Fear becomes sin when it leads to hostility toward migrants, pope says

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Being afraid and concerned about the impact of migration is not a sin, Pope Francis said, but it is a sin to let those fears lead to a refusal to help people in need.

“The sin is to allow these fears to determine our responses, to limit our choices, to compromise respect and generosity, to feed hostility and rejection,” the pope said Jan. 14, celebrating Mass for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

While fear is a natural human reaction, he said, “the sin is to refuse to encounter the other, the different, the neighbor, when this is in fact a privileged opportunity to encounter the Lord.”

Thousands of migrants and refugees now living in Rome, but coming from more than 60 countries, joined Pope Francis and an international group of cardinals, bishops and priests for the Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica.

Sixty of the migrants and refugees carried their homeland's national flags into the basilica before the Mass and hundreds wore the national dress of their countries.


For Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Human Life

God our Creator, we give thanks to you, who alone have the power to impart the breath of life as you form each of us in our mother’s womb. Grant, we pray, that we, whom you have made stewards of creation, may remain faithful to this sacred trust and constant in safeguarding the dignity of every human life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Collect for Jan. 22, Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children
SANTIAGO, Chile (CNS) — Pope Francis arrived in Santiago, the first stop on a seven-day, six-city visit to Peru and Chile, where he is taking his message of hope to people on the margins of society.

Arriving in Santiago after more than 15 hours in the air, Pope Francis was greeted by Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and a young Chilean girl. He told the crowd he was happy to be in Chile, and he blessed the workers at the airport before being transported to the papal nunciature, where he will stay the three nights he is in Chile.

On Jan. 17, the pope planned to travel to Temuco and meet with residents of the Mapuche indigenous community. Members of the Mapuche have called for the government to return lands confiscated prior to the country’s return to democracy in the late 1980s.

“Chile won’t be too difficult for me because I studied there for a year and I have many friends there and I know it well, or rather, well enough. Peru, however, I know less. I have gone maybe two, three times for conferences and meetings,” the pope told journalists aboard the papal flight.

There was no mention of increased security for the Chilean visit. Three days earlier, several Chilean churches were firebombed, and police found other, unexploded devices at two other churches in Santiago. Some of the pamphlets included the phrase, “The next bombs will be in your cassock” and spoke of the Mapuche cause.

Before heading to Peru Jan. 18, Pope Francis will visit Iquique, where he will celebrate Mass on Lobito beach.

In Peru Jan. 18-21, he will visit Lima, Puerto Maldonado and Trujillo.

He will also meet with the indigenous people of the Amazon during his visit to Puerto Maldonado. The Amazon rainforest includes territory belonging to nine countries in South America and has experienced significant deforestation, negatively impacting the indigenous populations in the area and leading to a loss of biodiversity.

In both countries, he hoped to restore trust and encourage healing after scandals left many wounded and angry at the Catholic Church.

Shortly after take-off from Rome, Greg Burke, Vatican spokesman, distributed a phone card the pope wished to share with journalists aboard his flight from Rome.

The photo depicted a young Japanese boy shortly after the bombing in Nagasaki, waiting in line, carrying his dead baby brother on his back to the crematorium. On the back of the card, the words “The fruit of war” were written along with Pope Francis’ signature.

Before greeting each of the 70 journalists, the pope said that he found the photo “by chance” and “was very moved when I saw this.”

“I could only write ‘the fruit of war. I wanted to print it and give it to you because such an image is more moving than a thousand words,” he said.

Responding to a journalist’s question about nuclear war, Pope Francis said: “I think we are at the very limit. I am really afraid of this. One accident is enough to precipitate things.”

The Peru-Chile trip is Pope Francis’ fourth to South America. In July 2013, he visited Brazil for World Youth Day. In July 2015, he traveled to Ecuador, Bolivia and Paraguay.

His trip to Colombia in September was his third visit to the continent as pope.

Contributing to this story was Jane Chambers in Santiago.

Pope asks forgiveness from victims of clergy sex abuse in Chile

SANTIAGO, Chile (CNS) — Pope Francis has spoken about his pain and shame at the irreparable damage caused to children by the crimes of sexual abuse committed by members of the clergy.

Addressing government authorities and members of the country’s diplomatic corps Jan. 16, the pope expressed his “pain and shame at the irreparable damage caused to children by some ministers of the church.”

“I am one with my brother bishops, for it is right to ask for forgiveness and make every effort to support the victims, even as we commit ourselves to ensure that such things do not happen again,” he said.

Preparations for Pope Francis’ visit to Chile Jan. 15-18 were overshadowed by continuing controversy over the pope’s decision in 2015 to give a diocese to a bishop accused of turning a blind eye to the abuse perpetrated by a notorious priest.

The pope’s appointment of Bishop Juan Barros as head of the Diocese of Osorno sparked several protests — most notably at the bishop’s installation Mass — due to the bishop’s connection to Father Fernando Karadima, his former mentor. Father Karadima was sentenced to a life of prayer and penance by the Vatican after he was found guilty of sexually abusing boys.

The protests against the pope’s appointment of Bishop Barros gained steam when a video of Pope Francis defending the appointment was published in September 2015 by the Chilean news channel Ahora Noticias. Filmed during a general audience a few months earlier, the video showed the pope telling a group of Chilean pilgrims that Catholics protesting the appointment were “judging a bishop without any proof.”

But Pope Francis made his way to La Moneda, the presidential palace, and welcomed by Chilean President Michelle Bachelet. Thousands were gathered in the square outside the palace, chanting “Francis, friend, Chile is with you.”

In his speech to the country’s political leaders, Pope Francis emphasized the need for officials to listen to the people and to value their experiences, cultures, sufferings and hopes.

Included in the pope’s list were “children who look out on the world with eyes full of amazement and innocence and expect from us concrete answers for a dignified future.”

At that point he told the officials, “I feel bound to express my pain and shame at the irreparable damage caused to children by some ministers of the church.”

The pope’s acknowledgment of the crimes of sexual abuse committed by members of the clergy was met with a loud applause from the government authorities present.

Looking at the country’s social and political life, Pope Francis congratulated the nation for its steady growth in democracy since 1990 when the rule of Gen. Augusto Pinochet ended.

The recent presidential elections in November, he said, “were a demonstration of the solidity and civic maturity that you have achieved.”

“That was a particularly important moment, for it shaped your destiny as a people founded on freedom and law, one that has faced moments of turmoil, at times painful, yet succeeded in surmounting them. In this way, you have been able to consolidate and confirm the dream of your founding fathers,” the pope said.
Catholics condemn ‘racist’ comments attributed to president

BY RHINA GUIDOS

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Some Catholics said it was more important to look at the sentiment, not the vulgarity of the words the president of the United States allegedly used to refer to immigrants from certain countries: Disparaging, hateful, racist.

Those are the words some Catholic organizations used to describe how they view the profane comments attributed to U.S. President Donald Trump at a Jan. 11 meeting about immigration.

On Jan. 12, Sen. Richard J. Durbin, D-Illinois, said the president used profanity to refer to people from certain countries, and other “things that we hate-filled, vile and racist” during a meeting about immigration, and at least one Republican senator, Sen. Lindsey Graham, confronted him about it.

In a statement following the reports, the National Black Catholic Congress said it condemned the remarks.

“As people of faith, concerned with the dignity of all of God’s people, we deplore such racist and hateful speech,” the group said.

While speaking to the press, Durbin said the comments, made while trying to hash out a deal on immigration, came after he was listing the countries with the highest number of people who benefit from Temporary Protected Status and include Haiti, El Salvador and some African nations, countries that, one by one, have seen the protection evaporate since Trump took office.

Trump questioned why the U.S. would accept more immigrants from Haiti and “(expletive) countries.”

And it was “especially appalling” that the president “graphically enumerated the countries he feels for people in struggling nations” during a week when the Catholic Church in the U.S. was marking National Temporary Protected Status Week, Atkinson said. The U.S. Catholic bishops instituted National Migration Week — observed this year Jan. 7-14 — to reflect on the circumstances confronting migrants, immigrants, refugees, and human trafficking victims.

“We call on the president to apologize to the people of all the nations he slandered and to the American people,” Atkinson said.

“We ask members of Congress and other leaders to denounce these slurs. They do not reflect who we are as Americans. The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas in a statement said they found it appalling that Trump would use “vulgar and offensive words about immigrants from certain countries.”

