 p.m.**

If you have been reluctant to come to the sacrament or have been away for some time this is a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with Christ and His Church.

Visit www.todayscatholicnews.org

LIGHT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

helpful "how-to" guidance.

They are encouraged to invite their family and friends who have been away from the sacrament to take part.

"Imagine the sense of welcome and hope they would experience if they walked into a church filled with people praying and meditating in silence in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament," one bulletin promotion announcement said.

Parishes across the diocese also offer Confession on a weekly basis. St. Gaspar del Bufalo in Rome City offers the sacrament after Masses, on Saturdays from 3:30 to 4 p.m. and by appointment. In addition to "The Light Is On For You" on March 6, the parish, like many others, will offer a Reconciliation Service on March 12 at 6:30 p.m. with several priests available. Many of the parishes provided their Lenten and weekly Confession schedules

in the Feb. 10 issue of *Today's Catholic*. Confession schedules for parishes are also available online at www.todayscatholicnews.org.

Benedictine Father Bernard Ramenaden, pastor of St. Gaspar del Bufalo, in the church bulletin stated: "We welcome this time as a time to seek conversion and reconciliation. It is good for us to know that Jesus before us has successfully faced the illusions and the misleading attractions of a world estranged from God."

For the deaf in the community, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, St. Matthew Cathedral, St. Jude, Fort Wayne, St. John the Evangelist, Goshen, Our Lady of Hungary, South Bend and Ss Peter and Paul, Huntington.

The March 6 date will be a "concerted diocesan effort to highlight the sacrament of Penance," Bishop Rhoades said. "It is not meant to replace Penance services or other regularly scheduled Confession times."