



TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Indiana bishops release pastoral addressing poverty in Indiana

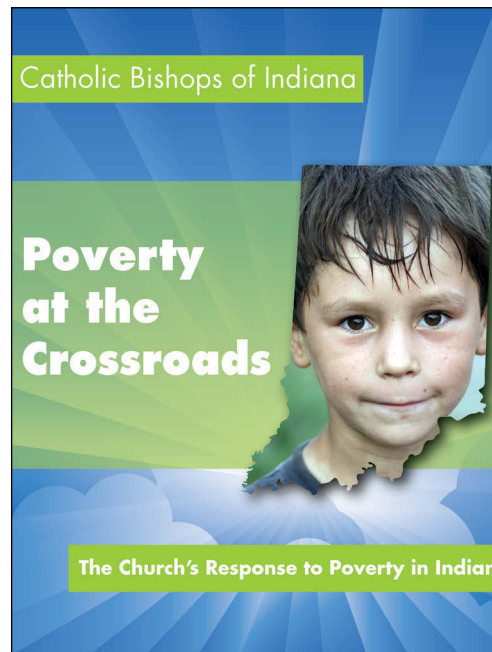
BY TIM JOHNSON

FORT WAYNE — The bishops of the Indiana dioceses and archdiocese have released a pastoral statement examining the issues of poverty in the Hoosier State. Titled “Poverty at the Crossroads: The Church’s Response to Poverty in Indiana,” the pastoral is published in this week’s issue of *Today’s Catholic*, pages 7-10.

The bishops write in the document: “We want to call attention to the poverty that exists right here within the state that calls itself the ‘Crossroads of America.’ We hope to help all of us better understand the many challenges facing our brothers and sisters here in Indiana and consider with you how our Church should respond.”

The pastoral uses the formula, “See, Judge, Act,” to invite and challenge everyone, “beginning with ourselves, to be more attentive to the poor in our communities, to identify the systemic issues that keep individuals and families poor, and to take concrete steps to reduce the long-term impact of poverty in our state, even as we reach out and help those who, here and now, suffer from its devastating effects,” the pastoral states.

Catholics in the five dioceses of Indiana



remain committed to serving those who are in immediate need through charitable agencies, parishes, schools and health care organizations.

The statement notes, “The generosity of our

people is extraordinary and evident through thousands of hours of loving service every week across the length and breadth of our state. As bishops, we recognize the goodness of diverse people and institutions throughout Indiana, and we thank God for the love and compassion shown to so many of our brothers and sisters in their time of need.”

“We believe it is essential that we make a prayerful, honest assessment of how we arrived at where we are today,” the pastoral adds. “If we truly are going to identify the causes and manifestations of poverty and create a pathway for positive, long-term, and sustainable change, we must strengthen the foundations upon which individuals and families build economic stability and realize their hopes for the future.”

All priests, parish leaders, diocesan departments, Catholic schools and health care will receive an electronic version of the pastoral for careful reflection and study by not just Catholics but all Hoosiers. The pastoral is available in English as well as Spanish.

“We do not advocate an empty academic exercise but rather a necessary step towards making decisions that will lead to substantive

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Court orders review of Notre Dame’s case on contraceptive mandate

BY PATRICIA ZAPOR

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Supreme Court March 9 ordered the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to reconsider its previous ruling and review — in light of the June Hobby Lobby decision — whether the University of Notre Dame must pay for coverage of contraceptives in employee and student health insurance plans.

The Supreme Court last June 30 said Hobby Lobby, a chain of arts and crafts stores, and Conestoga Wood Specialties, which also sued, need not comply with a federal mandate to include a full range of contraceptives in employee health insurance.

The Affordable Care Act includes provisions requiring employee health insurance to cover contraceptives. While there are exemptions for certain types of religious institutions, the circumstances are limited as to which employers may claim a religious exemption. The Hobby Lobby case dealt strictly with certain types of for-profit employers.

In that case, the court said the federal government could have chosen ways to provide uniform access to contraceptives that were less of an infringement on the

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CNS PHOTO/JONATHAN ERNST, REUTERS

Demonstrators gather outside the U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington March 4 as the justices inside hear oral arguments in a legal challenge to the federal Affordable Care Act. The court agreed to take a case challenging the federal subsidies that help people in 34 states pay for mandated health care coverage.

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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The patron saint of the Catholic Church



IN TRUTH
AND
CHARITY

BY BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

On Thursday, March 19th, we celebrate the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Saint Ambrose wrote that, next to Mary, Saint Joseph was the most eminent among the saints and destined by God to be the patron of all Christians. Blessed Pope Pius IX, at a very difficult time in the Church's history, placed the universal Church under his patronage. In 1870, he declared Saint Joseph the patron of the Catholic Church.

Through the centuries, the Church has honored Saint Joseph. It is an honor that reflects the honor given to him by God: the honor of being the husband of Mary and the earthly father of Jesus, the honor of being the protector and guardian of the Holy Family. Saint Joseph cared for Jesus with great love and was united to Mary in the most intimate and chaste marriage.

I think that the greatness of Saint Joseph is discovered in his faith. We see his marvelous faith in the Gospel when he received the message of the angel in a dream, telling him to take Mary into his home. The angel revealed to him that it was through the Holy Spirit that the child had been conceived in Mary. The Gospel tells us that when Joseph awoke, "he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home." Joseph's obedience of faith was like Mary's at the Annunciation. Without hesitation or objection, Joseph did as the angel commanded him.

We see Joseph's obedience of faith later when the angel ordered him to take Mary and the child Jesus and to flee into Egypt. He willingly obeyed, trusting completely in God. Throughout his life, Saint Joseph carried out God's will faithfully. He carried out his duties with perfect fidelity to God's will. He is an appropriate patron for all of us and for the Church, not only because of his loving care of the Holy Family, but also because of his example of faith. Like Mary, he heard the word of God and responded to it in faith. He served the Lord faithfully and did whatever God asked of him. Pope Saint John Paul II wrote that "already at the beginning of redemption, after Mary, we find the model of obedience made incarnate in Saint Joseph, the man known for having faithfully carried out God's commands."

The Gospel uses the adjective "just" or "righteous" to describe Saint Joseph. This word means that Joseph was a man of moral virtue who was obedient to the law. Even more, it describes his attitude of complete openness to the will of God. He allowed himself to be guided by the Lord. He answered God's call and fulfilled his mission responsibly and attentively. With great love and care, he watched over Jesus and Mary. He fulfilled his vocation as a faithful guardian of the Holy Family.



WIKIMEDIA

Anton Raphael Mengs' painting of "The Dream of St. Joseph" is shown in this painting, circa 1773.

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, celebrated the Mass beginning his ministry as Bishop of Rome on March 19, 2013, the Solemnity of Saint Joseph. At that Mass, he reflected on the mission God entrusted to Joseph: to be the protector of the Holy Father and the protector of the Church. He spoke about how Saint Joseph exercised this mission with humility and fidelity. Saint Joseph responded to God's call readily and willingly. He teaches us to do the same. Pope Francis reflected on his and our call to be protectors, like Joseph, of Jesus, of creation, of every human person (especially the poor), and of ourselves.

Last year, on Saint Joseph's Day, Pope Francis focused on Saint Joseph as a model for parents, especially fathers, and educators. Saint Joseph's Day is appropriately Father's Day in Italy. Pope Francis reflected on how Saint Joseph watched over Jesus' human development, his growth, as Saint Luke tells us, "in wisdom, age, and grace" (2:52). The Holy Father encouraged fathers to be close to their children, as Saint Joseph was close to Jesus, to be their guardians and teachers in age, wisdom, and grace.

Together with Mary, Joseph raised Jesus. Joseph was a great example to Jesus. He taught Him the wisdom that is nourished by the Word of God. Pope Francis says: "We could ponder how Joseph formed

the little Jesus to listen to the Sacred Scriptures, above all by accompanying him on Saturday to the synagogue in Nazareth." This is the vocation of every father in the formation and education of his children: to help them to listen to God's word, to bring them to Sunday Mass, to pray with and for them, to help them to grow in the grace of God.

Saint Joseph also taught Jesus in his work. Though we have little information in the Gospels about the hidden years of Jesus in Nazareth, we can imagine how Joseph instructed Jesus in his trade of carpentry. He was a real dad who spent time with his son, was close to him, a guardian of his growth in age, wisdom, and grace.

Saint Joseph is a great model for all fathers and for all the faithful. He always persevered in his faith in God. He was a just man and very responsible in living out his vocation. He was a protector and guardian. Saint Joseph continues with this mission from heaven. As he protected and guarded Jesus, he now protects and guards Christ's Mystical Body, the Church. I encourage your devotion to Saint Joseph.

As we celebrate Saint Joseph's Day on March 19th, let us learn from this great and humble saint. May he intercede for all fathers and for the whole Church! Saint Joseph, pray for us!

Father Hesburgh remembered by the Notre Dame community

BY CHRISTOPHER LUSHIS

NOTRE DAME — “For all the momentous events in which he played a role, and all the honors he received, Father Ted Hesburgh always said the most important day of his life was when he was ordained a priest.” Beginning with these words of admiration and praise, Holy Cross Father John I. Jenkins, president of the University of Notre Dame, united his voice with countless others from the Notre Dame family to express gratitude and support for the tremendous impact Father Hesburgh had on the Church and the world throughout his life.

Bishop John F. Noll of Fort Wayne ordained Father Hesburgh a priest with the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1943 at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. On Wednesday, March 4, the 15th president of the University of Notre Dame was laid to rest after a funeral Mass held in the same basilica, celebrated by Holy Cross Father Thomas J. O’Hara, the provincial superior of the congregation, and Father Jenkins as homilist.

The evening prior, a wake service was held for family and close friends of Father Ted, presided by President Emeritus Holy Cross Father Edward Malloy. He shared that in their last conversation, “Father Ted had been thinking about eternity, and what kept coming to mind was the phrase ‘no eye has seen nor has ear heard what God has in store for those who love Him.’”

Father Malloy also touched upon his spiritual life, revealing, “Father Ted celebrated Mass almost every day during his 71 years as a priest, except for one or two times when it was almost impossible.

His role as a pastor was evidenced following the wake, as public visitation was available throughout the night until 10 a.m. Wednesday morning. During this time, over 12,000 visitors filed into the basilica to pay final respects to the man who had been most responsible for shaping the mission and legacy of the university throughout the 20th century.

Father John Jenkins remarked on just how far Father Hesburgh’s reach had extended. “The arc of Father Ted’s life extended through the Great Depression, World War II, the post-war years, the Civil Rights movement, the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, the Vietnam War and unrest of the 1960s, the Cold War and Watergate. He was shaped by them all and helped shape many.”

He further emphasized that even with the influence and accolades Father Hesburgh accrued, his final desires were to be remembered in humility. He remarked, “as a religious who vowed poverty and obedience, Father Ted lived in a small, austere room, shared meals and common prayer with the Holy Cross community, and will be soon



CNS PHOTO/BARBARA JOHNSTON, UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Prelates pray near a large portrait of Holy Cross Father Theodore Hesburgh, former president of the University of Notre Dame, during his funeral Mass March 4 at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on the university’s campus. Father Hesburgh died Feb. 26 at age 97 in the Holy Cross House adjacent to Notre Dame.



CNS PHOTO/MATT CASHORE, UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Mourners surround the casket of Holy Cross Father Theodore Hesburgh during his burial service March 4 at Holy Cross Community Cemetery on the campus of the University of Notre Dame.

laid to rest under a simple cross, undistinguished from the graves of his Holy Cross brothers. Father Ted’s wish was that his funeral and burial would be as far as possible like other Holy Cross services.”

However, with a procession that included concelebrants Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick and Cardinal Roger M. Mahoney, Archbishop Blase J. Cupich and Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop Daniel R. Jenky, Bishop Denis J. Madden and Bishop Raymond E. Goedert, and over 100 priests and seminarians from the Congregation of Holy Cross, Father Hesburgh was bid farewell with a memorial few others have been privileged to receive.

Following Mass, countless students lined the pathway from the basilica to the cemetery, watching the procession flow by as they stood in silent representation for the innumerable lives Father Hesburgh touched throughout his ministry as a priest and educator.

Later Wednesday evening, a special tribute was held in the Joyce Center to commemorate the life and work of Father Hesburgh. Noted speakers included former President Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosalynn, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, for-

mer Notre Dame football coach Lou Holtz, Indiana Governor Mike Pence, Indiana Senator Joe Donnelly, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington, D.C., Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, as well as other friends and alumni who recounted heartfelt personal stories from their experiences with Father Hesburgh.