“Because he was a World War II Dutch prisoner of war, Bavo. “Because he was a World War II Dutch prisoner of war, Bavo.”

Trump comments ‘harsh, offensive,’ Vatican newspaper says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In its continuing coverage of the U.S. immigration debate, the Vatican newspaper noted media reports that President Donald Trump “used particularly harsh and offensive words about immigrants” from several countries.

“No agreement on Dreamers” was the headline on the lead story for L’Osservatore Romano’s edition dated Jan. 13 and published late Jan. 12. In the past few days, the paper reported, “the tension on the theme of immigration has risen noticeably” with Trump and a bipartisan group from Congress meeting Jan. 11 to discuss a measure that would keep the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program intact, but also include Trump’s demands for a border wall.

Meanwhile, “the tension on the theme of immigration has risen noticeably” with Trump and a bipartisan group from Congress meeting Jan. 11 to discuss a measure that would keep the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program intact, but also include Trump’s demands for a border wall. The program, known by its initials DACA, protects from deportation between 700,000 and 800,000 young people illegally brought to the United States as children. Based on media reports about the meeting, L’Osservatore said, “Trump used particularly harsh and offensive words about immigrants from El Salvador, Haiti and some African countries. The expressions immediately gave rise to controversy and indignation.”

Funeral services take place for Deacon Paul Dits

SOUTH BEND — Deacon Paul Dits, an ordained deacon of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, died Jan. 11 at the age of 88.

After his youth and initial schooling in the Netherlands, Paul Dits came to the United States in 1947 following service in World War II and two years as a German-held prisoner of war. He was married to Anna, who survives. They raised seven children.

He was ordained to the diaconate on June 12, 1974. As a deacon in this diocese he served at St. Jude Parish, South Bend, and St. Monica and St. Stavo parishes in Mishawaka. Deacon Dits also ministered as a jail chaplain in St. Joseph County jail and brought holy Communion to patients at Healthwicn, Memorial and St. Joseph hospitals. He also baptized some of his grandchil

Dits was assigned to the Church and served for missions in Haiti, Guam, El Paso, Texas, and East St. Louis, Illinois. Among countless causes, he worked for decades in Haiti, including a Dutch priest, Father Bohnen, who ran schools for poor kids. Mission trips also took him to Guatemala and Mexico.

Deacon Dits was assigned to St. Monica Parish in 1984 and worked under Father Thaddeus Kwak, helping in any way he could.
For ‘Dreamers,’ U.S. is the only home they know

BY RUBY THOMAS AND JESSICA ABLE

SPRINGFIELD, Ky. (CNS) — In response to Pope Francis’ call for Catholics to “Share the Journey” of their lives with one another under a two-year program introduced in September, the following stories relate the experiences and hopes of young Catholic immigrants who worship at St. Dominic Church in Springfield, Kentucky.

For now, they are protected by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program but that program is set to end in March unless Congress passes the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act, or DREAM Act.

Yuliana Ortega, 15, is a student at Washington County High School. Ortega came to the U.S. from Jalisco, Mexico, when she was just a year old.

Ortega said she fears having to leave her friends and family in Springfield once the DACA program ends.

“I don’t know anything about Mexico. I don’t know where I would go,” she told The Record, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Louisville.

Ortega, who juggles school and work at the restaurant her family manages, said she wished she wasn’t judged because of her race. Following high school, she hopes to work one day as an interpreter.

“We have goals and things in our lives we want to reach,” she said.

Wendy Hernandez, 21, is an English-language tutor for Washington County Schools. Hernandez came to the U.S. when she was 6 years old with her mother and two siblings. She said her mother fled Guernavaca, Mexico, to escape physical abuse. She considers the U.S. and Springfield, in particular, her home.

Since Hernandez learned of President Donald Trump’s decision to cancel DACA, she has found her future to be uncertain.

“It’s kind of scary because I don’t know what is going to happen,” she said. “My career, everything, is in their (lawmakers’) hands.”

Hernandez said there are several misconceptions concerning “Dreamers,” as DACA youth are sometimes called.

“We don’t get all the benefits everyone believes we do. We have to work harder than others to be able to go to school or to get a job sometimes,” she explained.

She said she worries about being forced to return to a country she does not know. If she could speak to legislators, she would tell them to “get to know us.”

“Get to know a little about us and see how we are trying to help our community. We have ambition and goals in our life for our future.”

Carlos Guzman, 26, is owner and operator of Longview Roofing in Lebanon, Kentucky. Guzman, said ending the DACA program would have a devastating ripple effect in his life.

Not only would he be taken away from his home, family and faith community, but he would be stripped of his livelihood, a business he has worked hard to build, he said.

“I think a lot of people don’t realize we work hard to have a better future. We try our best to contribute to this country. We pay our taxes, we create jobs and we contribute to the economy,” he said.

Guzman, who was brought to the U.S. from Sonora, Mexico, at 14, said people should not judge each other solely based on what others are saying.

“I’m sure every parent wants a better future for their children. Some may think it was probably wrong (for our parents) bringing us here, but what would you do for your child?” he said.

Guzman’s parents decided to bring him and his three brothers to the U.S. to avoid the constant violence they faced.

“It’s a big sacrifice because they left behind their parents and family. When family members die, it’s hard for them not being able to go back,” he said.

Dora Lozano, 18, is a student at Elizabethtown Technical and Community College, where she is studying Spanish and special education. Lozano said she has no memories of her native Mexico City, which she left with her family for the U.S. when she was 3 years old.

“I’m scared to lose everything. This is all I know,” she said.

If given the opportunity, Lozano said, she would ask legislators to try to understand the situation from her point of view.

“We didn’t come here to harm anyone; we came here to have a better life. This program (DACA) helps us to reach our goals. We don’t want it to be taken away.”

Juan Saucedo, 16, is a junior at Washington County High School and wants to become a diesel mechanic. He came to the U.S. from Aguascalientes, Mexico, when he was 4 years old.

Saucedo applied for DACA status earlier in 2017 and was in the application process when the Trump administration announced the end of the program. He is unsure of the status of his application.

“Our future is in their hands, but there’s nothing we can do,” the teen said. “We have goals like everyone else. Just because we’re Hispanic or a different race doesn’t mean we don’t have goals.”

Manuel Hernandez, 25, is a senior at Eastern Kentucky University where he is studying computer networking and security. He came to the U.S. with his two siblings, including sister Wendy, and their mother, when he was 13 years old.

Hernandez said he and other DACA youth contribute “to this country in many ways.”

“We’re students, we have jobs,” he said. “This is our home; I don’t think any of us want to go back.

“I said it’s difficult to fight against a narrative that depicts immigrants as ones who take jobs from others and demeans them. We’re not just a stereotype. We don’t steal jobs. We’re not criminals. We’re trying to contribute as much as possible.”

Thomas and Able are on the staff of The Record, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Louisville.
Payday lending bill makes practice more equitable for borrowers

INDIANAPOLIS — A bill to make payday lending more equitable for borrowers is under consideration at the Indiana General Assembly this year. The Indiana Catholic Conference supports the proposal.

Senate Bill 325, authored by Sen. Greg Walker, R-Columbus, would cap fees and the interest collected on the loan to 36 percent annually. Current law allows up to a 391 percent APR.

“A Catholic is called to acknowledge him or her,” Walker, who is an accountant by profession, said the research he’s done on this issue is interesting and it gives support as to why the measure should address it. He said the effect on the customer of the payday loan would be minimal if the borrower was a one-time-a-year customer. “The customers who habitually use payday loans may be less aware of the impact these high rates impose on them, not impose on the average consumer.”

Walker added when looking at payday loans on a state-by-state basis, payday lenders who are not already struggling to meet the weekly and monthly obligations that they have. And in some cases, there is really nothing to file bankruptcy on.

“Where the stresses are more measurable on the emotional and physical strain level,” said Walker. “This level of interest increases and actually compounds that stress on the individual and the family network. A customer for a payday loan is already in financial distress. A lot of the time the borrower is borrowing to pay off another debt, pay a utility bill or put food on the table,” he said.

“There is a difference between interest and usury,” said Walker. “It might be hard for some to draw a bright line between the two. But I draw it at 391 percent.”

Walker also points to alternatives to these products saying many nonprofit, and community development groups are working to step in and help fill the gap for families in financial crisis.

