Bishops OK medical directives, abuse charter revisions at spring meeting

BY DENISE FEDOROW

Having their voices heard was a common motivation cited by attendees of the Episcopal Region 7 V Encuentro gathering June 8-10 at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend. The gathering was attended by representatives from dioceses in Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana, and several bishops were present as well.

The process of the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino Ministry began at the grassroots level, with discussions in parishes about the needs and resources of the Hispanic community in regard to practicing their faith, evangelization and Church leadership. Representatives from those meetings, which took place in the fall, took their priorities and determined areas of focus first to a diocesan-level Encuentro gathering and now to the regional level. The discussions are building up to the formation of a national document of recommendations for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops regarding vocations, evangelization, family ministries, young adults, immigration status, formation of faith, education and more.

Leadership from 13 of the 16 parishes in the three-state area brainstormed the opportunities and challenges within each ministerial and pastoral area of focus, with the goal of prioritizing them before the national gathering in September. Frederick Everett, Secretary for Evangelization and Discipleship for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, said six or seven of the leaders from each diocese will attend the national gathering.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades was the celebrant for the gathering’s opening liturgy Friday evening. At the Mass that set the tone for the weekend of discussion, worship and reflection, he credited providence for its opening day having fallen on the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

“The Sacred Heart symbolizes the love of God. His infinite love revealed in the pierced heart of His Son; a love that conquers sin and transcends death,” he began, in his homily. “We are called to give witness to this love. The theme of V Encuentro, as you know, is ‘Missionary Disciples: Witnesses to the love of God.’ On this feast day we contemplate that love, the love of God revealed in His Son Jesus, who loved us to the extreme, to the end; and after contemplating and experiencing this love, to give testimony and be witnesses to it.

“In this V Encuentro we reflect on our vocation as missionary disciples to be witnesses to the love of God, to be like St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, who received the revelation of the Sacred Heart — disciples of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I hope that this Encuentro inspires and helps us to spread
Bishops across U.S. condemn separation, detention of migrant children

BY RHINA GUIDOS

WASHINGTON (CNS) — From Denver to New York City, the country’s Catholic bishops have joined a chorus of organizations, institutions and high-profile individuals urging the Trump administration to stop separating children from their parents as they seek respite in the U.S. from dire conditions in their home countries, largely in Central America.

None have been more outspoken, however, than the bishops with dioceses on or near the border between the U.S. and Mexico, where many migrants, adults as well as children, are being held in detention centers in geographic areas where many of the precipitates come into contact with families affected.

“Refugee children belong to their parents, not to the government or other institution. To steal children from their parents is a grave sin, immoral (and) evil,” said San Antonio’s Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller.

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Relatives embrace as they take part in a brief reunification meeting May 2 on the border between Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas.

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Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller June 14 via Twitter, the social media platform he has used to daily call attention to the situation.

“‘Their lives have already been extremely difficult. Why do we (the U.S.) torture them even more, treating them as criminals?’ he continued.

In a June 5 interview with CBS News, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions said: “If people don’t want to be separated from their children, they should not bring them with them.”

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“Asian and Pacific Islanders are ready for pastoral engagement in the Church’s mission of evangelization,” he said.

“Our approval of this document is indicative of an essential pastoral outreach to the mission of the Church in the United States. It’s a response to the call of Pope Francis to go to the peripheries to proclaim the Gospel,” he added. The document has been in the works for more than two years. The bishops engaged in an 85-minute discussion before agreeing to adopt new supplementary materials and a video to complement its long-standing document guiding Catholic participation in the public policy issues. They would supple- ment the bishops’ ‘Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship’ with ‘apply the teaching of Pope Francis to our day.’

The document traditionally has been updated and released about a year before the presidential election every four years, with its last update in 2015. The new materials are expected to be completed in time for the bishops to approve them at their November 2019 general assembly.

The bishops heard that a planned pastoral letter addressing racism is on schedule for a November vote during the bishops’ fall meeting in Baltimore. On the religious freedom front, Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, chairman of the bishops’ Committee for Religious Liberty, said the challenges to religious liberty continue to emerge and that the U.S. Catholic Church will remain steadfast in addressing them to serve the common good.

In response, he explained, the committee has developed a plan to change the narrative about what religious freedom truly means.

The effort will include “chosing our language carefully” through the use of “inspiring and relatable language that promotes the ‘gift’ of religious freedom,” he said. He used the example of faith-based agencies that face the threat of government shutdown because of their religious beliefs.