Holy Cross Father Paul Doyle, who cared for many of Father Hesburgh’s needs towards the end of his life, also shared three prayers Father Hesburgh relied on often when seeking guidance for upholding the mission of the university, specifically to continue working for justice, honoring Our Lady and invoking the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Father Hesburgh’s memory lives on in the hearts and minds of those who knew and were touched by him. He continues to be honored through a spiritual tribute at the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes on campus, where students have arranged candles to say simply, “TED.”

These events and memorials demonstrate a living witness of the final words from Father Malloy’s speech Tuesday evening. “Father Ted, you have been our pastor here at Notre Dame, as you have for the country and the world. Now, go to God, and may you rest in peace.”



PUBLIC SCHEDULE OF BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

- Sunday, March 15, 10:30 a.m. — Mass at St. Patrick Church, Walkerton
- Wednesday, March 18, 10:30 a.m. — Lenten Day of Recollection for Priests, Saint Martin de Porres Parish, Syracuse
- Wednesday, March 18 — Meeting of Diocesan Review Board, Holiday Inn, Warsaw
- Thursday, March 19, 8:30 a.m. — Meeting of Board of Directors of Our Sunday Visitor, Archbishop Noll Catholic Center, Fort Wayne
- Thursday, March 19, 6 p.m. — Mass at St. Joseph Church, Bluffton
- Friday, March 20, 10:30 a.m. — Hispanic Apostolate Meeting, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Warsaw
- Saturday, March 21, 7:30 a.m. — Mass for Diaconate Candidates, Ancilla Domini Chapel, Donaldson

Lenten Penance Services

- St. Michael the Archangel, 1098 County Road 39, Waterloo, March 15 at 5 p.m.
- Mary of the Assumption, 414 Madison St., Decatur, March 16 at 7 p.m.
- Queen of Angels, 1500 W. State Blvd., Fort Wayne, March 18 at 7 p.m.
- St. Anthony de Padua, 2114 E. Jefferson Blvd., South Bend, March 18 at 7 p.m.

Father Pius Ilechukwu conferred title of monsignor

BY TIM JOHNSON

BLUFFTON — Father Pius Ilechukwu, pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Bluffton, has recently been conferred the title of Very Rev. Monsignor by Pope Francis. The announcement was made by Bishop Hilary Paul Odili Okeke, the bishop of Nnewi Diocese, Nigeria, Msgr. Ilechukwu’s home.

The document for the conferment of Papal Chaplain (Chaplain of His Holiness) with the title of Very Rev. Monsignor was signed on Dec. 16, 2014. The announcement was made on Feb. 10 at the celebration of the 13th anniversary of the canonical erection of the Catholic Diocese of Nnewi and the 13th anniversary of the episcopal ordination and installation of Bishop Hilary Paul Odili Okeke, who is the first bishop of Nnewi Diocese.

“I feel happy, because it is an honor,” Msgr. Ilechukwu told *Today’s Catholic*. “It is a sign that the person is doing well. And more importantly, it is a call to be, ‘more like Christ,’ every day. It is a call to harder work in all



MSGR. PIUS ILECHUKWU

priestly pastoral ministry.” Bishop Okeke told *Today’s Catholic*, “Very Rev. Monsignor Pius N. Ilechukwu, has been a zealous and diligent

pastor. He has served the Church with devotion and commitment wherever he has been and is. He was an episcopal vicar in Nnewi Diocese before he travelled to the USA to help in pastoral ministry.”

The ceremony for the formal conferment of the papal honor is scheduled for May 16.

A joyful Msgr. Ilechukwu in gratitude noted, “Thanks to God for His blessings, love, guidance protection, mercy, etc. Thanks to His Holiness, Pope Francis. Thanks to my home bishop, Most Rev. Hilary Paul Odili Okeke. Thanks to my bishop here in the U.S., Most Rev. Kevin C. Rhoades. Thanks to my benefactors and benefactresses. Thanks to all my parishioners and staff present and past. Thanks to all my friends. God bless you all.”

Diocesan Women’s Retreat

Saturday, March 21 - 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
 St. Felix Catholic Center, Huntington
 Cost: \$20 (includes simple lunch and dinner)
www.diocesefwsb.org/adult-faith-formation

POVERTY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

change,” the bishops say.

The bishops' pastoral offers some observations on family life, employment, education and health care.

After reading the pastoral, and reflection, Catholic entities or individuals are encouraged to complete a survey of questions that can be accessed from the diocesan website, diocesefwsb.org.

Survey responses will be forwarded to the proper diocese by either choosing the diocese in which one lives or by filling in one's zip code. The survey will close May 1 and the results forwarded to the dioceses across the state.

The bishops say, “We invite and challenge everyone, beginning with ourselves, to be more attentive to the poor in our communities, to identify the systemic issues that keep individuals and families poor, and to take concrete steps to reduce the long-term impact of poverty in our state, even as we reach out and help those who, here and now, suffer from its devastating effects.”

“We hope that every Catholic community will consider this letter, and the five dioceses of Indiana intend to collect this reflection and continue the conversation,” the bishops say.

Visit www.ReducePovertyIN.org to learn more about the Catholic Church's efforts in Indiana to reduce poverty.

Cardinal Egan, retired archbishop of New York, dies at age 82

NEW YORK (CNS) — Cardinal Edward M. Egan, who retired as archbishop of New York in 2009, died March 5. The cause of death was cardiac arrest. He was 82.

After collapsing at his residence that afternoon, he was taken to NYU Langone Medical Center, where doctors pronounced him dead at 2:20 p.m.

A funeral Mass for Cardinal Egan was celebrated the afternoon of March 10 at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Visitation was scheduled for March 9 and early March 10.

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York told Catholics of the archdiocese he was saddened to tell them “our beloved” Cardinal Egan “has gone home to the Lord.”

“Join me, please, in thanking God for his life, especially his generous and faithful priesthood. Pray as well that the powerful mercy of Jesus, in which our cardinal had such trust, has ushered him into heaven,” said Cardinal Dolan, who succeeded Cardinal Egan.

“My sympathy to his natural family, who will grieve for their uncle, and to you, his spiritual family here in the Archdiocese of New York,” he added.

Cardinal Dolan in his statement said that Cardinal Egan “had a peaceful death, passing away right after lunch today, with the prayers and sacraments of his loyal priest secretary, Father Douglas Crawford, in his residence at the Chapel of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”



CNS PHOTO/MIKE SEGAR, REUTERS

Cardinal Edward M. Egan is seen outside St. Patrick's Cathedral following his installation Mass in 2000. The cardinal, who retired as New York's archbishop in 2009, died March 5 of cardiac arrest at a New York hospital. He was 82.

A former auxiliary bishop of New York, then-Bishop Egan was named to head the Diocese of Bridgeport in 1988 and was appointed as archbishop of New York in 2000. He was named a cardinal in 2001.

During his tenure as head of the New York Archdiocese, Cardinal Egan also had to tackle a budget shortfall and changing demographics. A three-year process led to the New York parish realignment decisions and involved a lot of listening and learning, the cardinal said at the time. “The good news is that the process works,” he said. “Every decision was the result of an in-depth study of the needs of the faithful here in the Archdiocese of New York.”

In retirement, Cardinal Egan assisted in the works of the New York Archdiocese. For the Vatican, he served on the Council of Cardinals for the Study of the Organizational and Economic Problems of the Holy See for five years and participated in the 2005 conclave that elected Pope Benedict XVI.

With his death, the College of Cardinals now has 226 members, 125 of whom are under 80 and therefore eligible to vote in a conclave to elect a new pope.

At the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Cardinal Egan was a current member of the Committee on Migration and a consultant to the Committee on Pro-Life Activities, as well as a member of the board of bishops for the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl said he and Cardinal Egan had been friends since 1963. He described Cardinal Egan as “a gifted

scholar of canon law” who also “conveyed a deep pastoral concern for and dedication to the faithful he served.”

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio said in a statement that Cardinal Egan “spread love and knowledge, and brought comfort to countless New Yorkers and others across the country and the world who sought his guidance and counsel — especially in the aftermath of 9/11.”

After the terrorist attacks brought down the twin towers of the World Trade Center, then-Mayor Rudolph Giuliani called on the cardinal for his spiritual help. Cardinal Egan anointed the dead and distributed rosaries to workers. He also celebrated many funeral Masses for those who perished in the attacks or died trying to help people amid the rubble.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo also recalled the cardinal's “thoughtful and compassionate stewardship” in helping New Yorkers “grieve and recover” following the events 9/11.

He said Cardinal Egan always “encouraged others to devote themselves to the greater good.”

“Cardinal Egan had a powerful and positive impact on our state and the world that will continue to be felt for years to come,” he said in a statement.

Richard E. Barnes, executive director of the New York State Catholic Conference, said Cardinal Egan's contributions to the conference's work “cannot be overstated.”

“He was a tireless defender of the poor and vulnerable, the unborn, the sick and the elderly,” Barnes said. “He had a particular devotion to Catholic education, calling it the Church's most important charitable ministry, and he raised untold mil-

lions to ensure its viability.”

Cardinal Egan also was a friend of the Jewish people in New York and during his earlier years in Chicago; the cities are home to two of the largest Jewish communities outside of Israel.

The archbishop of New York especially “plays a critical role in advancing Catholic-Jewish relations and Cardinal Egan is remembered as a friend who humbly built upon his Jewish relationships and lived out with the Jewish people the ‘Nostra Aetate’ ideal of the oneness of the community of all peoples,” said Rabbi Noam Marans, the American Jewish Committee's director of interreligious and intergroup relations.

“Nostra Aetate” is the Second Vatican Council's 1965 Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions.

Edward Michael Egan, the son of Thomas J. and Genevieve Costello Egan, was born April 2, 1932, in Oak Park, Illinois.

He earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois; a licentiate in theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome; and a doctorate summa cum laude in canon law, also from the Gregorian.

He also was trained as a concert pianist, and in addition to English and Latin, he spoke French, Italian and Spanish.

He was ordained a priest of the Chicago Archdiocese Dec. 15, 1957, at the North American College, in a ceremony that also included J. Francis Stafford, another future cardinal. After further studies in Rome, he returned to Chicago in 1958 to serve as parochial vicar of Holy Name Cathedral Parish, assistant chancellor and secretary to Cardinal Albert G. Meyer.

Back in Rome for doctoral studies from 1960 to 1964, he also served as assistant vice rector of the North American College. Again in Chicago from 1965 to 1972, he was secretary to Cardinal John P. Cody, archdiocesan vice chancellor and co-chancellor for ecumenism and social relations.

In the 1970s, he was an auditor of the Roman Rota, and also taught canon law at the Gregorian. Among other positions he held, he was a consultant to the Vatican Congregation for Clergy and was one of six canonists who reviewed the new Code of Canon Law with St. John Paul II before it was promulgated in 1983.

Appointed an auxiliary bishop in New York April 1, 1985, he was transferred to Bridgeport Nov. 5, 1988, and named archbishop of New York May 11, 2000. He retired in May 2009 at age 77; canon law requires bishops to turn their resignation into the pope at age 75.

Cardinal Egan was the first head of the New York Archdiocese to retire from the post. The three bishops and eight archbishops who preceded him all died in office.



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Newborn incubator bill passes House, headed to Senate

STATEHOUSE — A rise in abandoned infants in Indiana prompted one lawmaker to take action. Rep. Casey Cox, R-Fort Wayne, authored a bill to expand Indiana's safe haven law to provide a monitored, baby drop-box for parents in crisis to safely give-up their child without fear of punishment, or face-to-face interaction. The Indiana Catholic Conference supports the legislation.

The legislation, House Bill 1016, would authorize the state to approve qualifying service providers to install and operate a newborn safety incubator, which would be monitored for immediate response once a baby was dropped-off.

Cox, who presented his bill to the House Public Health panel, Feb. 19, said that the goal of the legislation is to "reduce infant mortality" in the state, saying this type of infant mortality is "completely avoidable." According to the Ambulance Medical Technician (AMT) Children of Hope Foundation, nationwide there is an estimated 200 abandoned newborns each year that are abandoned and die before someone finds them. He said that the actual number is estimated to be about three times higher due to the babies that die, but are never found.