As for its status, Walker said he is working with the committee chairman to get the payday lending bill a hearing, but said nothing definite is scheduled. “I hope to accomplish is to at least have the conversation,” he said. “I think it’s an important issue to talk about and raise awareness that there are better alternatives for people in financial crisis than obtaining a high interest, short term loan.”

A recent report issued by the Boston-based National Consumer Law Center shows 15 states and the District of Columbia have capped payday loans at 36 percent.

In a poll released this month, 80 percent of Hoosiers responded approval of legislation that would cap fees, studied the effects on low income families in states with payday loans versus those without. Their research showed that those with limited means fare far worse in states where payday lending products are available. The study concluded that rather than help a household, payday loans are more likely to create a debt burden and worsens the household’s financial stability.

Walker and others have noted the importance of assisting these families struggling to make ends meet. In states without payday loans, many resort to getting help from family or friends. Some cut back expenses, and there are many churches, government agencies, nonprofit and community organizations working to fill the gap.

Tebbe said, “I am disappointed that the chance is slipping for the payday lending bill to get a hearing.” Senate Bill 325 must receive a hearing before the end of January to advance.

To follow ICC priority legislation, details and get updates, go to www.indianacc.org.

Report abuse

It remains important for our church to protect children and young persons from the evils of abuse. To abuse a child is a sin. The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend remains committed to upholding and following its guidelines, policies and procedures that were implemented for the protection of children and young persons. These can be reviewed on the diocese’s website, www.dioceceswb.org, under “Safe Environment.”

If you have reason to believe that a child may be a victim of child abuse or neglect, Indiana law requires that you report this to civil authorities. If you or someone you know was abused as a child or young person by an adult, you are encouraged to notify appropriate civil authorities of that abuse. In addition, if the alleged abuser is or was a priest or deacon of the Catholic Church, you are encouraged to contact Mary Glowaski, victim assistance coordinator, at 260-399-1458; or mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org; or Msgr. Robert Schulte, vicar general of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, at P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801, 260-599-1419; or mraatz@fw.dioceceswb.org.

The diocese is committed to helping prevent the abuse or neglect of children and young people and to assist those who claim to have suffered harm as a result of such abuse.

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MONTECITO, Calif. (CNS) — The founder of a Catholic school in Ventura is among the fatalities caused by mudslides in Southern California, which have left at least 17 people dead and many others missing or injured in Montecito.

About 100 homes were destroyed and hundreds of others were severely damaged in the coastal enclave of about 9,000 people northwest of Los Angeles. Several news accounts said that a mudslide swept Roy Rohter, who founded St. Augustine Academy in Ventura, and his wife, Theresa, from their home in Montecito early Jan. 9. Theresa was rescued and said to be in stable condition, but Roy did not survive. “Roy’s life has been in service to his good, loving and ever-forgiving God,” said Michael Van Hecke, St. Augustine’s headmaster. “He has done so much for so many people and pro-life and Catholic education causes. ... Thousands have been blessed by the Rohters’ friendship and generosity.”

Heavy rains triggered the mudslides in an area ravaged a month before by wildfires. The Associated Press described a “torrent of mud, trees and boulders that flowed down a fire-scared mountain and slammed” into Montecito in Santa Barbara County Jan. 9.

Don’t rush through silence at Mass, pope says at general audience

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The silence that precedes the opening prayer at Mass is an opportunity for Christians to commend to God the fate of the Church and the world, Pope Francis said.

Departing from his prepared text and his weekly general audience Jan. 10, the pope urged priests “to observe this brief silence and not hurry. I recommend this to the priests. Without this silence, we risk neglecting the reflection of the soul,” he said. Continuing his series of audience talks on the Mass, Pope Francis spoke about the Gloria and the opening prayer. After the encounter between “human misery and divine mercy” experienced in the penitential rite, the faithful are invited to sing the ancient hymn of praise that was sung by the priests. “The Gloria consists of praise that was sung by the angels after Christ’s birth, the pope said.

Catholics urged to ignore rhetoric, help immigrants facing deportation

NEW YORK (CNS) — Catholics have a responsibility to look past the noisy rhetoric of the current debate on immigration and answer the “cry of the poor” by engaging with individuals facing deportation. That was the focus of a National Migration Week discussion Jan. 11 at the Church of St. Francis Assisi in New York examining the plight of individuals affected by President Donald Trump’s Jan. 25, executive order on deportation. Presiders discussed practical actions to extend Christian charity and seek justice.

National Migration Week began Jan. 7 and ends with the World Day of Migrants and Refugees Jan. 14. “We’re talking about being correct with our faith response as Christians. Are detention and deportation the right solutions?”

Franciscan Father Julian Jagiullia asked the participants. “Are we here for our interests or the interests of the people we serve?”

Father Jagiullia, director of the Migrant Center at St. Francis of Assisi since 2012, detailed routes to legal immigration and said there are more than 12 million people who face removal from the United States because of an irregular or precarious immigration status.

Belgian Catholics concerned about abuse of euthanasia law

OXFORD, England (CNS) — Catholics in Belgium are concerned the country’s euthanasia law is being abused to kill patients without legal checks and safeguards. Auxiliary Bishop Jean Kockereels of Mechelen-Brussels said “not just the Church’s hierarchy, but doctors and medical professionals as well” were concerned.

On Jan. 9, the Belgian church’s CatholXL news agency published an article saying the Federal Euthanasia Control and Evaluation Commission violated its statutes by failing to refer suspected legal abuses for investigation.

“IT’s shocking that, 15 years since its creation, this commission has not referred a single file to prosecutors or condemned a single doctor,” the Catholic report said. “It is acting as judge and jury, and not fulfilling its role. It isn’t broadening application of the law, but violating it.”

Bishop Kockereels told Catholic News Service. Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, apostolic administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, told CNS, “Nothing should prevent Jerusalem from being a national symbol for the two peoples. Any unilateral decision is not a solution,” he said.

“Jerusalem cannot be reduced to a dispute. It is something much more than that.”

Israel border police arrest a Palestinian man near Ramallah, West Bank, during a late-December protest against U.S. President Donald Trump’s decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Church and political leaders in the Middle East are intensifying efforts to combat U.S. President Donald Trump’s unilateral decision and his plans to move the U.S. embassy there. “The two-state solution is accepted by all the world, including the Vatican. It corresponds to the legitimate resolutions passed by the United Nations,” Auxiliary Bishop William Shomali of Jerusalem, patriarchal vicar for Jordan, told Catholic News Service. Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, apostolic administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, told CNS, “Nothing should prevent Jerusalem from being a national symbol for the two peoples. Any unilateral decision is not a solution,” he said.

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**Education for Ministry unit on catechesis**

FORT WAYNE — The Education for Ministry Program began in 1991 and is the foundational catechetical training program for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. This program gives Catholic schoolteachers in kindergarten through grade eight the doctrinal background to prepare students for living a life in Christ as they grow and mature. Parish directors of religious education, catechists, those involved in parish ministry, parents and the laity are also highly encouraged to complete basic certification in the Education for Ministry program to grow in a deeper knowledge and love of the Catholic faith.

This unit of the certification program will introduce the vision and method of catechesis. The vocation of the catechist, 'Six Tasks of Catechesis' and the pedagogy of faith will be addressed. In addition, participants will focus on the practical aspects of catechesis such as implementation of the Diocesan Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines, integration of the faith within the classroom and teaching children with special needs. Due to the subject material, this unit will be highly collaborative. Class will be held on Thursday evenings, Feb. 15 and 22, March 1 and 8. To register please visit [www.dioceseyfwsb.org/Education-for-Ministry-Program](http://www.dioceseyfwsb.org/Education-for-Ministry-Program). Registration closes on Wednesday, Feb. 7 or at the first 40 registered participants.

For more information, contact Janice Martin at jmartin@dioceseyfwsb.org or call 260-399-1411.

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**Forever Learning Institute lists spring classes**

SOUTH BEND — Area residents who are ready to learn a new language, dig deeper into their spirituality or maybe brush up on their iPad skills should mark their calendars for Feb. 20, when registration for these classes and over 90 more will open at Forever Learning Institute.

The wide variety of class topics, taught by a full-volunteer faculty, will include health and fitness, creative arts, music, history, language, literature and technology. Classes begin March 5 at Forever Learning Institute’s main campus, the Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley, Southfield Village, St. Joseph County Parks and Fernwood Botanical Gardens.