A second component will focus on telling stories of people facing questions of conscience, such as a nurse who was forced to assist in carrying out an abortion.

The committee’s next action was to focus on Religious Freedom Week, set for June 22-29. Archbishop Kurtz said a series of eight videos examining various issues related to the free practice of faith was planned to be released for the week. Its theme is “Serving Others in God’s Love,” and Catholics were being encouraged to pray and act in support of religious freedom in the U.S. and elsewhere during the week.

Papal diplomat says U.S.-North Korea summit brings hope for peace

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Talks between the leaders of the United States and North Korea are “truly historic” and bring hope for the start of a new era of peace, said Pope Francis’ ambassador to Korea.

“Very important” new page has been turned, Archbishop Alfred Xuereb, apostolic nuncio to South Korea and Mongolia, told Vatican News June 12.

“It marks the beginning of a still long and arduous journey, but we are hopeful because the start has been very positive, very good,” he said.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and U.S. President Donald Trump met on Singapore’s Sentosa island for the historic summit June 12. It was the first meeting between a sitting U.S. president and a North Korean leader. Afterward, Trump said Kim would work to end North Korea’s nuclear program. Trump promised to end joint military exercises with South Korea.

After the summit, Cardinal Andrew Yeom Soung-joon of Seoul, South Korea, and apostolic administrator of Pyongyang, North Korea, celebrated Mass in Myeongdong Cathedral to pray for prompt execution of the summit agreement.

“When I heard the news that there was a meaningful agreement between the two summits in their first meeting, I deeply thanked God to remember our prayers for reconciliation and union of the Korean people,” Cardinal Yeom said in his homily.

“I sincerely wish that the agreement can be promptly executed to achieve the common good not only for Korean people but for all people on the globe.”

He also added prayers for the believers in North Korea to have the freedom of religion and be able to lead human lives as soon as possible.

Archbishop Xuereb told Vatican News the rhetoric has

The Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has made the following appointment:


Priest appointment

The Reverend Dominic Dung Nguyen, S.V.D., has been appointed to Pastor of St. Patrick Parish, Fort Wayne, effective July 2, 2018.

Pope Francis’ ambassador to Korea.

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Was the Church right about contraception?

BY LISA EVERETT

A look at ‘Humanae Vitae’ 50 years later

Fourth in a series on the anniversary

S

o far in this series, we have seen how the love-giving and life-giving purposes of sex are intimately linked because they mirror the inner life of God, who is love. We have also considered how contraception attempts to sever the connection between these twin purposes, and in so doing separates what God has joined. If this is the case, we should expect to see serious fallout in society when the practice of contraception becomes commonplace. Let’s look now at the consequences that Pope Paul VI warned the world about in “Humanae Vitae.”

The Holy Father predicted at the outset that contraception “would open wide the way for marital infidelity.” We saw in the first article in this series striking evidence that the diffusion of contraception in American society in the early 1960s facilitated much more adultery than before, and was the biggest factor that led to the doubling of the divorce rate in one decade. Last, we think this was just a “blip” that occurred on our cultural radar screen in the 60s, a 2014 article published by the American Psychological Association reported that rates of adultery in America remain high: “Infidelity is a common occurrence in marriages, and prevalence estimates for extramarital affairs in the United States have ranged from 20 percent to 40 percent.” (“Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice 2014,” Vol. 3, No. 1, 1-12).

Following the heels of marital infidelity, Pope Paul VI feared a general lowering of moral standards in society. Once we start dismantling sex as God designed it, where do we draw the line? If sex is no longer linked to procreation, must it really be limited to marriage? And why confine such a pleasurable experience to adults? With sex untethered from adult responsibilities like bearing and raising children, can’t teens and even children partake of the fun?

In fact, Pope Paul VI was particularly concerned about the effect this dismantling of God’s design for sex would have on young people. “Not much experience is needed,” the Holy Father reflected, “to be fully aware of human weakness and to understand that human beings — and especially the young, who are so exposed to temptation — need incentives to keep the moral law, and it is an evil thing to make it easy for them to break that law.”

When contraception became socially acceptable and widely available, one of the main disincentives to sex outside of marriage disappeared overnight. The reduction in unplanned pregnancies that the proponents of contraception promised was offset by the far greater numbers of people lured into sexual relationships by the false sense of security that contraception provided.