Cox explained that Indiana created safe haven laws in the 1990s in response to an increase in abandoned babies that allowed parents to relinquish parental rights of a child in certain circumstances. Cox said that all 50 states have some version of the safe haven law. Cox said that as long as there are no signs of abuse, Indiana's safe haven law allows legal anonymity, but not full anonymity. Current law requires an in-person, face-to-face interaction between parents, a police

officer, firefighter or hospital personnel in order to gain legal immunity protection. "The face-to-face interaction is debilitating to the purpose of the safe haven law," said Cox. "Can we further the policy? Can we make the existing safe haven law better by providing a greater amount of anonymity? I think we can."

Cox said this concept of baby incubators dates back to the Middle Ages. In 1198, in response to numerous abandonments and drowning of babies in the Tiber River, Pope Innocent III directed certain monasteries to begin accepting abandoned infants anonymously through walls or windows. Troubled mothers could place their child in a cylinder, commonly known as a foundling wheel, which when turned around would deliver the baby from the outside to the inside of the monastery. The mother would ring a bell alerting the monastery that a baby had been put into their care.

Cox said that this concept, updated to modern day standards, continues. The external-internal incubators, today, also commonly referred to as "baby hatches," are often built

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

BRIGID CURTIS AYER

in police stations or hospitals. According to Cox, they are in operation all over the world and provide full-anonymity for troubled parents wishing to relinquish their baby.

"There are numerous examples in Europe and Canada," said Cox. "Germany has 100 of these units in operation," he said, "and Pakistan has 300."

Other countries currently using the incubator process include Switzerland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Italy and Vatican City. The external-internal infant incubators are typically temperature and climate-controlled, and emit a silent alarm notifying first responders that a baby has been placed dropped-off.

Monica Kelsey, a firefighter in Fort Wayne told the panel that her mother had abandoned

her as an infant. "The problem with the safe haven law now is these girls have to walk into a facility and hand-over their baby," said Kelsey. "They have gone nine months without telling anyone they were pregnant and they are in crisis mode. They don't want to be seen and this is the only alternative that we have to keep these children safe."

According to Kelsey, 13 babies have been relinquished in Indiana under the safe haven law. Thirty-three have been abandoned. Thirteen of the 33 were found deceased. "We have a problem," said Kelsey.

Sue Swayze, representing Indiana Right to Life, said, "We stand in support of the bill. We think it's visionary. It helps a desperate mother with a place to put her baby."

Indianapolis resident Linda Znachka, founder of He Knows Your Name ministry, also testified in support of the bill. Znachka said she formed her

ministry in 2009 when a baby was found deceased in a downtown Indianapolis dumpster. After calling the coroner's office, Znachka learned that the baby would be buried in a mass grave. Znachko said she was "appalled" that in the 21st century there would be such disregard for a child's dignity. This set Znachko on a five-year mission seeking to bring awareness and dignity to death for babies. Znachko legally adopts abandoned babies who have died, gives them a name and a proper burial.

House Bill 1016 passed the House Feb. 24, 94-0, and has been assigned to the Senate Public Health and Provider Services Committee. The bill is expected to receive a hearing by the Senate panel before the end of March.

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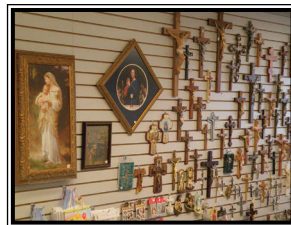
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St. Jude Stations of Service Lenten project puts corporal works of mercy in motion

BY VINCE LABARBERA

FORT WAYNE — The Social Action Committee at St. Jude Church, Fort Wayne, planned a series of activities during the six weeks of Lent to raise awareness of as well as implement the corporal works of mercy.

"This represents the culmination of our attempt over the past several years to highlight a corporal work per year," said Sheila McGarry, president of the committee for more than 20 years. "We have successfully highlighted all of them," she added.

This year a different opportunity for service in the community with other parishioners is being offered every week during Lent, McGarry continued. The first event or "Station of Service" was held Feb. 20-21 and satisfied the first two corporal works of mercy: Feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty.

With a small percentage of money from the parish tithe fund, the project participants purchased food and supplies needed to make 900 sack lunches that were prepared in the church basement the evening of Feb. 20 for The Franciscan Center. They were delivered on Feb. 21. Volunteers could sign up after all Masses the previous weekend.

"We stopped counting at 70 as parishioners were still coming in to help," said Julie Renninger, a committee member for the past 14 years. In addition to McGarry



PROVIDED BY THE ST. JUDE SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

In Fort Wayne, St. Jude Social Action Committee members and parish volunteers participate in a "speed sort" at The Franciscan Center Thrift Store on Feb. 28. Other scheduled service opportunities have included a St. Jude Night dinner at the Fort Wayne Rescue Mission on March 7 and No Sew Blanket Making on March 14 at Salem Church United Church of Christ.

and Renninger, other members include Sue Harrington, Pat Tighe, Liz Sanders, Joan White and Ann Helmke.

"We truly hear Pope Francis calling all of us to take care of the poor," said Renninger. "Our committee allocates money to individuals and organizations locally, nationally and globally." She added they are hopeful news of what their

committee is doing this Lent may help other parishes, if not already doing so, to undertake the corporal works of mercy.

In the back of church by the statue of St. Jude, Stations of Service cards are available that outline various ways parishioners can carry out each of the works of mercy during Lent, McGarry related, whether it be by participating in a scheduled

group service opportunity or by choosing another option. A blank line in each category is like a write-in ballot for something a person does that fits the work but is not listed as an option.

"Families can complete a family card or proceed individually," she explained. Junior high students also can ring-up hours of service. The goal is to practice all the works of mercy at least once during the six weeks of Lent. If a volunteer wants his or her card officially validated as each work is completed, a member of the Social Action Committee can do that after any Mass on any weekend. Or, parishioners can proceed on the honor system and self-validate, McGarry indicated.

"Information is provided in the bulletin each week on the scheduled service for the upcoming week with the opportunity for sign-up," said McGarry. "And we have spoken of having a celebration of completion after Lent for those who reach the goal and to which we would invite all the community partners. This Lent we're encouraging parishioners to help others carry their crosses in a very real way by participating in the Stations of Service Lenten project," McGarry concluded.

The past and remaining scheduled opportunities for service include:

• Feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty

Monthly food collection during March, transportation of food to Beacon Heights, Fishes and Loaves Lenten Collection, Associated Churches Warehouse Lenten Collection "Sort and Shelf" on Saturday, April 4, from 10-11:30 a.m. at 602 E. Wayne St.; Easter food packing and Easter food delivery.

• Clothe the naked

Contribution to "Clothe Naked with Warmth" collection, donation of used clothes to a clothing bank, donation of used school uniform items to St. Jude School.

• Shelter the homeless

Youth Ministry Homeless Outreach contribution or distribution, care for a foster child or an adopted child, contribution to St. Vincent de Paul Society toward rent and utilities for parishioners, participation in RCIA, helping candidate find a home in the Church; service as greeter/usher, making people feel at home in church.

• Ransom the captive

Literacy Alliance "Reading Opens Doors" Lesson and Recognition Lunch on Wednesday, March 25, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 709 Clay St. No. 100, helping provide an educational activity for students, serving lunch and presenting achievement awards for reaching reading goals; SCAN 30th Annual Brown Bag Lunch March 17-18, helping on event day with packing or delivery of Casa meal; Blue Jacket Shopping Trip on Thursday, April 2, from 12-2 p.m. at 2826 S. Calhoun St., helping clients shop for clothes to wear on job interviews; transportation to church, chapel, grocery, etc. for someone unable to travel independently; donation of used glasses to New Eyes for Needy, Lions Club, etc.; contact a deployed member of the military by call, package, etc.

• Visit the sick

Matthew 25 Health and Dental Clinic "Clean-Paint-Plant-a-thon" on Thursday, March 19, from 1-3:30 and/or 3:30-6 p.m. at 413 E. Jefferson Blvd., replacing plastic plants with live plants, washing walls and painting in main waiting room; Project Linus "No Sew Blanket Making" on Saturday, March 14, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and/or 1-3 p.m. at Salem Church United Church of Christ 2401 Lake Ave.; hospital visit; sending a get well card, flowers or balloons; nursing home visit; distribution of Eucharist to hospital/homebound/nursing home; care for sick family member or friend; participation in St. Jude Prayer Shawl Ministry.

• Bury the dead

Contribution of funeral dish to a funeral dinner, serving at a funeral dinner, participation in funeral ministries (choir, servers, etc.); attendance at a funeral, calling or memorial service; cemetery visit; attendance at Mass said in memory of a family member or friend; prayer for victim at site of homicide.



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- Four-year Bachelor's degree in an aligned field of study
- Demonstrated volunteer experience in parish activities
- Strong communication and computer skills
- Previous public speaking experience
- Previous development or non-profit experience a plus

Interested candidates should send resume, references, salary history, and salary requirements (necessary for consideration) to:

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You may also choose to email all of the above information to: jobs@RedeemerRadio.com

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Catholic Bishops of Indiana

Poverty at the Crossroads: The Church's Response to Poverty in Indiana

Introduction

Our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society's most neglected members. (Pope Francis, apostolic exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel," n. 186)

As bishops who serve the people of God, our concern is for everyone, regardless of their religious affiliation, race, ethnic background, economic or social status. Christ came to save all humankind. As His ministers, we have been given the responsibility to carry on Christ's work in service to all our sisters and brothers here in the state of Indiana.

At the same time, we bishops have a particular obligation to care for the most vulnerable members of God's family. That is why we pay special attention to the unborn, to the sick and the elderly, to prisoners, to those who suffer from various forms of addiction or mental illness, and to the education of people from many different backgrounds and circumstances. That is also why we care, in a very special way, for those brothers and sisters of ours who are poor.

With this particular responsibility in mind, we bishops address this pastoral letter to faithful Catholics as well as to all people of good will here in Indiana. We want to call attention to the poverty that exists right here within the state that calls itself the "Crossroads of America." We hope to help all of us better understand the many challenges facing our brothers and sisters here in Indiana and consider with you how our Church should respond.

The Gospels insist that God's heart has a special place for the poor, so much so that God Himself has "become poor" (2 Cor. 8:9). Jesus recognized their suffering, and He had compassion for their loneliness and fear. He never looked away from their plight or acted as if it did not concern Him. Always, our Lord stood with the poor – comforting their sorrows, healing their

wounds and feeding their bodies and their souls. He challenged His friends to recognize the poor and not remain unmoved.

All disciples of Jesus Christ are called to love the poor as He did. As people of faith, we are invited to see the poor, to allow the Word of God to illuminate the reality of poverty, and to respond with transformed hearts.

Using the simple formula of SEE, JUDGE, ACT, we invite and challenge everyone, beginning with ourselves, to be more attentive to the poor in our communities, to identify the systemic issues that keep individuals and families poor, and to take concrete steps to reduce the long-term impact of poverty in our state, even as we reach out and help those who, here and now, suffer from its devastating effects.

I. See

There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table (Luke 16:19-21).

Jesus tells the powerful story of a poor "street person" named Lazarus, and the rich man who passed by him each day without noticing him. It is apparent that the rich man could not — or would not — see the poverty that was right in front of his eyes. As a result, he was blind to the poor man's need and — just as tragic — to the opportunities God gave him day after day to share his abundant gifts. At the conclusion of the story, we learn that this blindness cost the rich man a place in the company of Abraham.

How does this parable of Jesus speak to us today here in the state of Indiana? What are we not seeing as, day after day, we go about our busy lives? Are we incapable — or worse — have we chosen not to see our sisters and brothers who are poor? Are we blind to the impact poverty has on families, neighborhoods and entire

communities and unquestioning as to its causes?

We may not encounter poor people as we go about our daily business, but they are there just the same. As an appendix to this letter, we include some sobering statistics regarding poverty, homelessness, unemployment and hunger right here in the Hoosier State. Most of us have no idea how serious — and widespread — this problem is. Like the rich man in Jesus' parable, we fail to see what is right before our eyes. In addition, we miss the opportunities our Lord gives us to recognize Him in the face of the poor.

Statistics can appear cold and impersonal. If those facts do not help us to "see" the poor in our midst, we might want to consider a definition of poverty in terms of its impact on everyday life. Father Larry Snyder, former president of Catholic Charities USA, draws upon the experience of Catholic Charities workers throughout the country to explain that individuals are poor if:

- they cannot afford housing that is clean, safe and in good repair;
- they cannot afford nutritious food for themselves and their family on a regular basis;
- they cannot consistently pay their utility bills even though it is a priority;
- their children are not adequately clothed for school with clean clothes that fit and are in good repair, and they do not have proper clothing for work; or,
- they cannot afford to go to the doctor for any kind of illness for fear that the visit will be beyond their means to pay for it.¹

Many Hoosiers live in these circumstances. What are some of the realities that we are challenged to see clearly as citizens of Indiana concerned about human dignity, family life and the social and economic health of our

1. Rev. Larry Snyder, *Think and Act Anew: How Poverty in America Affects Us All and What We Can Do about It*, (Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y. 2010), 42.



state?