Students may register for classes by mail or in person at Forever Learning Institute, located in St. Therese Little Flower Parish Center, 54191 Ironwood Road, South Bend, on Feb. 20, 21 and 22. All classes are $45 each. View all course offerings online at [www.foreverlearninginstitute.org](http://www.foreverlearninginstitute.org) or call the Institute at 574-282-1901 to reserve a course guide.

Forever Learning Institute Inc., is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to improve the quality and dignity of senior adult life through continuing intellectual challenge, spiritual reflection and social interaction. Classes are available to those 50 years of age and older.

For more information contact Eve Finnessy, executive director, at 574-282-1901, or director@foreverlearninginstitute.org.

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**Bishop designates ‘Catholic Radio Sunday’**

FORT WAYNE — Expressing gratitude for a lay apostolate that transmits quality Catholic programming across the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades recently designated the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time as Catholic Radio Sunday.

Catholic Radio reaches people whom priests might not encounter in their ministry; people who are searching, people who are hungry for the truth of the Gospel, theunchurched and Catholics who are inactive in the practice of the faith, he said.

“I believe so strongly in Catholic radio’s power to evangelize that I (…) do a weekly broadcast called ‘Truth in Charity’ that airs Wednesdays at noon and replays Saturdays at 11 a.m.,” Bishop Rhoades said. “The show not only provides another medium to teach, it also gives me an opportunity to connect with (listeners) in an approachable way.”

This year, during Masses on Jan. 21, prayers will be offered for the mission of Catholic radio.

Redeemer Radio encourages worshippers and listeners to pray, volunteer and offer financial support as they are able.

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**Josephine’s Hope combats scourge of human trafficking**

FORT WAYNE — Nine days of prayer, awareness, education and involvement will take place in Fort Wayne in an effort to end human trafficking, or modern-day slavery.

Josephine’s Hope is an effort of the Mission and Values Integration Committee of the University of Saint Francis. The prayer events of the project will be a presentation by Alyssa Ivanson, WANE-TV investigative reporter. Last year, she presented a series on human trafficking in Fort Wayne titled “Hidden Predators.” Her presentation for Josephine’s Hope, titled “Hidden Predators: The state of sex trafficking in Fort Wayne” will take place at 7 p.m.

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**Retrouvaille can help marriages**

INDIANAPOLIS — Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue … or have you stopped talking to each other? Retrouvaille is a worldwide program that offers tools needed for hurting couples to rediscover a loving marriage relationship. For more than 30 years, the program has helped hundreds of thousands of couples heal their hurting marriages. To learn more about the program or to register for the Feb. 23-25 weekend and follow-up post-weekend sessions in Indianapolis, visit the websites [www.HelpOurMarriage.com](http://www.HelpOurMarriage.com) or [www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org). Email RetrouIndy@gmail.com or call 317-489-6811 for confidential registration information.

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**‘Oh, say, can you see...’**

Students from various Allen County nonpublic schools recently sang the national anthem at a Mad Ants Basketball game. Schools represented included Most Precious Blood, St. Charles and Holy Cross Lutheran. This was a first-time event, where every nonpublic school in Allen County was invited to the game. Children had free tickets and adults had reduced-amount tickets.
**RESPECT LIFE**

“Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.”

—Pope Francis

St. Patrick Church
ARCOLA

Human Life is Precious from Conception until Death

Always Choose Life

St. Bavo Parish
Mishawaka

“Take my hand... not my life!”

St. Stanislaus Kostka
55756 Tulip Road
New Carlisle, Indiana

**Allen County Right to Life March for Life 2018**

January 27th: 12pm Rally, 1pm March
University of St. Francis Perf. Arts Center

**St. John the Baptist**

New Haven, IN

**RESPECT LIFE**

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**Is contraception part of the solution or part of the problem?**

**By Lisa Everett**

Jan. 22 marks the 45th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the infamous Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion on demand in our nation. Since that fateful day, almost 60 million innocent unborn children have lost their lives through methods which would constitute cruelty to animals in the minds of most Americans. In the decades since Roe became the law of the land, many well-meaning people have proposed that better access to contraception is part of the solution to the problem of abortion. Even within the pro-life movement, conventional wisdom often dictates neutrality or silence on the question of contraception. What is becoming increasingly clear, however, is just how closely contraception and abortion are connected. This connection was firmly grasped by “first wave” American feminists such as Susan B. Anthony. Far from insisting on contraception and abortion to regulate procreation, 19th century feminists condemned both. They considered contraception to be “unnatural,” “injurious” and “offensive” to women, and feared that its use in marriage would relegate women even further to being regarded as sex objects by their husbands. More than a century later, Pope Paul VI sounded the same alarm in his prophetic encyclical, “Humanae Vitae,” a quarter-century after “Humanae Vitae” was issued. Contraception attempts to sever the link between sex and procreation, which, if unsuccessful, can be definitively accomplished through an abortion.

Despite their differences of nature and moral gravity, contraception and abortion are often closely connected, as fruits of the same tree. It is true that in many cases, contraception and even abortion are practiced under the pressure of real-life difficulties which nonetheless can never exonerate from striving to observe God’s law fully. Still, in very many other instances, such practices are rooted in a hedonistic mentality unwilling to accept responsibility in matters of sexuality, and they imply a self-centered concept of freedom, which regards procreation as an obstacle to personal fulfillment. The life which could result from a sexual encounter thus becomes an enemy to be avoided at all costs, and abortion becomes the only possible decisive response to failed contraception. It may be that many people use contraception with a view to excluding the subsequent temptation to abortion. But the negative values and consequences of contraception and even abortion are inadvertently fueling its fires. Our only hope is a renewed respect for the timeless Christian ethic regarding sexuality and procreation.

**Tak my hand... not my life!**

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**April-fifty years of legal abortion**

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**May we who have been blessed by the Church’s clear and beautiful teaching lead the way.**
Laity taking their rightful place in pro-life work, ministry

BY MARK PATTISON

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Building a culture of life is not solely the work of bishops and ordained clergy. Laypeople take the lead in diocesan and parish settings, and in independent organizations, to make the case for life.

Johanna Coughlin is one such example, but far from the only one. In her eighth year of working for the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Respect Life Office, she took over as director last year when her predecessor retired.

To Coughlin, it seems to her “I’ve always been in pro-life ministry.” Growing up in Memphis, Tennessee, where her mother was involved with the local Birthright chapter, “we had several young moms stay with us,” she said. When Coughlin was in middle school, she recalled, “one of the moms invited my mom and me to witness the birth of her son.

“I thought I might be drawn to this type of a ministry, maybe as a volunteer, but not as a profession,” she told Catholic New Service. That changed, though. “Initially, I thought I’d be a lobbyist. I was a lobbyist for National Right to Life (Committee) for a very short time,” Coughlin said, but “after getting a family of my own I started working for the archdiocese.”

She said the Baltimore archdiocese has been greatly helpful to her, letting her work part time, and also work from home, as her family has grown to five children, ages 9, 7, 5, 3 and 1. Coughlin’s mother lives with the family and helps out with the children, she added.

There are “so many good and faithful people in our parishes who do the real work, motivating parishioners to come down for the March for Life,” she said. “There are ‘so many good and faithful people in our parishes who do the real work, motivating parishioners to come down for the March for Life,” she said. “There are ‘so many good and faithful people in our parishes who do the real work, motivating parishioners to come down for the March for Life,” she said. “There are ‘so many good and faithful people in our parishes who do the real work, motivating parishioners to come down for the March for Life,” she said. “There are ‘so many good and faithful people in our parishes who do the real work, motivating parishioners to come down for the March for Life,” she said. “There are ‘so many good and faithful people in our parishes who do the real work, motivating parishioners to come down for the March for Life,” she said.

March for Life participants carry a banner past the front of the U.S. Supreme Court building in 2014 in Washington.

in pro-life efforts since 2008, when he started working in the Family Life Office of the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia. He was active in family life and men’s ministries while there, but he also loved speaking — often at lofty days at the State Capitol in Richmond with lawmakers representing districts in the diocese who were not pro-life. “It is,” O’Neill said, “the pre-eminent rights issue of our day.”

In Harrisonburg, he wants to double the turnout for next year’s March for Life. As he was being interviewed by CNS, the diocese sent a news release outlining local respect life efforts: 30 parishes holding holy hours for life, and 13 parishes sponsoring busses to Washington for the march.