More people having sex has inevitably led to higher rates of unplanned pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases, especially among young people because, to be highly effective, contraceptives have to be used correctly and consistently. The pill continues to be the most commonly used contraceptive in the United States, and while its perfect use-effectiveness is 98-99 percent, its typical use-effectiveness is only 91-95 percent, according to the Guttmacher Institute, the former research arm of Planned Parenthood. What this means is that, in practice, increased access to contraceptives such as the pill actually leads to increased rates of pregnancy, STDs and abortion, especially among young people. Recent studies in England have reaffirmed that increased access to contraception for teens leads to higher pregnancy and abortion rates, as well as a dramatic increase in STD rates among 16-19-year-old girls.

While there is no doubt that some people continue to promote contraception, sincerely thinking that it will avert the “need” for abortion, the facts paint a very different picture. Contraception attempts to sever the link between sex and procreation which, if unsuccessful, can be definitively accomplished through an abortion. Twenty-five years after “Humanae Vitae,” St. John Paul II connected the dots between contraception and abortion in his beautiful encyclical “Evangelium Vitae,” or “The Gospel of Life”: “It may be that many people use contraception with a view to excluding the subsequent temptation to abortion. But the negative values inherent in the ‘contraceptive mentality’ — which is very different from responsible parenthood, lived in respect for the full truth of the conjugal act — are such that they in fact strengthen this temptation when an unwanted life is conceived. Indeed, the pro-abortion culture is especially strong precisely where the Church’s teaching on contraception is rejected.”

Just a few years before St. John Paul II penned these words, a similar cultural connection between contraception and abortion was noted in a striking, even startling, way by the U.S. Supreme Court in its 1992 Casey decision, which reaffirmed Roe v. Wade — in some critical respects abortion is of the same character as the decision to use contraception ... for two decades of economic and social developments, people have organized intimate relationships and made choices that define their view of themselves and their places in society, in reliance on the availability of abortion in the event that contraception should fail.”

That many people do use abortion as a backup to failed contraception is demonstrated by studies which have found that among women who have abortions, over 80 percent are experienced contraceptive users, and over half say they were using a contraceptive in the month before conception. In addition, the Guttmacher Institute has published data which clearly show that states like New York and California, which rank highest in access to contraception, also have the highest per capita abortion rates in the country.

Innocent, unborn children are the most obvious victims in abortion, but they are not the only ones. When God’s design for sex is dismantled, it is always women and children who bear the brunt. Pope Paul VI feared tremendously how poorly women would fare when contraception became the norm. In the next article, we will see how justified his fear was.

HUMANAЕ VITAE

God, Marriage, and Family Planning Lecture Series
Dr. John Bequette - Department of Theology University of St. Francis

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July 9th • July 16th • July 23rd
7:00-8:00pm
30 minute lecture
30 minute Q&A

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Gaza students in Catholic-run school defy daily challenges

Jerusalem (CNS) — Messelem Mutlak, a 15-year-old student at the Rosary Sisters School in Gaza, fantasizes about being a champion goalkeeper and when he is not studying, he dedicates himself to improve his soccer skills.

Mutlak’s real dream though, is to study computer science at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston.

However, the reality of his life as a young man living in Gaza is that no matter how much effort he puts into his studies and getting good grades, he has about as much chance of going to MIT as he does of becoming a star goalkeeper.

“I have maybe a 1 percent chance of going there,” Abu Smara said. “I want to study in the USA to better myself. And I want to do something in my future so my parents want me to study in the USA to better myself. And I want to do something in my future so probably in Gaza, he said.

He wants to study medicine, “I think I did well on my exams,” Abu Smara said. “My parents want me to study to the USA to better myself. And I want to do something in my future so that I can help the world and my people. But it is hard to study here in Gaza. I am not able to focus all the time.”

To keep focused as not to fall into despair, Abu Smara started training two years ago for triathlon competitions, which are held once a year in Gaza. This year he finished in the top 10, he said.

Much of his motivation and focus on positive goals despite rampant difficulties and dangers of living in Gaza has come from the education he has received at the Rosary Sisters School.

“They teach me about life and how to have a positive outlook, not just book learning,” he explained. “They help me to think things through and realize that not everything that happens to you in life is negative. They help us to think positive and be happy in your life.”

On March 30, Palestinians began the Great March of Return, a six-week campaign that included protests demanding to be allowed to return to their homeland in what is now Israel. More than 110 people were killed and thousands wounded in the ensuing demonstrations, mainly along the Gaza border as Israeli forces responded with gunfire and tear gas.