We believe it is important to point out that the consequences of the severe economic downturn that began in 2008-2009, a period that some call the "Great Recession," caused many more Hoosiers to face the despair of poverty. A growing number of our small towns and rural communities, which had been the backbone of our state, have seen crucial industries disappear. The social and economic conditions caused by poverty in these communities as well as in our larger cities have had serious consequences, including the breakdown of family life, an increase in the manufacture, sale and use of drugs; violence in our homes and in our streets and the resulting increase in our state's

prison population. Multigenerational poverty, measured by the number of individuals

in economic distress whose parents, grandparents and perhaps great-grandparents also suffered severe economic instability, is a reality whose impact on human dignity, family stability and healthy communities is immense. Members of families in the grip of multigenerational poverty are far less likely to possess the internal, intangible resources that would encourage them to acquire the education, life skills and employment opportunities that are available to other members of their communities and that are critical to breaking the cycle of poverty. Without the skills and experiences necessary to make positive personal and employment decisions, poor choices appear predetermined and the

POVERTY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

vicious cycle of poverty remains intact.

Catholics in the five dioceses of Indiana remain committed to serving those who are in immediate need through our charitable agencies, parishes, schools and health care organizations. The generosity of our people is extraordinary and evident through thousands of hours of loving service every week across the length and breadth of our state. As bishops, we recognize the goodness of diverse people and institutions throughout Indiana, and we thank God for the love and compassion shown to so many of our brothers and sisters in their time of need.

Yet, this compassionate response does not absolve us from asking hard questions. We believe it is essential that we make a prayerful, honest assessment of how we arrived at where we are today. If we truly are going to identify the causes and manifestations of poverty and create a pathway for positive, long-term, and sustainable change, we must strengthen the foundations upon which individuals and families build economic stability and realize their hopes for the future.

As Christians, we are called to recognize Jesus in the face of the poor. Seeing our brothers and sisters as they are — members of God's family who have gifts to share with us and whose need compels us to share our gifts in return — is an essential element of Christian charity. Seeing ourselves as stewards of all God's gifts is integral to authentic Christian discipleship.

In the account of the Final Judgment in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt. 25:31-46), both the good and the evil people are surprised at how closely the glorified Lord identifies with the poor. Hence they ask: "Lord, when did we see You...?" If we truly seek to follow Jesus and to live as He lived, we will clearly acknowledge the poverty of those around us, and we will respond with open and generous hearts to their

immediate and long-term needs.

Questions for reflection

Have you been surprised to discover relatives, friends or neighbors in distress as a result of changes in our state's economy over the last five to 10 years?

Where do you see the reality of poverty in Indiana?

How is your parish, school and diocese now responding to the poor in its midst?

II. Judge

Both Christian preaching and life are meant to have an impact on society. (Pope Francis, "Joy of the Gospel," n. 180).

In his apostolic exhortation, Pope Francis observes: "No one can demand that religion should be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life, without concern for the soundness of civil institutions." He makes it clear that the Church "cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice," but must work with all people of good will to build a better world (cf. "Evangelii Gaudium" No. 183).

The root causes of poverty are complex and must be addressed effectively by a holistic and multifaceted approach to social, economic, cultural and spiritual development. While we may be tempted to direct our attention and charitable resources towards addressing the immediate needs of the poor for food, shelter and health care, in justice we cannot neglect the more thorny public policy issues. We need to face these, if we wish to address the fundamental causes of poverty here in Indiana, as well as in our nation and global community.

As bishops, we claim no expertise in the practical details of political theory, economics or the social sciences. We must, however, emphasize some universal truths — such as the dignity of every human person, the basic human rights that apply to all, regardless of their economic, social, racial or cultural circumstances, and the importance of religious freedom for individuals and communities. As pastors, we wish to speak with and for those who suffer from the dark effects of poverty here in Indiana,

including victims of multigenerational poverty as well as those who more recently have found themselves without work and struggle for the basic necessities of life.

We see the following areas as meriting careful reflection and study by Catholics and all Hoosiers. We do not advocate an empty academic exercise but rather a necessary step towards making decisions that will lead to substantive change. These key areas are Family Life, Employment, Education and Health Care. Although it is not possible for us to address these issues in detail in this letter, we will offer some observations that we hope would stimulate discussion and lead to positive action.

FAMILY LIFE

We Catholics believe that a crucial element in God's plan for humanity is marriage, which we understand as the union of one man and one woman who make a commitment to each other for life and become "one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). This sacred union forms the family, the basic unit of society, which is dedicated to the transmission of new life (children) and to stewardship of all God's creation. The Church teaches that the family is a kind of "school of deeper humanity," love and hope for society (Vatican II, "Gaudium et Spes," 52). Our families teach us who we are as individuals and as members of human society. The family is also where we first learn how to live — how to take care of ourselves, how to share our gifts and talents with others, and how to collaborate and live in harmony with our neighbors whether close to home or far away.

Without the family, children cannot grow beyond a sterile isolation. Without the family, unity among people and nations loses its most basic catalyst and coexistence deteriorates into a pragmatic sort of commerce — "conceivable only on the basis of utility, on a calculus of fear, but not on the goodness of living together, not on the joy that the mere presence of others can give" (Pope Francis, encyclical "Lumen Fidei," n. 51).

Family teaches us that we are God's children, brothers and sisters called to participate in the life of God Himself. This is where we learn to recognize the sacredness of every human life as well as the beauty and necessity of living together in peace. This is where we discover the fundamental principle that grounds all human rights and dignity: that every person, regardless of sex, race, religion, or economic or social status, is deserving of our respect. Experience teaches us that the family is the only lasting, solid foundation on which healthy societies can be built.

Family teaches us how to live. In the family, we learn the basics of economy, the value of work, the meaning of sexuality, the joy of self-giving, the importance of breaking bread together and



having fun with family members and friends. These are not small things. They have a huge impact on our quality of life and on our ability to interact with others — extended family, neighbors, fellow citizens and even strangers (including "aliens" or "enemies" who are unlike us and whose differences appear to threaten our security).

We are keenly aware that this understanding of the meaning of the family represents an ideal that rarely is achieved in its fullness. A significant brokenness can exist in families today (as in every age), and each of us can name the ways that families fail to live up to the grand vision that our Church proposes for marriage and family life. Our own experience of brokenness teaches us the value of compassion and forgiveness.

We believe that it is worth fighting for the family. We are convinced that our individual lives and our world are enriched by "the sanctuary of life and love" that good families provide. We believe that every child should grow up in the warmth and protective care of a loving family. We deeply regret that the challenges facing families today threaten the health and happiness of individuals and the common good of human society.

As pastors, we witness the struggle that young families, especially single-parent families, have breaking out of the cycle of poverty in order to provide food, clothing, shelter, education and health care for their children. Finding (and keeping!) good jobs is much more difficult for teenage parents, especially if they are not

married, because they frequently lack the necessary education, skills and experience to compete in today's job market. Add to this handicap the costs associated with transportation and health care, and the challenges can be overwhelming.

In addition, as the number of underage and single-parent families continues to grow, the number of fathers who are unable or unwilling to support their children also increases. Strong marriages and healthy families provide an environment that can help overcome the most severe economic challenges. Unfortunately, the stress of economic instability, substance abuse and domestic violence, combined with other social and cultural factors, contributes to the disintegration of marriages, disrupts stable families and often results in substance abuse and other addictive behaviors.

Our society today permits — even encourages — behavior that works against a healthy family life. Consumerism can promote reckless spending and unsustainable debt. Promiscuity is fueled by attitudes that disrespect the beauty of human sexuality and the sanctity of marriage and family life. All segments of our society suffer from the effects of cultural and economic threats to the health and vitality of families, but the poor, especially multigenerational poor, are especially vulnerable to negative social and economic influences that undermine family life. It has even been said that stable marriages are increasingly the luxury of the rich.

To address the long-term effects of poverty in our society,



we must strengthen marriage and family life. As St. John Paul II wrote in his apostolic exhortation on the family, "Familiaris Consortio," "The future of humanity passes by way of the family" (n. 86). When families are strong, society is strong. When families are broken and unstable, all human communities suffer. At the same time, we recognize that instability of marriage and family life is intensified by poverty, which can produce an intolerable stress that limits human development. And, since single-parent families are increasingly the norm for the poor, the Church must make a special effort to understand their circumstances and offer the wisdom of her tradition.

EMPLOYMENT

"The economy must serve people, not the other way around" is a succinct paraphrase of a crucial statement by St. John Paul II in his encyclical, "Laborem Exercens": "In the first place, work is for man and not man for work" (n. 6.6). Work is more than simply a way to make a living; it is a continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected; these include the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize, to private property, and to economic initiative.

For St. John Paul II, this powerful statement — work is for man; man is not for work — is the principle that governs the success or failure of all economic systems. The human person is what is most important, not economic theory or social structures.

The human person, the one who works, is not a means to an end, but the primary beneficiary of his or her own labor.

Every worker has a fundamental dignity because he or she is made in the image and likeness of God. Workers are co-creators with God in building the human community. Workers are not commodities. They are not instruments of production or tools in the hands of owners or managers, who are entitled to use them and then set them aside at the end of the day or the completion of a particular project.

Indiana is home to thousands of the so-called "working poor." These are women and men who have jobs but whose income is not enough to sustain them or to cover the necessities of life, including food, housing, health care, transportation and childcare. For these families, full-time, year-round work by itself is not enough to lift them out of poverty.

St. John Paul II teaches, "a just wage is the concrete means of verifying the justice of the whole socioeconomic system" ("Laborem Exercens," 19). Why? Because the laborer truly is worthy of his or her wage (cf. Luke 10:7). And because a society that cares for the least of its citizens — including the unemployed, the underemployed and uninsured — is a society that will flourish in the sight of God and in its material and spiritual well-being.

EDUCATION

There is an intimate connection between family, employment and education. Parents are the first and principal educators of their children. As we noted

above, it is in the family where we first learn the value of work, the importance of collaboration and teamwork, and the moral principles that are key to a faithful, productive and successful work environment.

The Catholic Church is strongly committed to education and, particularly, the education of the poor. More than two centuries of experience convince us about the powerful role that education plays in breaking the cycle of poverty and helping families, producing thriving citizens, workers and professionals.

We also attest to the effect that poverty has on a family's ability to provide children with a quality education. Poor children are often hungry, undernourished and prone to limited attention spans. Crying for attention, they frequently exhibit inappropriate behaviors. They may live in cars or temporary shelters and seldom find sufficient physical rest. Recurrent moves means that regular school attendance is difficult, if not impossible. No wonder poor children struggle to learn, develop and test their skills and abilities, and recognize the importance of completing their education in order to compete with others in demanding job markets.

Our Catholic tradition commits us to the education of the whole person — mind, body and spirit. We refuse to be fatalistic about the future hopes and dreams of families and children who are poor, including the multigenerational poor. We have seen with our own eyes the difference that a quality education can make in the lives of children and their families.

As Pope Francis reminds us, to be truly "with and for the poor," we must provide all children — but especially those who are poor — "with an education that teaches critical thinking and encourages the development of mature moral values" ("Joy of the Gospel," 64). This is the way out of poverty for individuals and families, and the best way to build a society that is just, economically productive and dedicated to promoting and defending the human dignity of all its citizens.

HEALTH CARE

For decades, the Catholic bishops of the United States have been unswerving advocates for comprehensive reforms that will lead to health care for all, especially the weakest and most vulnerable. We believe that health care is fundamental to human life and dignity. It is also a critical component of our Church's ministry. In collaboration with professionals throughout Indiana, the Catholic Church provides health care, purchases health care and tries to enhance the health care system. The Catholic community serves the sick and uninsured in emergency rooms, homeless shelters and on the doorsteps of our parish churches. We bring both strong convictions and practical



experience to the challenge of health care.

Many lower-income individuals and families in our state lack the resources to meet the expense of their health care. For these families, significant premiums and cost-sharing charges can serve as barriers to obtaining coverage or seeing a doctor. Therefore, we believe that existing cost-sharing protections should be maintained, and new health insurance coverage options must protect the lowest income enrollees from burdensome cost sharing. We also call for much-needed funding for safety-net clinics, hospitals and other facilities that provide health care to the poor and vulnerable members of our communities.