“Most of the impetus for the March for Life comes from the parishes. The parishes organize their own buses,” he added. “We centralize that information and promote it, giving people around the diocese an idea of where they can go. We almost have two months dedicated to respect life,” O’Neill noted, with Respect Life Month in October, while “January ends up being a de facto second month for respect life.”

O’Neill’s former boss in Arlington, Therese Bermpohl, has served in various capacities in the pro-life effort for over two decades. In the mid-1990s, she worked for the U.S. bishops in spreading the news about natural family planning. She also taught morality at a Catholic high school in the Washington suburbs and did campus ministry before taking a job with the Arlington diocese 12 years ago. Within a month of her hiring, she became acting director of the diocesan family life office. Last year, she was named executive director of the multipronged Marriage, Family and Respect Life Office.

She keeps her in this ministry, she said, is “just my desire to spread the good news, spread the Gospel." When asked if knowing Jesus Christ has changed her life, right? And having the Church as a vehicle, with all the sacraments,” she continued. “I think it’s a natural thing for me to say. ‘C’mon everybody, you’ve got to get to know the Lord, the Church is still a voice in the wildness, calling us to straighten our path to the Lord. We’re going to heaven, eventually, and the Church is the straightest way to get there.”

For Bermpohl, it was her work at the high school and college that sealed the deal for her. “My oldest child was born with heart complications,” she said. “I saw so many women who had abortions in college or in high school — as young as 16. One came up to me. It was devastating. You see the look on their face. ‘He forgives, he forgives. ‘I can’t forgive myself. ‘Yes, he will, all you have to do is turn to him and you’re forgiven,” she said, recalling their conversation.

“IT’s really kind of powerful, being able to be a catalyst,” she said. “It’s just a privileged position when someone’s so broken and so wounded, to be able to say, ‘Let me show you the way,’ “

Bermphol said. She recalled one woman who came on a pro-life retreat. “She can’t even look up. At the end of her post-abortion healing, she’s like a new person,” she said. “She’s free. And that really is the message of freedom. You’re free. You’re not chained by sin.”

Bermphol, though, continues to worry about the culture. “Human sexuality is the action of God chose to bring human beings into this world, and it’s treated as an extracurricular activity,” she said. And until we get to say that there’s something profound here, I don’t know if we can change the culture.”

Hawkins — no longer a student herself, she founded Students for Life in 2006, a year or so after her college days ended — is busy in the run-up to the March for Life, as are most people engaged in pro-life ministry. Her organization’s national conference takes place the day after the march. “We distribute thousands and thousands of signs” for the march itself, she said CNS. Then she flies to San Francisco for the annual Walk for Life West Coast in that same week by another conference.

She got her start in pro-life activity at age 15, when she said yes to a request from a friend at her church to volunteer that summer at a pregnancy resources center. After that experience, Hawkins said, “it got put on my heart,” and “I wanted to be more.”

She started a pro-life group at her high school in West Virginia and at her college. Hawkins said she can’t find a pro-life faculty member to sponsor the group, but “a professor who was pro-life sponsored the club.” He “didn’t agree, but he thought we should have the right to form a pro-life group on campus.” She said she got known as “the pro-life girl at school.”

These days, “my husband is a great source of support. I can go home at the end of the day and talk about things,” Hawkins said. “My oldest child was born with cystic fibrosis. I have four children, and two were born with CP. In a way, it’s been a huge help in my professional life — keeping things prioritized, keeping things balanced.”

That “dark night of the soul” feeling is not uncommon to those in pro-life ministry. “I think all of us have” felt it, said Kristan Hawkins, founder of Students for Life. She likened it to “trying to swim to the top of the pool and people are trying to dump more water on you.” She said faith gets one through those rough spots.

A great prayer for life is urgently needed, a prayer which will rise up throughout the world. Through special initiatives and in daily prayer, may an impassioned plea rise to God, the Creator and lover of life, from every Christian community, from every group and association, from every family and from the heart of every believer. — Pope St. John Paul II, “Evangelium Vitae,” No. 100.

WASHINGTON — The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, No. 575, designates Jan. 22 as a particular day of prayer and penance, called the “Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children.”

The GIRM states: “In all the Dioceses of the United States of America, January 22 (or January 23, when January 22 falls on a Sunday) shall be observed as a particular day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life and of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion.”

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops adds its voice by saying that “over 56 million abortions since the 1973 decisions of Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton reflect

with heartbreaking magnitude what Pope Francis means by a ‘throwaway culture.’ However, we have great trust in God’s providence. We are reminded time and again in Scripture to seek the Lord’s help, and as people of faith, we believe that our prayers are heard.

As individuals, we are called to observe this day through the penitential practices of prayer, fasting and/or giving alms. Another way to take part is through participating in special events to observe the anniversary of Roe v. Wade.”

Various rallies and marches take place over the next few weeks in parishes across the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. In addition, a state event takes place Jan. 22 and the national March for Life happens in Washington, D.C. Jan. 19.

This year’s March for Life is set for Jan. 19.

“Knowing it’s a call when you can step back from those moments and those conversations and say you’re going,” she added. “I’m inspired by all the people around me. I tell them all the time. ‘You are the guys doing the work, and... making sure these things happen.’ I’m inspired looking at these folks — especially the ones who have done it for so long.”

Thomas O’Neill, head of the Respect Life Office in the Diocese of Arlington, Pennsylvania, had the same issue added to his portfolio six months ago, he told CNS.

This first year is getting a sense of what it’s like to be at, “I’m going down (for the march), witnessing everything, taking notes.”

O’Neill has been involved with heartbreaking magnitude what Pope Francis means by a ‘throwaway culture.’ However, we have great trust in God’s providence. We are reminded time and again in Scripture to seek the Lord’s help, and as people of faith, we believe that our prayers are heard. As individuals, we are called to observe this day through the penitential practices of prayer, fasting and/or giving alms. Another way to take part is through participating in special events to observe the anniversary of Roe v. Wade.”

This year’s March for Life is set for Jan. 19.
Walls between respect life, social justice camps tumble down

BY DENNIS SADOWSKI

WASHINGTON (CNS) — When Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin offered the idea that the Church could approach its concern for protecting human dignity in tackling abortion, euthanasia, poverty and peace under a “seamless garment” during a 1983 speech at Fordham University, there were doubters who said the concept was flawed.

For years, the ideological rift between respect life adherents on the “right” and the peace and justice advocates on the “left” felt wider than the Grand Canyon and nigh impossible to bridge.

It was, some concluded, one Church, two camps. So the work of both continued, largely with limited collaboration.

Such divisions just may be breaking down.

The desire to protect human dignity from conception to natural death is increasingly seen as hinged together.

The consistent life ethic is the focus of the Pittsburgh-based Rehumanize International. Executive Director Aimee Murphy, who is Catholic, helped found the organization after being in prison or the life of an enemy lines or the life of an alien.

“We wanted an organization that could address not only the life of a child in the womb but also the life of the child behind enemy lines or the life of an inmate in prison or the life of a refugee, the life of any human being in any circumstance,” she explained.

While Rehumanize International is nonpartisan and nonsectarian, Murphy acknowledged its work is strongly influenced by Catholic social teaching and that the organization also is shared by many other faiths. In the broadest sense, she said, the work focuses on human rights.

“Among young people, this human rights paradigm is catching on,” Murphy said.

The organization has developed educational material on unjust wars and military conflicts, abortion, euthanasia, suicide, human trafficking, poverty, sexual assault, embryonic stem-cell research, capital punishment and torture. There’s even the current “Nukes Are Not Pro-Life” campaign.

The integration of respect life and social justice concerns is a welcome development among two staff members of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Jonathan Reyes, assistant general secretary for integral human development, and Tom Grenchik, executive director of the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, told CNS such integration is key to the life of the Church.

People have varying interests and areas of expertise and sharing them with society is what it means to be Catholic, Grenchik said.

“That’s the dignity of the human person that motivates the Church, that motivates Catholics to respond with love,” he said.

“Whether it’s the child in the womb or the homeless person or the person with a disability, it’s that God-given dignity that motivates us to respond.”

Reyes said the long-existing divide along left/liberal and right/conservative lines remains little to young people especially. What matters most is upholding human dignity, he said.

This shrinking of the gulf is “more important than ever because the challenges to human dignity are remarkable, whether it’s in the protection of human life or providing people with health care. There are real threats to human dignity right now,” he told CNS.

People also may be seeking answers to basic questions about life and their place in the world in the face of deep polarizations and that it may be the Holy Spirit who has inspired people to set aside differences in response to Pope Francis’ call to be people of mercy for the world.