Israel maintains that the ruling Hamas party has used the demonstrators for its own political purposes, with its members trying to breach the border fence into Israel.

Gaza has been under an Israeli and Egyptian blockade for more than a decade since Hamas was voted into government. Both countries control the exit routes of the besieged 139-square-mile strip of land sandwiched between them, where about 1,000 Christians live amongst a majority Muslim population of 1.8 million.

Tensions remained high in Gaza. Three demonstrators were reported killed and hundreds injured along the border on the last Friday of Ramadan, June 8, as Israeli soldiers fired tear gas and live rounds at protestors who threw grenades, other improvised explosives and rocks at the soldiers and burned tires.

Though it can be “devastating” to hear about the situation along the border, the Rosary School students interviewed — all Muslims, as are the majority of the students at the school — said it was clear to them they can help the Palestinian cause by getting an education and contributing to society in the future.

“You can’t really focus … when I know some people are getting killed on the border but I don’t go to demonstrations. I don’t want to go and my parents don’t want me to go. I can give more to my society alive than dead, though I can’t be sure of what my future will be. If the border is not open, where can I go?” said Jaafar Abu Cumboz, 15, who wants to be a surgeon.

Of course, it is difficult to maintain hope in Gaza, acknowledged Yassen Alakhras, 16, but he knows he is a good student. He wants to study medicine, probably in Gaza, he said.

“People ask me how I can remain positive, but I will live my life,” Alakhras said.

School principal Sister Nabila Saleh, originally from Egypt, said that in addition to providing a strong academic curriculum, the school dedicates itself to imparting students their own importance and value as members of society.

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“Yes, I can learn about how the life of the Jewish Poor Handmaiden who was persecuted by the Nazi regime and executed at Auschwitz.

1 – 4 p.m. EDT, Saturday, July 21
Cana Hall, The Center at Donaldson
GPS: 9601 Union Road, Plymouth, Indiana

www.poorhandmaids.org

North Korea’s leader Kim Jong Un and U.S. President Donald Trump shake hands after signing documents during a summit at the Capella Hotel on the resort island of Sentosa in Singapore June 12.

KOREA, from page 3
gone from unleashing “fire and fury” against North Korea to more moderate language “that speaks of peace, of relations based on understanding, therefore, we are truly full of hope and confidence.”

“You can imagine how anxiously the Korean people and the church here in Korea are experiencing this truly historic moment,” the papal nuncio said.

“The Holy See wants to support whatever possible initiative that promotes dialogue and reconciliation” while also taking advantage of being able to take the Gospel message to everyone,” he said.

Pope Francis led thousands of people in St. Peter’s Square in prayer June 10, expressing hopes the summit would lead to lasting peace.

“My talks,” he said, “contribute to the development of a positive path that assures a future of peace for the Korean peninsula and the whole world.”
U.S. officials return stolen Columbus letter to Vatican Library

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — With the help of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, a 15th-century copy of a letter Christopher Columbus sent to his royal patrons describing the riches of the New World has been returned to its rightful owner — the Vatican. The rare eight-page document, estimated to be worth $1.2 million, had been secretly replaced with a forgery, while the true document eventually ended up in the hands of a U.S. collector from Atlanta. The late Robert Parsons had purchased the piece for $875,000 in the United States in 2004 “in good faith,” unaware it had been stolen. Callista Gingrich, U.S. ambassador to the Holy See, and representatives of the Department of Homeland Security and its investigations division presented the original copy during a ceremony June 14 at the Vatican Library.

After raid, Ohio bishop says immigration system adds to suffering

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The bishop of Cleveland said a recent immigration raid at an Ohio gardening and landscape company “makes clear that our current immigration system contributes to the human suffering of migrants and the separation of families.” In a June 6 statement from the Diocese of Cleveland, Bishop Nelson J. Perez said he felt “a great sadness” for the families affected by the raid and whose lives have been disrupted.

Robert Kennedy’s Catholicism was part of his life and politics

Robert Kennedy’s Catholicism was part of his life and politics. But underlying these tributes also have not shied away from what reason people have for “as a summons to heal the world, making clear that our current immigration system contributes to the human suffering of migrants and the separation of families.” In a June 6 statement from the Diocese of Cleveland, Bishop Nelson J. Perez said he felt “a great sadness” for the families affected by the raid and whose lives have been disrupted.