We believe that health care is not a privilege, but a right and a requirement to protect the life and dignity of every person. All people, regardless of their circumstances, should have access to comprehensive, quality and affordable health care. It should not depend on where they were born, their stage of life, where or whether they or their parents work, how much they earn or where they live.

Questions for reflection

Do you agree that the Church has a responsibility to speak on behalf of the poor?

Is there an issue that is more important for the Church's consideration than the four mentioned in this section (Family Life, Employment, Education and Health Care)?

III. Act

"It is dangerous to dwell in the realm of words alone, of images and rhetoric. Realities are greater than ideas," (Pope Francis, "Joy of the Gospel," n. 231).

This letter is a call to act with justice and charity. We invite all who read these words to join us in reaching out to the poor members of our state. We challenge everyone, beginning with ourselves, to engage the leaders of business, government and voluntary organizations throughout our state in effecting meaningful changes in the policies and practices that perpetuate poverty in all its manifestations.

Actions do speak louder than

words, especially when we intend to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give shelter to the homeless, and provide employment, education and health care to all members of our community. Together with women and men of good will, we want to offer hope to all who suffer, and we seek to build a just society that can alleviate the long-term effects of poverty here in Indiana and throughout our nation and the world.

Through institutions and organizations such as Catholic Charities, Catholic hospitals, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, parish social ministries, elementary and secondary schools as well as colleges and universities, our Church responds to an increasing number of people who are in desperate need of housing, medical care, food, transportation, education and other necessities. The Catholic Church in Indiana is a leading advocate for just social structures that will preserve families while addressing the systemic problems of poverty. The challenges are formidable, but with transformed and hopeful hearts, we must act.

At the same time, we join all people of good will in calling for the development and implementation of strategies that address the root causes of poverty here in the "Crossroads of America." Our response intends to provide for the immediate needs of our sisters and brothers and, at the same time, take seriously the underlying issues that prevent our state's employment, educational and health care systems from effectively meeting the needs of individuals and families in all corners of Indiana.

The call to act justly demands an organized and systematic response to the issues of poverty in Indiana. Direct service of the poor at the level of our parishes and other communities is necessary and should be esteemed as a means of practicing Christian charity. However, isolated action alone will not suffice. Only a multifaceted, community-wide approach will truly reduce the debilitating and demoralizing effects of long-term, multigenerational poverty throughout our state.



POVERTY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

FAMILY LIFE

We invite the Catholic faithful and all people of good will to work to reduce poverty by intentionally focusing on one of the root causes of poverty in Indiana. Grounded in our Catholic faith and tradition we recommend that we strengthen and support Indiana's families by assigning the highest priority to the wellbeing of children in the family and society.

Strengthening families requires that we support marriage and the ideal of families with two parents who live together and share responsibility for their children. Today many families are broken and most struggle under significant stress. All families need our loving support and assistance now, even as we work for a future in which healthy families can thrive. Therefore, we propose that a single question guide us in all service and program decisions made by government agencies, private institutions and Church ministries regarding families:

Do programs and policies place a primary emphasis on child welfare and enhance — not detract — from strong marriages and family life?

The task of strengthening support for Indiana's families is formidable. In order to be successful, organized and sustained efforts are needed throughout the state. We propose that every Catholic diocese, parish, educational institution and health care organization in our state serve as a catalyst for local, grassroots efforts focused on mitigating poverty in its community. All people of goodwill, regardless of their religious tradition, should be invited to join in a collaborative and systematic effort to attend to the needs of Hoosier children and their families.

We propose that we set clear, measurable goals for our efforts to alleviate poverty by meeting the needs of married couples and families in our state. While not all outcomes can be easily calculated, clearly defined goals will assist us in setting and accomplishing objectives that are ambitious but achievable with the help of God's grace.

As we have already observed, there are undeniable links between family life, employment, education and health care. Poverty brings intolerable stress on the family's ability to carry out its mission as the fundamental unit of society. Families are called to be stewards of all God's gifts, and this requires an environment of stability and peace that can provide each family member with opportunities to exercise his or her responsibilities for the common good. A supportive family environment results in healthier, happier and more hopeful individuals, who are more

likely to work for the common good and participate in community activities.

WORK

To address the serious challenges facing our economy in the state of Indiana today, we must look carefully at the impact of policies, legislation and governmental regulations on real people, the women and men who struggle to earn a living, support their families and make ends meet. We cannot fix the economy by employing abstract theory that is detached from those whose lives are at stake. As St. John Paul II tells us, we cannot simply look at material needs (food, shelter, clothing, health care, etc.), as important as these are for individuals, families and communities. We should also foster a spirituality of work, which recognizes its profound impact on the intellectual, social, cultural and religious life of individuals, families and communities.

The Church does not propose detailed programs aimed at creating jobs or promoting economic development. However, the Church does remind governmental, business and community leaders that the only truly effective measure of sound economic policy and practice is the extent to which real people thrive and grow as persons and as workers.

In addition to the economic benefits of stable employment, work offers individuals increased opportunities to enhance their personal dignity. Work should be the primary means by which parents provide for their families and contribute to a healthy community. Governmental programs should exist principally to provide an adequate safety net for individuals who are in transitional situations or suffer from incapacitating illness or injury.

Therefore, we propose that the state of Indiana dedicate resources towards improving the opportunity for Hoosier families to find meaningful, economically rewarding work.

Plans for economic development ought to include strategies aimed at breaking the cycle of multi-generational poverty.

EDUCATION

A good, well-rounded education that begins as early in life as possible establishes a foundation for a promising future for children and encourages the formation of productive, contributing citizens and healthy families. Every child should have the opportunity to develop his or her full potential, and it is the responsibility of parents and the wider community to help make possible the growth and success of all children.

With this in mind, we bishops commit our dioceses, parishes, schools and social services agencies to working with state and local governments as well as business and civic leaders to achieve the following objectives:

- Strengthening marriage and family life by supporting the role

of parents as the primary educators of their children (including programs that make it possible for parents to choose schools for their children and to engage them more effectively in their children's education);

- Encouraging the state of Indiana to dedicate the resources needed to provide for early childhood education, especially among underserved populations;

- Reducing de facto segregation or isolation by race, ethnicity or income in order to provide all students with opportunities to learn with and from peers from diverse social and economic backgrounds;

- Achieving "best practices" and effective policies for teaching and learning, including class size, length of school days, number of school days per year, tutoring and mentorships;

- Attracting, retaining and rewarding teachers and administrators who place the education of children first and who possess the formation necessary to meet the needs of children from economically challenged and/or socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

HEALTH CARE

We bishops in Indiana repeat the call for a genuine reform of health care that is accessible and affordable for all. We invite all Hoosiers to join us in working for health care systems that will:

- Promote and defend human dignity from the moment of conception until natural death;

- Attend to the whole person (body, mind and spirit), while pursuing a genuine pluralism that respects freedom of religion and conscience;

- Care for poor and vulnerable persons, regardless of race, ethnicity, economic or social or legal status;

- Practice a careful stewardship of resources by restraining costs and applying them equitably across the spectrum of those who must pay for health care.

If we give priority to family life, work, education and health care, an economically strong, well-educated and healthy Indiana will have fewer individuals, especially men, in prison. Unwed pregnancy rates will decrease. More young women and men will be able to pursue post-secondary education and training for careers. The number of multiple-family residences and the constant migration from one residence to another will decrease, helping to provide more consistency in educational opportunities for children. Fewer grandparents will be required to assume full responsibility for rearing children because more mothers and fathers will be present and active in their children's lives.

What we can do?

What can we do to help alleviate poverty in Indiana, now and in the future? What actions can we take that will make a difference in the lives of our fellow

Hoosiers who suffer from the immediate and long-term effects of poverty?

First, we can "storm heaven" with confidence that our prayers will be heard and answered. As a community of faith, we believe in the power of prayer. We trust that our cry for our "daily bread," is heard and answered by our heavenly Father. However, prayer is also attentively listening to what God has to say to us. If we ask God to help us better serve the needs of the poor, whom He loves, surely He will show us the way.

Next, we can work to strengthen families. Starting with our own families — our spouses, children, grandchildren and extended families — we can show that family comes first. We can work to set aside some of the whirlwind of distractions promoted in contemporary culture in order to spend time with family, supporting and encouraging those whom we love most in the world. Reaching beyond the limits of our own families, we can share our time and talent with our neighbors, our fellow parishioners and members of our communities. We can support legislation and public policies that are pro-marriage and pro-family life. We can work to elect public officials whose actions really do speak louder than their words when it comes to protecting and enhancing family life.

Then, we can advocate for economic vitality and for access to affordable, quality education and health care. As we have tried to demonstrate, employment, education and health care are critical means for alleviating the long-term effects of poverty in our state. To this end, we bishops strongly urge all individuals, families and Catholic institutions to speak on behalf of comprehensive and just legislation and social policies in these crucial areas. We invite all people of good will to join us in finding and implementing both immediate and long-term solutions to the problems faced by those who are poor and vulnerable in our communities.

Finally, we all can support Catholic Charities and other social service agencies in our state through generous stewardship of our time, talent and treasure. As stewards of all the gifts we have each received from a generous and loving God, we are invited and challenged to respond to the Lord with increased gratitude and generosity.

Questions for reflection

How does my community (parish, school, institution) directly serve the needs of the poor?

How could my community unite with others in a strategy to alleviate the most fundamental causes of poverty in Indiana?

Conclusion

In the Gospel, Jesus tells the parable of the great King, who sends his servants to "the highways and hedgerows" to invite everyone to his feast (cf. Lk.

14:23). Today, Jesus sends us, his disciples, to the "Crossroads of America," to extend His loving care for the least of His brothers and sisters.

Loving care for the poor and vulnerable is a consistent theme in Sacred Scripture. Our Lord's teaching about the last judgment is quite specific. We will be judged worthy or unworthy of eternal life based on how we treated Christ Himself in the "least" of His sisters and brothers — especially the hungry and thirsty, the naked and homeless, the prisoner and the stranger. Jesus' admonition about how our lives will be judged is pointed and unequivocal: what we do to the poor and the destitute — "the least of these My brothers and sisters" — we do to the Lord Himself.

This is a sober warning. Most of us think mainly about ourselves and about our families and friends. The poor? We may feel a vague sense of moral obligation to them, but too often the poor are distant, anonymous and invisible. That is why Catholic social teaching insists that the needs of the poor must take priority. Otherwise, we might not see them or quickly forget about them as we go about our daily business.

We do not mean the publication of this letter to be the final word about the Church's response to poverty in our state. We hope that every Catholic community will consider this letter, and the five dioceses of Indiana intend to collect this reflection and continue the conversation.

Such reflection is crucial for our mission in the world today. Pope Francis invites us to see the profound connection between evangelization and human advancement, which must necessarily find expression and development in every effort of evangelization ("Joy of the Gospel," 178). We look forward to working with you to proclaim the Good News by strengthening family life, promoting just employment and ensuring a quality education and comprehensive health care for all Hoosiers, especially the poor and vulnerable.

*Given on Ash Wednesday,
Feb. 18, 2015*

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin

+ *Joseph W. Tobin, Archbishop*

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

+ *Kevin C. Rhoades*

Bishop Charles C. Thompson

+ *Charles C. Thompson*

Bishop Timothy L. Doherty

+ *Timothy Doherty*

Bishop Donald J. Hying

+ *Donald J. Hying*

St. Joseph plans parish mission

BLUFFTON — St. Joseph Church in Bluffton will host a parish mission from March 15-19. The mission, titled, "Strengthening Our Faith Through the Eucharist" will be held from 7-8 p.m. each evening with refreshments provided. On March 15, Jason Garrett will speak on the "Domestic Church"; March 16, Father Bob Lengerich will speak on "Parish Church"; March 17, Marilyn Fech will speak on "Community Church"; March 18, Father David Voors will speak on "Reconciling Church" with the sacrament of Reconciliation following; and March 19, the feast of St. Joseph, Mass will be celebrated at 6 p.m. by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades. A potluck dinner, with meat, drinks and desserts provided, will follow Mass. Please bring an extra large dish to share. Childcare and transportation is available.

Dominican Brother Briscoe to be ordained deacon

WASHINGTON — Dominican Brother Patrick Mary Briscoe, a friar studying for the Priesthood and currently assigned to St. Matthew's Cathedral, Washington, D.C., will be ordained a deacon in the Crypt Church of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on Saturday, March 14, by Bishop Roger Foys, of Covington, Kentucky.