“It’s really very much Pope Francis’ message,” Grenchik agreed. “We’re supposed to be a hospital and we’re supposed to be in the healing business.”

More information about Rehumanize International is online at www.rehumanizeintl.org.

By Dennis Sadowski
Elkhart County marches for life

Men and women from the Silent No More organization shared their testimony of regret and guilt after they made their abortion-related decisions. Through prayer and help from organizations such as Haven for Healing, they’ve found forgiveness and God’s mercy, and now share the truth of the pain and regret abortion causes. They spoke during the seventh annual Rally and Prayer Walk for Life sponsored by the Elkhart County Right to Life organization Jan. 13.

At left, marchers pray outside the Elkhart County Courthouse. Below, Deacon Jim Fuchs of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Elkhart, left, and Father Matthew Coonan of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Elkhart, lead marchers down Franklin Street — braving the cold as they head toward the offices of Reason Enough to Act, where they offered prayers for the pro-life organization.
Caring for ‘the other America’

In the wake of Donald Trump’s election as president, much has been made of the voters he attracted, usually identified as white, male, small town and rural, working-class Americans. While such statistical generalizations obscure the fact that many who did not fit that stereotype also voted for him, it did attract a great deal of attention to that “other America” that resides between the crowded coastal states and media centers.

Books like “Hillbilly Elegy” by J.D. Vance became must-reads, and punditry was making post-election resolutions to get out of their media bubbles and visit “other America” so that they shocked them on Election Day. Looking at the electoral map of red (Republican) and blue (Democrat) states, one immediately sees the huge scarlet swath that included the South, Midwest and upper Midwest — what is often dismissively referred to as flyover country. Those journalists wanting to see what makes this part of America tick clearly have a lot of ground to cover.

I grew up in California and now reside on the East Coast, but for many years I lived in Indiana, one of those red flyover states. I’ve enjoyed the riotous ethnic and racial diversity of the Washington area, and the Church here reflects this diversity. My parish has a weekly Mass for Nigerian Catholics, throbbing with different rhythms, vivid colors and no concern that it all gets wrapped up in an hour. Nearby, a parish serving a large Hispanic community is standing room only every Sunday.

The needs of these communities are great, and the Church is keenly aware of them. It has sought to help immigrant families and to protect their rights. The bishops know personally young Dreamers brought to this country and growing up in their parishes, and they know also the Church’s strong biblical commitment to the poor and the stranger.

Yet I felt privileged to have experienced my Midwestern parish as a young girl. There were high levels of engagement and stewardship, a simple, heartfelt appreciation of community, a sincerity and generosity that helped me appreciate the values and the spirit of the heartland.

Before the 2016 election, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, a Catholic social research organization, summarized its research about “rural Catholics.” It contrasted folks living in rural states or major urban areas with folks in noncoastal states and rural areas. CARA reported that Catholics living in rural and small town, noncoastal communities had higher rates of religious practice, higher rates of parish involvement, higher rates of financial support of their parish, higher rates of youth engagement as well.

“There may be fewer in the pews in rural America, but they are more connected to their faith and parish than those anywhere else in the country,” the report concluded.

The heartland is ailing, however. It is losing jobs. Its young people are migrating to larger urban areas. Many of the afflictions of the city fester also in the country.

A small town’s small schools have been battered by the decline in families, with divorce and cohabitation increasing increasingly. It is beset by drugs and gang activity. A pastor told me his church was experiencing almost a funeral a week due to drug overdoses.

Catholics have deep roots in these communities, and the Church is uniquely positioned not only to serve the needs of its faithful people but also to give voice to their suffering, as it does for the immigrant, the refugee, the city dweller.

The 2016 election may have caught political observers by surprise, but the Church understands its call is to serve all the marginalized and the hurting, whatever their zip code.

Thank you for your service

Together with another Little Sister, I was invited to represent the Congregation on a somewhat exclusive reception during the Christmas season. We were happy to bring two of our residents along with us. One of them, a 97-year-old veteran of World War II, proudly wore his veteran’s jacket decorated with a host of ribbons. The other, an immigrant and artist, is the widow of a U.S. Navy veteran.

During the reception we sampled the luscious buffet, admired the beautiful Christmas decorations and met a few notable personalities. But what really struck me were the attention and affection the partygoers gave our two residents, especially our veteran airman. Women and men, both old and young, paused to let him pass through the crowd in his wheelchair, offered to wait on him and thank him for his service. More than a few knelt beside him to ask about his military experience and his life story, listening attentively as he sketched out the details of his long life. Our resident felt so special! He returned home beam¬ing and was talking about this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The reverence and esteem of the VIPs we met that day for our elderly residents was moving.

“Thank you for your service.” they kept repeating. Without diminishing in any way the unique contribution of our veterans, it struck me that this is something we should be saying to all of our elders. “Thank you for your service … as sons and daughters, parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles … Thank you for your service as educators, nurses, factory workers, engineers, farmers and business¬men …

More profoundly, we should thank our elders for their wisdom, their faithfulness and their selfless generosity toward us. We owe them a great debt of gratitude for all that they share with us and pass on to us — their faith, their life experience, their family history and the history of our communities and nations. We need to remember our elders, take a lively interest in them and offer them our support so that they will be able to go on contributing to the formation of new generations.

Pope Francis has often said that a people who does not take care of grandparents has no future. Let’s keep this in mind as we begin a new year, and especially as we gather from Washington, D.C., to San Francisco this month to march for the rights of our elders.

The need for our elders to be appreciated is a lesson. Nothing is more important in life than being with Christ, than answering the Lord’s call.

Directly and simply, Paul told the Corinthians that they could accept salvation — or not. We have the same choice.

Follow the Lord instead of seeking temporal pleasures

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Sanctus
Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts...

Nunc dimittis
Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace.

Amen
Nunc dimittis

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Mark 1:14-20

The first reading for this weekend is from the Book of Jonah, an Old Testament writing seldom presented in the liturgy. While Jonah is the central figure of this book, he was not the author. The author is unknown. Scholars believe that the Book of Jonah was written sometime after the Babylonian exile of the Jews.

The reading speaks of Jonah’s visit to Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, located roughly in the region of modern Syria. He went there at God’s command, to preach conversion.

Preaching conversion in Nineveh was a tall order. The Jews who first heard this reading knew exactly how difficult the assignment was. No city on earth had the image of evil and vice that surrounded Nineveh.

Nineveh, after all, was the capital of Assyria. Over the centuries, many neighboring powers invaded and overwhelmed the Holy Land. None of these invaders matched the Assyrians for bloodthirstiness and brutality. To convert the people of Nineveh would be regarded as almost impossible.

For its second reading this weekend, the Church offers us a passage from the First Epistle to the Corinthians. Paul was challenged in leading the Christian Corinthians to a fully developed Christian life. Theologically, it was in reality what Nineveh was symbolically to the ancient Jews. Corinth was known around the Roman Empire as a center of vice and licentiousness. This distinction said very much, since vice and lewdness prevailed throughout the empire.

The apostle called upon the Corinthians of Corinth to remember that time passes quickly, and that life is short. They had before them two options. The first was life in America’s small towns have been battered by the decline in families, with divorce and cohabitation increasing increasingly. It is beset by drugs and gang activity. A pastor told me his church was experiencing almost a funeral a week due to drug overdoses.

Catholics have deep roots in these communities, and the Church is uniquely positioned not only to serve the needs of its faithful people but also to give voice to their suffering, as it does for the immigrant, the refugee, the city dweller.

The 2016 election may have caught political observers by surprise, but the Church understands its call is to serve all the marginalized and the hurting, whatever their zip code.

Thank you for your service.

Together with another Little Sister, I was invited to represent the Congregation on a somewhat exclusive reception during the Christmas season. We were happy to bring two of our residents along with us. One of them, a 97-year-old veteran of World War II, proudly wore his veteran’s jacket decorated with a host of ribbons. The other, an immigrant and artist, is the widow of a U.S. Navy veteran.

During the reception we sampled the luscious buffet, admired the beautiful Christmas decorations and met a few notable personalities. But what really struck me were the attention and affection the partygoers gave our two residents, especially our veteran airman. Women and men, both old and young, paused to let him pass through the crowd in his wheelchair, offered to wait on him and thank him for his service. More than a few knelt beside him to ask about his military experience and his life story, listening attentively as he sketched out the details of his long life. Our resident felt so special! He returned home beaming and was talking about this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The reverence and esteem of the VIPs we met that day for our elderly residents was moving.