Raised in Fort Wayne, Brother Patrick is currently pursuing his Licentiate in theology at the Dominican House of Studies. At St. Matthew's, he has worked principally with parents (whose children are in religious education) by leading a Sunday morning seminar, with young adults, and in various capacities as a liturgical minister. Brother Patrick graduated from Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne and Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, where he majored in philosophy and French literature. Since joining the Dominican Order, he has served in campus ministry, as an intern at the Archdiocese of Washington, and as a missionary in Kenya (alongside Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity).

Brother Patrick will continue to minister there during his final year of initial formation. He will serve as deacon and preach for the first time on Saturday, March 14.

St. Mary's College tuition, room and board rates for 2015-16 announced

NOTRE DAME — The Saint Mary's College Board of Trustees recently approved a 3.9 percent increase in tuition and fees and room and board for the 2015-16 academic year. Tuition and fees are set at \$37,400 and room and board will be \$11,320, making the cost to attend Saint Mary's College \$48,720.

"The college has worked hard to manage the costs and keep the increases at a minimum while

AROUND THE DIOCESE

SOUL FOOD TASTE-A-THON HELD AT SAINT JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL



PROVIDED BY SAINT JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL

The Dare-to-Be Club of Saint Joseph High School in South Bend hosted a Soul Food Taste-a-thon for students, staff and faculty on Feb. 25. Senior Annie Johnson wanted to bring an awareness of the African-American culture to her classmates. "There is no African language taught in school, and many people don't know much about our culture," said Johnson, who after talking to her mother, May Lee Johnson, decided to host the event during Black History Month. Johnson chose the menu and her mother enlisted family members and friends to prepare the food, building a smorgasbord of African-American foods. "If I invited you to dinner at my house this is what we would eat," May Lee pointed out. "Everybody eats chicken, green beans, macaroni and cheese and ice cream. It's just prepared a little differently," she said. Garrett Loitz tasted collard greens for the first time in his life. "I was apprehensive at first. I tried it, and I'm glad I did. They were good!" he said. Shown are Annie Johnson, left, and her mother, May Lee, right, preparing to serve their homemade ice cream.

providing your daughter with an education that guides her personal and academic growth, building on her natural abilities and leadership drive," Susan Bolt, vice president for finance and administration, said in a letter to parents and guardians of students.

Alpha training planned in April

FORT WAYNE — Alpha, a new initiative for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, is being offered as a parish tool for evangelization

that is based on hospitality, sharing and prayer. The program, which is inviting people to encounter Christ in 112 languages in 169 countries worldwide, consists of a series of 10 weekly interactive sessions that include a meal where guests can relax and get to know each other, a short faith-based talk on who Jesus is, the Bible and the personal testimony of the speaker, and small group discussion where trust and friendships are built.

The Alpha program training will be held on Saturday, April 18, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Vincent de

Paul Msgr. John Kuzmich Parish Life Center located at 1502 E. Wallen Rd. in Fort Wayne. Deacon Steve Mitchell, Alpha USA national director, Alpha in a Catholic context, Mary Guilfoyle, Alpha administrator of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Plymouth, Michigan, and Laura Lies, Alpha in a Catholic context advisor, will speak on the content and facilitation of the program.

Cindy Black, director of faith formation for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, says of the program, "Alpha is a program of hospitality and building trust to invite people to a basic course to explore the purpose of life, who Jesus is and to provide a context to personally encounter the love of Jesus Christ. It really answers Pope Francis' call to go to the peripheries to meet people where they are and introduce them to Jesus. ... It begins by simply inviting people to a meal. There is no pressure beyond to do anything. They are just invited to return each week. It allows people a safe context to ask questions about Jesus and share their experience of God without judgment, while we listen."

Alpha training speaker Deacon Steve Mitchell says, "Alpha is more than a video talk series. Over a meal, guests encounter Christ in a loving community, they listen to compelling talks that appeal to the head, the heart and the will, then, in small group discussion, have the opportunity to examine the claims of Christ against the backdrop of their lives and our culture. Over the weeks together in these small groups the Holy Spirit is given the freedom to move in their hearts as trust is built and community formed. Barriers crumble and guests open up to the presence of our risen Lord, relationships of trust allow the guests to enter into prayer together as they are invited to 'drop their nets' and become intentional followers of Jesus. A moment of conversion is a most beautiful moment to witness, that moment when faith meets grace changes everything."

And Alpha Catholic Advisory Board member, Father John Riccardo, who hosts Catholic radio program, "Christ is the Answer," adds that in his 18 years as a priest he's never seen any other program that has had as far reaching an impact at the parish level. The

Alpha program has the capacity to draw people into a relationship with Jesus. "It builds a relationship with the Lord on a kind of a vertical dimension, but then it does this tremendous job of building community with people who are having a conversation sitting around a table talking about whatever topic that might be at hand," he says. Once they encounter Jesus, he says, then they can be brought into understanding how they can encounter Him in the sacraments, Bible studies and other ways to help them grow and mature as disciples. It is the beginning, he says.

Cost of the April 18 Alpha program training, which includes lunch, snacks and training materials, is \$15 for diocesan participants and \$20 for those outside the diocese. For information contact Cindy Black at 260-399-1436 or cblack@diocesefwsb.org.

Deanery Council of Catholic Women honor women of faithful service

The Deanery Council of Catholic Women honored women for their faithful service to their parishes on Saturday, March 7. Over 150 attended the ceremony held at St. Mary Mother of God Church in Fort Wayne. The morning opened with Mass celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades. The 18 award winners were each presented with a certificate from the bishop and a gift of a Guardian Angel pin from the council. Carol Doehman is the deanery president.

Nominated by their pastors and rosary sodalities, these women are a group that have served their parishes tirelessly, often behind the scenes in a variety of capacities and are deserving of recognition.

The 2015 Fort Wayne area recipients were as follows: Arlene Aker (St. Aloysius, Yoder), Janet Voight (St. Charles), Carolyn Kirkendall (St. Rose, Monroeville), Margaret Freiburger (St. Therese), Barbara Spreen (St. Patrick, Fort Wayne), Roberta Davis (St. Patrick, Arcola), Mae Leedy (St. Peter and Paul, Huntington), Rafaela Savage (Immaculate Conception, Kendallville), Jane Czech (St. Mary), Dolores Rennecker (St. Michael, Waterloo), Theresa Dirig (St. Elizabeth Ann Seton), Yvonne Goodman (St. John the Baptist, New Haven), Leonor Rodriguez (St. Joseph, Fort Wayne), Marilyn Fischer (St. Vincent), Julie Nolan (St. Louis, Besancon), Joyce Bernes (St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel), Meg Hanlon (St. Peter) and Peggy Luley (Most Precious Blood).



The 18 award winners honored by the Deanery Council of Catholic Women are shown with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades.

A chance to say goodbye

In last month's article I talked about three very special patients who presented to the hospital during the same week and all were at the end of their lives. Let me share the story of one of the other people. I met this particular gentleman about 30 years ago because of heart rhythm problems. He could be gruff and cantankerous but always very loveable. He was a truck driver by trade and boy, did he have stories to tell. I suspect there may have been a little embellishment now and then, but over the 100 or so times I saw him over the years I can't remember one time that I didn't walk out of the room without a smile on my face having just enjoyed some laughter and usually another great story.

I'll call him Joe. When Joe was 83 years old he became very unstable because of severe coronary artery blockage, and we made the difficult decision together to have him undergo high-risk bypass surgery. I remember him telling me he

was going to live until he died and he would not tolerate being sick and restricted — waiting for the big one to happen. He did great! My staff and I continued to be entertained with each visit he made to the office after surgery.

As he turned 86 he developed a more rare form of heart disease called a restrictive cardiomyopathy. He did surprisingly well for a few years, but then I realized during his last several visits that his time was coming. It was not long after that, he presented to Lutheran Hospital very early one morning, with the sky still dark, in cardiogenic shock and having intermittent life-threatening arrhythmias. As is common nowadays the hospitalist team admitted him.

As I began to make rounds early that morning I was notified he had been admitted and was in critical condition. I headed over to the ICU to see him. As I arrived a young wide-eyed male nurse who was very animated and clearly shaken

THE CATHOLIC DOCTOR IS IN

DR. DAVID KAMINSKAS

greeted me. He told me during the past several hours my patient had apparently died several times. Joe had gone into a very rapid ventricular tachycardia (VT) and became unresponsive and pulseless for more than a minute. The VT spontaneously resolved and his heart began to beat in a normal rhythm once again. (For those of you with a medical background wondering why he wasn't shocked — he had appropriately declared himself a “do not resuscitate” or “allow natural

DOCTOR, PAGE 13

Look upon the Cross of Jesus



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

4th Sunday of Lent Jn 3:14-21

This weekend the Church celebrates “Laetare Sunday,” the name drawn from what is the first word in Latin of the Entrance Antiphon, “Rejoice!” Lent is well under way. Easter is not that far in the future.

The reason for rejoicing is not so trivial as to say that the drabness and penance of Lent will soon end. Rather, it is a lesson about life. The drabness and trials of earthly life someday will end. The glory of heaven awaits — just as Easter awaits.

Once the Church required, and still allows, celebrants at Mass to wear vestments of a rose color. It is not as if the more somber violet of Lent today is diluted. Rather, the violet is brightened by the sunbeams of the approaching dawn. That dawn, of course, will be the brilliant flash of the Resurrection.

The Second Book of Chronicles supplies this weekend with its first reading. Once Chronicles was in a single volume. As time passed, and as editors and translators had their way, it was separated into two volumes. Thus it has remained, and thus it exists in all modern translations of the Bible.

It is part of the Bible's historical set of volumes. While these volumes tell of the history

of God's people, their purpose is not to report history, but to reveal developments in the people's religious experience.

This reading recalls the bitter events that led to the chosen people's defeat by the Babylonians, and the removal of many Hebrews, their numbers now unknown, to Babylon. In Babylon, they were not exactly enslaved. Nor were they hostages, in the sense that they were not held to prevent rebellion by their kin people back home. But, they led an unhappy life in a foreign and unwelcoming culture.

Through the human instrument of Cyrus, the Persian king who overwhelmed Babylonia, God freed these people.

The Epistle to the Ephesians is the source of the second reading. It is an eloquent proclamation of God's mercy. The epistle declares that before Christ, humans were doomed to everlasting death. Then, through and by salvation in Christ, they were able to attain everlasting life.

St. John's Gospel furnishes the last reading, recalling a moment in the Exodus, that long march by the Hebrews from Egypt, where they had been slaves, to the Promised Land. The march took them across the stark and unforgiving Sinai Peninsula. Trials were many, hunger and thirst among them. They lost their way. But, another trial was the presence of venomous snakes.

Again, God supplied relief. He told Moses, the leader, to lift a snake on a staff, and to hold this staff high. God promised that all who looked upon this staff, with the impaled snake, would survive.

The implication of the Crucifixion is clear. The Gospel subtly reminds us that all who look upon the Cross of Jesus in faith will live.

The Gospel continues. It is a moving description of God's mercy. Humans can find joy, and they can find eternal life. But, only in and through Jesus can they find joy and life.

Reflection

The Church gently, but firmly, leads us onward through Lent. It reassures us that Easter is not far into the future. In fact, it will come in only a few more weeks.

If Lent has been productive, Easter should be a moment of joyful, personal resurrection. In faith, we then also should rise, ourselves being raised by our identity with Christ from the death of sin.

Lent's productivity and effectiveness, however, depend upon us. We ourselves, by our commitment to God, and then by our prayer and penance, decide the value of Lent personally for ourselves.

The Church today urges us to continue to make Lent effective, to look ahead to resurrection.

READINGS

Sunday: 2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23 Ps 137:1-6 Eph 2:4-10 Jn 3:14-21

Monday: Is 65:17-21 Ps 30:2, 4-6, 11-12a, 13b Jn 4:43-54

Tuesday: Ez 47:1-9, 12 Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9 Jn 5:1-16

Wednesday: Is 49:8-15 Ps 145:8-9, 13c-14, 17-18 Jn 5:17-20

Thursday: 2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16 Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29 Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22 Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a

Friday: Wis 2:1a, 12-22 Ps 34:17-21, 23 Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Saturday: Jer 11:18-20 Ps 7:2-3, 9b-12 Jn 7:40-53

CRS and Lebanon

“The nations of the world are becoming more and more dependent on one another and it will not be possible to preserve a lasting peace so long as glaring economic and social imbalances persist.”
— St. John XXIII

This week our Rice Bowl focus is on the option for the poor and vulnerable that reminds us of our Christian duty to give a voice to the voiceless and to help those who cannot help themselves. This duty applies to the work of Catholic Relief Services in Lebanon where nearly 1 million Syrian refugees are currently living. Due to the civil war in Syria, more than 100,000 people have been killed since March of 2011. Nearly 3 million Syrians have left their homes since the beginning of the war and half of these refugees are children. It is estimated that 1 million of these refugees are living in Lebanon. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is working with local partners to help around 150,000 of these refugees.

In a situation of displacement such as this one, children are greatly affected by the uncertainty that accompanies everyday life. In refugee communities, CRS works to provide some normalcy for children. CRS helps to support schools where children can learn and play while also having access to counselors who can help them deal with the trauma of war and displacement. Also, assistance is provided to parents by way of food vouchers to help families provide for the basic needs.

Our brothers and sisters in Lebanon have been forced to leave all of their worldly possessions behind. Though he was not a refugee himself, St. Charbel Makhoul gave up all of his earthly possessions to better follow God. St. Charbel was born Youssef Zaroun Makhoul in Lebanon in 1828. Having always been devoted to the Blessed Mother and interested in the monastic life led by two of his uncles, Youssef joined the Lebanese Maronite Order and chose the name Charbel after a second century

CRS RICE BOWL

MELISSA WHEELER

martyr. Charbel became a priest and lived in a monastery for 16 years. During this time, he gave up all of his earthly possessions and asked his superior if he could live in a hermitage. Permission was granted and Charbel spent 23 years living alone in silence. He prayed for long hours and truly fell in love with Jesus during this time. Pope Pius VI once said this about St. Charbel: “May he make us understand, in a world largely fascinated by wealth and comfort, the paramount value of poverty, penance and asceticism, to liberate the soul in its ascent to God.” While reflecting this week on the option for the poor and vulnerable focused on refugees in Lebanon, use this prayer.

God of all nations, our world is so busy and noisy and full. Help us to follow the example of St. Charbel, who lived a simple life of peace and quiet, devoted entirely to You. May we too set aside time to be still in Your presence. Help us to hear Your voice in those quiet moments. Help us to do those good things You ask of us. We ask this through Christ our Risen Lord. Amen.

As you consider the lives of those who have to leave almost everything behind when they flee their homes in times of crisis and war, ask yourself these questions. Which of your worldly possessions help you to better find God? Which could you — or should you — do without? How can a simpler lifestyle help you to live in solidarity with refugees around the world?

Melissa Wheeler is the diocesan director for Catholic Relief Services.

Saint of the Week



Dominic Savio

1842-1857
Feast March 9

Growing up in an Italian peasant family, Dominic wanted to be a priest and in 1854 became a student of St. John Bosco at the Oratory of St. Francis de Sales in Turin. There he formed the Company of the Immaculate Conception to pray and help with various tasks. Don Bosco insisted that Dominic balance his spiritual intensity with chores and games. But Dominic's frail health gave out in 1857, when he was bled for lung inflammation. On his deathbed, he said, “I am seeing the most wonderful things.” In 1859, the 22 men who formed the core of the new Salesian order all were original members of Dominic's Company. The patron saint of choirboys, Dominic was canonized in 1954.

No fighting God

Some months after my son-in-law, Rob Susil, died, a longtime friend asked me, in a gentle but point-blank way, “Are you still fighting God?” The only honest response was, “Yes.” At which my friend said, simply, “You’re not going to win, you know...”

I think back on that exchange now, during the Lent following the fifth anniversary of Rob’s death, because Lent is the “acceptable time” (2 Cor 6:2) to ponder the mystery of suffering and death, and what it teaches us about God’s ways, our ways and the incalculable difference between the two.

Even after a half-decade, the death of Dr. Robert Susil makes no sense by any human calculus. He was a young man in terrific physical shape at the beginning of the very prime of life. He was a thoroughly converted disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a devoted husband and father. He was also a brilliant scientist and compassionate healer, one of the country’s foremost young cancer doctors, who died of cancer after having won the esteem of his colleagues at the highest altitudes of American medicine; as one of his older Johns Hopkins colleagues said to me, at Rob’s wake, “We just lost our next Nobel Prize.” If that was true, I kept asking myself, why did God take him years before he had the chance to make what I’m sure would have been a historic pro-life speech while accepting one of the world’s most prestigious awards? I’d probably have been watching on CNN-Purgatory, but still ... why?

My friend’s nudge about fighting God prompted me to dig into the Book of Job. It’s strange that the Lectionary doesn’t make more use of Job during Lent, for surely this masterpiece of world literature is the apex of the Old Testament’s reflection on the unfathomable mysteries of evil and suffering and their relationship to God. And in Job, I began to find, if not answers to Rob’s death that made rational sense, then at least an answer that made sense in light of biblical faith.

Job, I came to see, is the model of what an Italian biblical scholar has called “the believer who loves the true God in himself and for himself, without ulterior motives” — and does so precisely along the dark path of suffering. It is Job, sitting amidst misery, who rejects his friends’ calculating, facile suggestions about why bad things happen to good people. It is Job who, in the end, refuses to cram the divine will and purpose onto the procrustean bed of human wisdom. It is Job who, finally, lets God be God—and who, by admitting that he is not the artisan of his own existence, makes a deeper act of faith in the God whose divine “logic” is beyond anything human minds can grasp.

Robert Charles Susil, I came to understand, was another of those righteous men who loved the true God “in himself and for himself,” making no bargains in the process. And if he could approach the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that way, how could I do less? So while I do not pretend to have gained any further insight, these



THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

GEORGE WEIGEL

past five years, into the divine “logic” of Rob’s life and death, sharing his Passover gave me, ultimately, the gift of knowing that I cannot fight the God in whom I profess faith each Sunday without rendering that profession of faith false — although it took me awhile to accept the gift.

Lent — the Christian walk to Jerusalem with the Lord who meets His destiny there in complete submission to the Father’s will — is an annual reminder that God is God and we aren’t. When Jesus tells Pilate, “You would have no power over me unless it had been given over from above” (Jn 19:11), He is not making an abstract point in political philosophy; He is making an act of faith in the design of salvation the Father has devised.

The grace to bring ourselves to embrace that design, however “illogical” it may seem, is one special grace of the 40 Days.

George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

and he knew this was the end of the road for him. I left, but came back about an hour later to find his room filled with about 15 people, all family and close friends. He told everybody in the room he was ready to go. Knowing the family well I asked Joe if it would be okay if we all prayed together. I subsequently led the family in prayer in one of the most precious moments I have ever spent at a patient’s bedside. There were hugs and tears all around as I left the room but promised Joe I would be back soon to check on him again.

About an hour later I returned to find the room full of his loved ones and Joe unconscious taking his last breaths. He passed moments later. This was not your typical death. It WAS a death that I wish more people could have. Joe embraced the fact it was his time, and family and friends surrounded him as he entered into the kingdom of God.

So why didn’t Joe die when he had that sustained run of ventricular tachycardia? And why didn’t he die when he flat lined for such a long time. Of course only God knows, but I have witnessed this many times over the years as I have been entrusted with end-of-life care for my patients. There are the cases when my patient has been unresponsive for days only to wake up, say their goodbyes to their loved

ones and then soon thereafter slip away. I remember multiple cases where patients are intubated on life support and heading toward death when they inexplicably rallied and were able to be extubated so they could once again talk to their family just before they died.

Now I think Joe was very ready to die. I think he would have been very happy to die when he had the VT or the asystole. In fact, I will never forget him looking at me and his son and saying “I am ready, let’s get this over with,” and his son lovingly saying to his father, “Sorry dad, but you are not on that committee.” I could be wrong, but I think God allowed Joe to survive those last few hours not for him to say goodbye, but rather to give some of his loved ones an opportunity to gather at his bedside, pray and be at peace with his death. As a popular Christian song says, “Our God is an awesome God!”

Dr. David Kaminskas is a board certified cardiologist and member of Lutheran Medical Group who has practiced in Fort Wayne since 1982. He is a member of The Jerome Lejeune Guild of Northeast Indiana.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH

Gospel for March 15, 2015

John 3:14-21

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for Fourth Sunday of Lent, Cycle B: an explanation of the plan of salvation. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

MOSES	LIFTED UP	SERPENT
SON OF MAN	ETERNAL	LIFE
GOD SO LOVED	WORLD	BELIEVES
IN HIM	NOT PERISH	CONDEMN
ALREADY	VERDICT	LIGHT
PEOPLE	DARKNESS	EVIL
HATES	EXPOSED	TRUTH