“Thank you for your service.” they kept repeating. Without diminishing in any way the unique contribution of our veterans, it struck me that this is something we should be saying to all of our elders. “Thank you for your service … as sons and daughters, parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles … Thank you for your service as educators, nurses, factory workers, engineers, farmers and business¬men …

More profoundly, we should thank our elders for their wisdom, their faithfulness and their selfless generosity toward us. We owe them a great debt of gratitude for all that they share with us and pass on to us — their faith, their life experience, their family history and the history of our communities and nations. We need to remember our elders, take a lively interest in them and offer them our support so that they will be able to go on contributing to the forma¬tion of new generations.

Pope Francis has often said that a people who does not take care of grandparents has no future. Let’s keep this in mind as we begin a new year, and especially as we gather from Washington, D.C., to San Francisco this month to march for the rights of our elders.

Follow the Lord instead of seeking temporal pleasures.

GUEST COMMENTARY

SR. CONSTANCE VEST, LSP

For the early Christians, the kingdom of God was near. “Then the Lord calls Simon...” The apostle called upon the Corinthians to be holy. These four Apostles’ instant response is a lesson. Nothing is more important in life than being with Christ, than answering the Lord’s call.

Directly and simply, Paul told the Corinthians that they could accept salvation — or not. We have the same choice.

GUEST, page 13

READINGS

Sunday: Jan 3:5-10 Ps 25:4-9 1 Cor 7:29-31 Mk 1:14-20
Monday: 2 Sm 5:1-7, 10 Ps 89:20-22, 25-26 Mk 3:22-30
Tuesday: 2 Sm 6:12b-15, 17-19 Ps 24:7-10 Mk 3:31-35
Wednesday: 2 Sm 7:4-17 Ps 89:4-5, 22-23 Ps 137:1-2
Friday: 2 Tim 1:1-8 Ps 96:1-3, 7-8a, 10 Ps 4:24-34
Saturday: 2 Sm 1:12-17, 10-17 Ps 51:12-17 Mk 4:35-41
To be or not to be — parsing the implications of suicide

In recent years we have witnessed a growing tendency to promote suicide as a way of resolving end-stage suffering. Physician-assisted suicide is now legal in a handful of states, and a number of other jurisdictions are considering laws to legalize the practice. A few years ago on “Nightline,” Barbara Walters interviewed an assisted suicide advocate who summed it up this way: “We’re talking about what people want. There are people who, even suffering against a sea of troubles, and by opposing, end them.” He concludes by asking whether we shouldn’t rather “bear those ills we have not always fly to others that we know not of?” Among those who end up committing suicide, whether physician-assisted or otherwise, many will face extenuating circumstances including severe depression or other forms of extreme mental pain. In such cases, it is clear that their moral responsibility will be greatly diminished, as fear and anguish constrict their ability to think and reason clearly. But this is not the case, and some people, with clear mind and directed intention, do choose to end their lives, as appears to have been the case for Britney Maynard. She was the young woman in California who, in the early stages of her brain cancer, carefully arranged and orchestrated her own physician-assisted suicide, establishing months in advance the date and setting, who would be present in the room, what music would be playing as she did it, etc. Such a decision is always a tragedy, and every life, even when compromised by disease or suffering, remains a great gift to be cared for. When freely chosen, suicide is a form of serious wrongdoing and is, in the words of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Gravely contrary to the just love of self. It likewise offends love of neighbor because it unjustly breaks the ties of solidarity with family, nation, and other human societies to which we continue to have obligations.” It leaves behind loved ones to contend with unresolved guilt, shame and pain.

While ending our life may seem to offer an “escape valve” for the serious pressures and sufferings we face, we do well to consider the real effects of this choice both in this life, and in the life to come. In the next life, a preceding act of suicide may deny us the very relief we were seeking, and may, in fact, lead to harsher purification in a new situation of our own making, or, heaven forbid, to a fate far worse than purgatory. Our Lord and His Church care profoundly for those who commit suicide; and even though this act clearly involves grave matter, the catechism reminds us that “We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for full and perfect reparation. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives.” Suicide affects us not only in the here and now, but has significant, even eternal, implications for the journey to that “undiscovered country” that awaits us.

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D., earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org

Sunday readings: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; 1Cor 7:29-31; Mk 1:14-20 and Deut 18:15-20, Mk 1:1-28

ACROSS
1 Italian for “Pope” 25 Compass point
5 Egg layer 26 God gives to prophets
10 Tender loving care 27 Musical concluding passage
11 God repented of this against Nineveh 28 Education in URL
12 God’s warning “illustrious” 29 Gravestone
13 Promissory note 30 Abandon
14 Abs. for a function 31 Param
15 key on keyboard 32 Pity
16 Musical concluding passage 33 Pity
17 Disgust 34 Malaria
18 James and John did to nets 35 Abandoned
19 Jesus’ spread through Galilee
20 Promise 45 Mythical goat figure
21 Compass point 46 Past
22 Muscat 47 Past
23 Compass point 48 Jesus’ spread through Galilee
24 Holy Land: “Wheat” 49 The world is passing

DOWN
1 Form of malnutrition 5 Your own people
2 “Maria” 54 Similar to
3 A word for Gehenna 55 Sticky fastener
4 Old word for alarm 56 Compass direction
5 Jakyl’s alter ego 57 Little bit
6 St. John the Evangelist emblem 58 Top cards
7 Compass point 59 It’s running out
8 It’s running out 10 We eat one ___
9 We eat one ___ 11 Abrupt
12 Be sorry for 12 Irish name meaning
13 Pencil end 13 Gravestone
14 Pencil end 14 Abandoned
15 Cola 15 Pity
16 Expert 16 Musical concluding passage
17 Musical concluding passage 17 Disgust
18 Pencil end 18 James and John did to nets
19 Lion heart 19 Go in search of
21 Coza 20 Irish name meaning
22 Arrogant 21 Rebellious
23 Expert 22 Arrogant
24 Sparse 23 Expert
25 Compass point 24 Sparse
26 Lion heart 25 Compass point
27 Musical concluding passage 26 Lion heart
28 Education in URL 27 Musical concluding passage
29 Musical concluding passage 28 Education in URL
30 Abandon 29 Musical concluding passage
31 Gravestone 30 Abandon
32 Pity 31 Gravestone
33 Pity 32 Pity
34 Malaria 33 Pity
35 Abandoned 34 Malaria
36 Not downs 35 Abandoned
37 Jonah was sent here 36 Not downs
38 List of corrected errors 37 Jonah was sent here
39 Jesus’ spread through Galilee 38 List of corrected errors
40 Japanese city 39 Jesus’ spread through Galilee
41 Gather leaves 40 Japanese city
42 Name of many 41 Gather leaves
43 Spartan kings 42 Name of many
44 Passed 43 Spartan kings
45 Mythical goat figure 44 Passed
46 Ammon 45 Mythical goat figure
47 Past 46 Ammon
48 Jesus’ spread through Galilee 47 Past
49 The world is passing 48 Jesus’ spread through Galilee
50 WWII army women 49 The world is passing
51 Gorilla 50 WWII army women
52 Not “no” 51 Gorilla

Sister Constance Veit is director of communications for the Little Sisters of the Poor.
Now Hiring

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)/Executive Director
Department of Administration
Lafayette, IN

The Catholic Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana is seeking a skilled leader as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Executive Director of the Department of Administration. The CFO is responsible for the overall financial management of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana and the stewardship of fiscal re-sources in support of the mission and goals of the Diocese.

Requirements: A CPA and/or a Master’s degree in finance, financial administration, or related field. Minimum of 5 years in a senior financial role, preferably in a non-profit or a Catholic organization. For more information, contact Jeanne Lausten, Director of Human Resources, (765) 742-0275, ext. 4604, or jlausten@dol-in.org.

We are currently seeking candidates for the position of Diocesan Development Director at our Chancery office in Lafayette, IN. The Diocesan Development Director leads all stewardship and development activities for the central administration of the Diocese. Essential duties of this role include creating a long-term plan for diocesan-level giving, including potentially new or modified annual and biennial giving programs plus, capital campaign and parish-level stewardship programs. The incumbent will oversee all current development programs, such as Fruitful Harvest and Seminarian Appeal, while exploring process improvements. This individual will also serve as a lead staff person on the Board of Directors of the Lafayette Diocesan Foundation, Inc., coordinating the activities of the Foundation and the Board including administering funds, creating and maintaining endowments and creating the Foundation’s annual report.

Qualified candidates should possess a Bachelor’s degree in an area of public administration, marketing, communication, philanthropy or related field and five years’ experience in non-profit fundraising, development or related area. Strong communication, public speaking, and public relations skills are needed, along with excellent organizational development and analytical skills.

To apply, please send resume and cover letter to jlausten@dol-in.org
**What’s Happening?**

**What’s happening?** carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. Send announcements at least two weeks prior to the event. View more Catholic events and submit new ones at www.todayscatholic.org/event. Events that require an admission charge or payment to participate will receive one free listing. For additional listings of that event, please call the Today’s Catholic advertising sales staff at 260-399-1449 to purchase space.

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**Rest in Peace**

The Divine Mercy Funeral Home and Catholic Cemetery are committed to comforting those who mourn while assisting them with planning the funeral rites in accordance with Catholic teaching and practice.

We invite you to consider your funeral service and burial needs now, before the time arises, saving your loved ones from making those difficult decisions. If you have already made pre-planning arrangements through another funeral home, you may transfer those arrangements to Divine Mercy if that is your wish.

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Monday through Friday

To schedule an appointment call 260.426.2044

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**Fort Wayne**
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Dolores M. Eash, 89, St. Vincent de Paul
Michael Thompson, 76, St. John the Baptist
Margaret Ann Shields, 92, St. Vincent de Paul
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James E. Gondek, 78, Christ the King
Garrison Haynes, 90, St. Matthew Cathedral
Michael David Kruek, 39, Holy Cross
Adeline C. Wharton, 87, St. Anthony de Padua
Brad A. Kusmier, 41, St. John the Baptist
Helen Kovacs, 93, Christ the King
Patrick James Richards, 90, St. Joseph
Mary M. Freeman, 86, St. Therese, Little Flower

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**District Council of Catholic Women to present A Mothers Hope**

BESANCON — Guest speaker Stasia Roth, founder and executive director of A Mothers Hope will speak at the DCCW meeting Thursday, Jan. 25, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. at St. Louis Besancon Atrium, 15535 Lincoln Hwy East, A Mother’s Hope offers safe shelter to homeless pregnant women and offers them training and opportunities to improve their lives.

‘Winning Friends for Christ One Conversation at a Time’

FORT WAYNE — St. Vincent de Paul Parish will host “Winning Friends for Christ,” on Wednesday, Jan. 24, at 6:30 p.m. in the St. Vincent Msgr. John Kuzmich Life Center. 1502 E Wallen Rd. Father Thomas Cavanaugh and Thomas Gallagher will discuss the principles of telling others about our faith that can be used in every part of life.

‘The Dignity of Women’

FORT WAYNE — “The Dignity of Women,” a talk by Bishop Dwenger High School theology teacher, Jessica Hayes, will be Wednesday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m., at St. John the Baptist Church, 4500 Fairfield Ave. Contact Stephanie Norris at 260-744-4393 for information.

Chicken and dumpling fundraising event

ANGOLA — A homemade chicken and dumpling fundraising event will be Friday, Jan. 26, from 5-7 p.m. at St Anthony de Padua Church, 700 W. Maumee St. Tickets are $8. All proceeds benefit the Youth Mission trip to the Franciscan Kitchen in Louisville this summer.

Summit Show Choir Invitational

FORT WAYNE — Bishop Dwenger High School will host the Summit Show Choir Invitational on Saturday, Jan. 27, in the main gymnasium. Ticket prices vary. Contact Christy Maloney at 260-496-4162 for information.

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**Now Hiring**

**Business Manager**

Saint Anthony Catholic Church in South Bend seeks a business manager. This is a full-time position with benefits. Qualifications include accounting or business degree. Relevant experience helpful.

Main duties include routine transaction processing; tuition management; cash flow projections; budget development and overall fiscal management of church and school.

Finance Council

c/o Father David Ruppert
St. Anthony Parish
2114 E Jefferson Blvd
South Bend, IN 46617

(574) 282-2308, father@stasb.org

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**Crossword**

January 21 and 28, 2018

The Crossword

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**What’s Happening?**

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**For Today’s Catholic advertising sales staff at 260-399-1449 to purchase space.**

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**Divine Mercy Funeral Home**

**Catholic Cemetery**

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**Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.**

Matthew 5:4

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**St. Anthony de Padua**

Words Teach - Actions Speak

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**The Divine Mercy Funeral Home**

To schedule an appointment call 260.426.2044
Bishop Rhoades’ visit is highlight of new year at Dwenger

BY BONNIE ELBERSON

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades’ pastoral visit to Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne, on Thursday, Jan. 11, was a highlight of the new year for students and faculty. “It is always a special day for BDHS when Bishop Rhoades comes to visit,” said principal Jason Schiffli. “All of us enjoy the opportunity to celebrate Mass with Bishop, and the students love visiting with him during lunch and interacting with him in the classroom.”

The entire student body gathered in the school gymnasium for holy Mass celebrated by Bishop Rhoades and concelebrated by chaplain Father Robert Garrow. The bishop greeted the students and faculty at the beginning of the Mass, and encouraged them to dedicate the new year to the Lord, to become closer to God and to open themselves to His love.

Bishop’s homily clearly resounded with the gathering of young people. He began by saying, “I’d like to talk to you this morning about victory and defeat. Throughout life we experience victories and defeats, successes and failures. It’s part of life. In sports events, you have victories and defeats. In classes and exams, you have successes and failures. … What I want to speak about in this homily is about life as a whole — victory and defeat in life as a whole.

“In the first reading from the Old Testament, we heard about a great defeat for God’s people, the people of Israel. They were defeated in battle by their enemy, the Philistines. It was a disastrous defeat. … the Philistines slew about 4,000 Israelites on the battlefield. After the battle, the elders of Israel wondered why God allowed this great defeat by the Philistines and they decided to enter the next battle with the ark of the Lord, the Ark of the Covenant, with them. They went to the sanctuary of Shiloh and got the holy ark and the whole camp of the Israelites shouted loudly, the reading tells us, when the ark arrived in the camp.”

The Philistines became frightened, thinking that the gods were now on Israel’s side. … but now the Israelites suffered an even more disastrous defeat, said Bishop Rhoades. They again lost the battle and 30,000 foot soldiers, the Philistines captured the ark of the Lord and killed Eli’s two sons.

“What led to Israel’s defeat?” asked the bishop. “When you read the first book of Samuel, you learn that the people had drifted from the Lord. They were living in a worldly manner and even made idols for themselves. … They had lost their relationship with God. They no longer worshiped Him. … They were distant from God. … They had forgotten the God who had saved them in the Exodus. So they suffered a disastrous defeat. … They lost everything.

“In the Gospel we see the opposite, a victory. The leper was a person who could be considered defeated in life. He not only had that terrible disease, but he was cast off from the people because of it. He was considered unclean. He was ostracized. … But what did this leper do? He came to Jesus Christ. He knelt down before Jesus and begged Our Lord to make him clean. He had faith. … The Gospel tells us that Jesus was moved with pity. … Jesus touched him and the leper was cured. This was a victory, not a defeat. … The battle was won in two minutes. In the battle with the Philistines, it took all day and ended with defeat. What’s the difference between these two battles? The leper had faith.

“Defeat comes when we fall away from the Lord. What brings victory? Faith! We can think about the faith of that leper who humbly knelt down before the Lord and asked Him to make him clean. In life, it is faith that gives us the victory.

“Bishop Dwenger High School exists to help you win the victory in your life, to share in the great victory that was won by Jesus through His life, death and resurrection,” he summarized. “It is the victory of truth, goodness and love. (It is) victory over falsehood, evil and hatred. We need faith to win this victory in our lives. It is my prayer that we will all be part of that army of saints that have won the crown of victory, with the help of the woman who is the Queen of All Saints and who helps to win the crown of victory. May God bless all of us with the gift of faith, the faith that leads to victory, to eternal life in heaven.”

Bishop Rhoades spent the day visiting with students in the classrooms and during lunch. His first classroom visit was to Lisa Pehrman’s genetics class, which he called “an important area of study in our culture today.” The students posed several questions about gene editing, assisted reproduc-