VERDICT

```

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

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

death” — A.N.D.)

He remained unconscious for several minutes but then woke up and began talking to his son who was the only family member at his bedside. Joe had a loving family but most of them, like me, were just being notified of his critical status that morning. His nurse then told me about Joe’s second apparent death, which had occurred just minutes before I arrived. He went into asystole, better known by all as “flat line.” His nurse told me it lasted for four minutes (which I still find hard to believe) and he was sure Joe had died. In all my years of cardiology, I have never seen anybody’s heart stop that long only to begin beating again. In fact, there would be permanent brain damage in most people at that length of time.

As his son sat vigil at the bedside, Joe’s heart began to beat slowly and then back to a normal pattern. He regained consciousness and was transiently confused. This is finally when I entered the room to assess old Joe. He recognized me at once (his brain was fine!) and thanked me for coming. I had an honest conversation with him

A well-earned rest

Those of us who seek to build a culture of life stand on the shoulders of gentle giants. They are ordinary people who — even before Roe v. Wade made abortion on demand legal — responded with extraordinary generosity to defend our most defenseless brothers and sisters.

John (“Jack”) C. Willke, M.D., was one of those giants. He passed away on Feb. 20, at the age of 89, having lost his wife of nearly 65 years, Barbara, two years ago. They raised their family of six children in Ohio, and have 22 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

An inseparable team, Jack and Barbara worked with urgency for over 40 years to show the wonder of human life developing in the womb and to tell the truth about the brutality of abortion. Dr. Willke retired from his family practice to do full-time pro-life work in 1988. Barbara also had a medical background, having been a nurse. Their educational resources, speaking engagements, and media appearances raised public awareness and cultivated a whole generation to fight abortion. Their reach also extended internationally. They spoke jointly in 64 countries; and “The Handbook on Abortion” (just one of 12 books they authored) was translated into over 30 languages, selling approximately 1.5 million copies worldwide.

In 1997, just two years after St. John Paul II’s beautiful encyclical, “Evangelium Vitae” (“The Gospel



LIFE ISSUES FORUM

DIERDRE MCQUADE

of Life”), the Willkes co-authored “Why Can’t We Love Them Both.” It fostered a more charitable tone in pro-life work. They wrote: “Why can’t we all stand with the pregnant woman? Why can’t we tell her that we share the agony of her decision? That we really know of no ‘convenience’ abortions? Why can’t we tell her that we stand with her, not against her? ... In the coming years, the hallmark of the pro-life movement at least, should not be just to save the baby, but to love them both.”

Today, their gentle, non-judgmental approach extends to all who have been involved in abortion. Coupled with God’s unlimited mercy, it invites women and men alike to seek integrated healing of body, mind and soul.

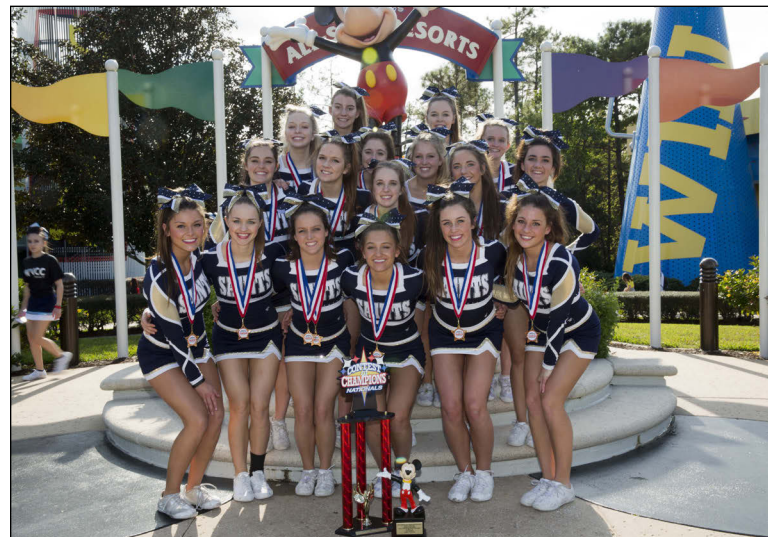
Thank you, Dr. and Mrs. Willke. Thank you for your tireless witness on behalf of the unborn. And thank you for paving the way for so many others to do the same. We pray that you will enjoy a well-earned rest together, surrounded by the modern-day holy innocents you worked so hard to protect.

Sports

USF PLACES NO. 9 IN BASKETBALL COACHES' POLL

In the Final NAIA Division II Men's Basketball Coaches' Top 25 in 2014-15, the University of Saint Francis received its 102nd top 25 ranking and is No. 9 in the poll released Wednesday, March 4, from the NAIA offices.

VARSITY CHEERLEADERS NAMED 2015 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS



PROVIDED BY BISHOP DWENGER HIGH SCHOOL

CYO, ICCL teams claim titles

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — The much-anticipated diocesan tourney for the 2014-2015 basketball season took place at Indiana Tech's Schafer Center on Sunday afternoon, March 8.

In the final showdown, the South Bend ICCL teams rolled into Fort Wayne and claimed the first of the three matchups, while the CYO won the other two.

At a glance, St. Matthew beat Most Precious Blood, 37-18. High scorer for the Reds was Connor Christmas with six points, while Jacob Bishop led the victors with 12.

Next up, in the battle of the birds, St. Charles capped off a stellar season and kept their record unblemished on the year downing St. Joseph, 62-27. The Cards were led by Matt Kochanski with 19 points, and the Eagles had three players with eight a piece: Brennan Horjeih, Conor Raligan and Chris Smith.

Finally, St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel slipped by Holy Cross, 38-33. Chaz Black had 13 for the Crusaders, while Norman Knapke led the



JOE ROMIE

St. Matthew player Jacob Bishop (No. 13) splits two defenders from Most Precious Blood as he drives to the hoop.

Squires with 13 and Walter Knapke chipped in 11.

Certainly a high point for every championship team's season, the annual event has gone on for many years and added special memories for hundreds of young players, most of whom are making their final grade school hoops appearance. Competing on collegiate hardwood,

this year's venue was especially thrilling for the athletes and many thanks go to Indiana Tech for the use of their facilities.

St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel served as host for the 2015 event and a pleased athletic director, Maria Parsenow, reported, "It was a nice time. The boys seem to enjoy it and it all went really well."

The Bishop Dwenger varsity cheerleaders defended their National Championship title in Orlando, Florida, on March 1. This is the fifth title in a row for the Saints and the 10th overall. Senior Alexis Eddy was named "Best Cheerleader" in the individual portion of the competition and received a \$500 college scholarship. Also recognized was senior Emily Tippmann who was named "Most Outstanding Dancer." Seniors on the team are Emily Tippmann, Graisen Proctor, Alexis Eddy, Dominique Effinger, Maggie Houlihan, Lucy Schenkel. Juniors are Grace Gillig, Maria Trahin, Jenna Eckland, Maddy Tippmann. Sophomores are Raina Gulachek, Amy Weillbaker, Jaclyn Grutsch, Katie Eddy, Emily Noye, Sylvia Schenkel with freshman Maggie Schreck. Amy Gonzagowski, Vicki Kuker and Doris Derheimer coach the girls.

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FISH FRIES

Lenten fish fry planned

South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521, 61533 Ironwood Rd., will have a fish fry on Friday, March 13, and on all Fridays during Lent, from 5-7 p.m. Adults \$8.50, children 5-12 \$3.50. Shrimp are also available for \$9.

St. Monica plans rummage sale

Mishawaka — St. Monica Parish will have a rummage sale Saturday, March 21, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the school gym, 223 W. Grove St. Antiques, collectibles and much more. The Rosary Society will have a bake sale with donuts and coffee offered.

Drive-through fish fry

Fort Wayne — The Knights of Columbus will have a fish fry Friday, March 20, from 4:30-7 p.m. at St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel. Cost of meal is \$8. Drive-through only.

St. Patrick's festivities planned

South Bend — The annual St. Patrick corned beef and cabbage dinner will be Saturday, March 14, from noon to 4 p.m. in the St. Patrick parish center gym, 308 S. Scott St. Free admission to live Irish music and dancing. Meal tickets can be purchased at the door — adults \$10, children 6-12 \$3, children under 5 are free. Call 574-287-8932 for information.

Fish and chicken dinner

Monroeville — Cornerstone Youth Center will have a fish and chicken dinner Friday, March 13, from 4-7:30 p.m. at 19819 Monroeville Rd. Tickets are \$8.50 for adults and \$5.50 for children 6-10. Drive-through or carry-out.

Theology on Capp

Mishawaka — High School teens are invited to Theology on Capp

Monday, March 16, from 7-8:45 p.m. at the Knights Hall, 114 W. First St. Sister Marie Morgan will speak. Cappuccino, hot chocolate or soft drinks are free. Guests are welcome to bring snacks.

Trivia night planned at St. John

Goshen — St. John the Evangelist March Trivia Night, will be Saturday, March 14, from 6-9:30 p.m. in the Deacon Art Bleau Parish Center. A table of eight may be reserved for \$80. Ten rounds of trivia will start at 7 p.m. Cost is \$10 per person at the door. Bring your own adult beverages and snacks and socialize from 6-7 p.m. (Adults only) Prizes awarded for best decorated table, best St. Patrick's Day outfit and winning trivia table. Proceeds will benefit the St. John Welcoming Committee. Call 574-533-3385 for more information.

Theology on Tap

Fort Wayne — Theology on Tap for young adults in their 20s and 30s, single or married, will be held at Soups Salad and Spirits, 1915 S. Calhoun St., Thursday, March 19, at 6:30 p.m. The topic "Architecture: Divine Poetry," will be explored with architect William Heyer. Visit www.diocesefwsb.org/TOT for information.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School registration begins

Fort Wayne — St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School 2015-2016 registration begins March 6-17 for current school families. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioners may register from March 18-25 and non-parishioners begin registering after March 25. Enrollment packets can be found at www.seascsfw.org.

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 Send resumes or inquiries to:
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Bernice I. Lard Fernandez, 80, St. Vincent de Paul	Mishawaka John F. Brothers, 73, St. Joseph	South Bend Merlin J. Bellinger, 41, St. Joseph
Fort Wayne Patricia Linda Martinez, 56, Our Lady of Good Hope	New Haven James R. Galligher, 78, St. Louis Besancon	Teresa P. Rector, 88, Our Lady of Hungary
Jelan A. Whitten-Strother, 8, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception	Notre Dame William F. Eagan, 95, Basilica of the Sacred Heart	Arlene Johnson Roseman, 87, St. Augustine
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Unlikely friendship renews faith and inspires many

BY DIANE FREEBY

SOUTH BEND — Faith in God, with a devotion to the Blessed Mother, a desire to help others and a sense of humor are helping two young men as they face the biggest challenges of their lives.

Adam Keszei and Chris Freeby, 2013 graduates from rival Catholic high schools, recently became friends under the most unlikely of circumstances. Recovering from major surgery this winter at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, they met during a group workout session on the seventh floor of a hospital 90 miles from their hometown of South Bend.

Diagnosed as a toddler with cerebral palsy, Chris lived with pain from twisted leg bones his entire life. He dealt with increased pain while overcoming the challenges of academic rigor at Saint Joseph High School in South Bend before finding a surgeon who could correct the problem in his leg. Now Chris is hoping to walk tall, straight and pain-free.

Adam, a college student pursuing his dream of becoming a pilot, saw his life change in an instant after he was pried out of a wrecked car Christmas night. Now paralyzed from the waist down, Adam hopes to find a new normal and do a lot of the things he did before the accident.

"It's going to be a challenge," the Marian graduate admits. "I'm going to have to do things in a new and different way, but that's OK."

Adam was in the back seat of a car, parked on a dirt road, looking at the stars and hanging out with



PHOTO PROVIDED BY DIANE FREEBY

Chris Freeby, left, a Saint Joseph High School graduate, and Adam Keszei, right, a Marian High School graduate, developed a friendship during rehabilitation at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago.

friends on Dec. 25, 2014. The last thing he remembers is someone saying, "We're gonna get hit!" When Adam regained consciousness, his knees were in his face and he couldn't feel his legs. Adam says he never panicked and had an unexpected feeling of peace even as rescue workers used the Jaws of Life to pull him from the car. Airlifted to a nearby hospital where he had emergency back surgery the next day, doctors said he had a 1 percent chance of ever walking again.

"As a Catholic, I know that whatever happens, a lot of good can

come out of it even though it's a bad thing," recalls the 20-year-old, who says that feeling of peace never left him. "At the same time, friends of my parents and other people were seeing my story and becoming inspired. Apparently that was helping a lot of people and I was very happy with that. It really helped me get through the whole thing."

Meanwhile, Chris was struggling with the pain of having bones broken and rearranged during surgery, fastened together with metal plates and screws. Tendons were cut and stretched and he was fitted for leg

braces. Despite his good prognosis, the immediate pain was overwhelming, until he met Adam.

"I really learned a lot from Adam," explains Chris. "It's interesting, he should be learning more from me because I've always had a disability! I've learned to have more faith, to believe things will get better. You have to take every day as it's given. I trust because as Catholics we are called to believe in God and to have faith in others."

These Marian and Saint Joseph High School grads leaned on each other.

"When I was able to help Chris," says Adam, "that really helped me. It gave me happiness. At the same time Chris helped me, too, directly, by his prayers and his love and support for me."

Chris is looking forward to getting back to his job as a food server at Holy Cross College, and his volunteer work at Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center. Being there for Adam helps him realize that even if he's not at full-speed physically, he can still serve others.

Adam and Chris joke a lot, and as hospital roommates shared some conversations they couldn't have with most people. A small statue of Mary and a few rosaries scattered about the otherwise clinical hospital room revealed a shared devotion to Our Lady.

"I try to pray the rosary every day," says Adam, who admits he returned to his faith after straying a bit during his first year of college.

Chris says he's been blessed by pilgrimages made to Marian shrines where he felt more open to going to daily Mass and praying more.

"That's the way Adam is," adds Chris. "He's the kind of person

who's open to those things. And he's opening up himself to help me become a better person."

Just before his accident, Adam delved into Marian consecration, completing the 33 Days to Morning Glory devotion, as well as the longer version by St. Louis de Montfort.

"I believe in the special graces ... I've seen them in action and they've really helped me. They've actually strengthened my faith, too, because I've seen things that seem impossible actually happen."

Like the progress he's made since December. Brought to RIC flat on his back, Adam is now able to do wheelies in his souped-up chair and use adaptive gear to stand upright and get in and out of the family car.

"I know a lot of people are praying for me," explains Adam when he's asked how he remains so upbeat. "Honestly, it makes me feel happier than I felt before the accident."

Finally returning home to South Bend in early March, Adam is eager to continue moving forward. Still interested in aviation, Adam isn't ruling out someday becoming a pilot.

"If that's not what I'm supposed to do, then I'll find out," says Adam. "If it's God's will, then the doors will keep opening and if not, they'll close."

Faith and humor sustain their friendship, as Chris maintains he and Adam are "like brothers from another mother!"

Recalling what he's learned from his new friend, Chris says he tries to look at the big picture.

"Every day is a new day and you just have to trust it will get better."

argued that the mandate's purpose "is to discriminate against religious institutions and organizations that oppose abortion and contraception."

In the original 7th Circuit ruling, Judge Richard Posner, joined by Judge David Hamilton, said Notre Dame has the option of following the accommodation that says employers who object to the coverage on moral grounds can fill out a form and direct a third party to provide the coverage to their employees.

Posner wrote: "If the government is entitled to require that female contraceptives be provided to women free of charge, we have trouble understanding how signing the form that declares Notre Dame's authorized refusal to pay for contraceptives for its students or staff, and mailing the authorization document to those companies, which under federal law are obligated to pick up the tab, could be thought to 'trigger' the provision of female contraceptives."

In a statement, Mark Rienzi, senior counsel of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, which represents many plaintiffs who are challenging the mandate, described the Supreme Court's remand order as "a major blow to the federal government's contraception mandate."

SCOTUS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

religious rights of the owners of the businesses. It said under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act such "closely held" companies can assert religious views that protect them from the mandate.

The mandate — under rules issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services — requires nearly all employers to cover contraceptives, sterilizations and some abortion-inducing drugs in employee health insurance plans. It includes a narrow exemption for some religious employers that fit certain criteria. Religious employers that are not exempt can comply with a third-party accommodation.

Dozens of lawsuits in process around the country raise questions related to compliance with the law for schools, private employers, religious orders, faith-based media companies and others. Some of those lawsuits are based on the employers' objections to the process required to seek an accommodation or exemption.

In its lawsuit, Notre Dame



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