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INDIANAPOLIS — There are ways that couples can help their marriage. If one or both partners feel alone, frustrated or angry, if they argue or have stopped talking to each other, or wonder if the marriage might end, Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-v) can help.

Retrouvaille is a worldwide program that offers tools needed for hurting couples to rediscover a loving marriage relationship. For more than 50 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 Aug. 3-5 weekend and follow-up post-weekend sessions in Indianapolis, visit the website www.HelpOurMarriage.com or www.retrouvaille.org; email RetrouIndy@gmail.com; or call 317-489-6811 for confidential registration information. The Indianapolis Retrouvaille event is the closest one to many couples in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Earthworks offers Summer Day Camp

DONALDSON — Earthworks Summer Day Camp is a place for children to disconnect from technology and learn about the interconnectedness with all of creation. Earthworks Summer Day Camps are designed for children ages 6-10. Weekly day camps run Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. EDT. July camps will be held July 9-13, 16-20 and 23-27.

Earthworks Summer Day Camps are filled with activities related to nature. These include music, exploring the variety of habitats at The Center at Donaldson, art and nature-related games. Residents from Maria Center, an independent living community at The Center, join the children twice a week for intergenerational activities.

Each week the campers will visit a farm and greenhouse, fish, hike through the woods and prairie, and a favorite — "kids playing with kids" (of the goat variety). An art experience that is inspired by the natural surroundings is included.

Children can attend one or more of the six weeks of day camp. The cost is $150 per week with a 10 percent discount for additional siblings. Before and after childcare is available upon request. Scholarships are available for up to 50 percent of the cost of camp.

For additional information, visit www.earthworksonline.org, call Earthworks at 574-935-4164 or email Cheri Ringer, coordinator of Earthcare Education at cring@poorhandmaids.org.

Earthworks is a ministry of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, located at the Lindenwood Retreat & Conference Center.

Parishes join together in Corpus Christi procession

A Corpus Christi procession led by Father Christopher Lapp, holding the Body of Christ, wound from St. Joseph Parish, Mishawaka, through downtown to the Mishawaka Riverwalk on June 3, the feast of Corpus Christi. The procession crossed the St. Joseph River via the footbridge. At the halfway point of the bridge Father Jacob Meyer assumed leadership of the procession, which finished at St. Monica Parish with adoration.

-Article-
Women sought better life for children in US

BY DENISE FEDOROW

H ours spent fending for themselves, hard manual labor, going to school on empty stomachs, not having anything to eat throughout the school day and receiving a substandard education — that was the experience of sisters-in-law Angela Telez and Valeria Tochimani as young children in the city of Cholula, Puebla, Mexico. It was a future they didn’t want for their children, and the motivation for their emigration to the United States.

“I came because there were not a lot of opportunities to study,” Telez said. She shared that back in her hometown it was normal to get married at 16 or 17, have kids and work too hard. She didn’t want that same cycle for her kids. The jobs the women had as children — making bricks — were not the most stable and were very labor-intensive. They also cultivated their own corn, but without the aid of animals or machinery.

“That work was just too difficult,” she said.

Many children in Cholula went to work at the age of 7, and the education they got was much different than in America. Telez said if her mom had time to feed her kids breakfast they’d eat, but if not, the children had to go more than six hours without any food. If Mom couldn’t leave work to bring them lunch, they wouldn’t get any.

She said the food they had was simple: eggs or beans, cooked over an open fire with sticks. There was rarely gas available for the stove, and even when it was it was too expensive. Not buying it was a way to save money.

Tochimani’s experience was similar. She had six siblings, and by the time she was 5 she and her other siblings were being left home from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. because her mother worked. Although there was food in the home there was no one to fix it, so they’d go to school without anything to eat. Other times, they’d eat a tortilla with salt. As she got older, around 10 years old, she’d come home from school while Mom still was at work and eat a churrito — a tube-shaped pastry — inside bread, something she and her sister still did.

Tochimani said her parents didn’t go to school to sign her report cards because they were working. She also recalled a time when her younger sister was spoken to by the teacher because she was wearing “dirty” clothes. They were dirty, and the teacher wanted to know why. Why wasn’t there anyone at home taking care of the child? Teears well up in Telez’s eyes as she recalls such things. “I don’t blame my mother for the things we struggled with,” she said. “I understand, but it’s still hard to think about and I get emotional about it.”

According to Tochimani, things in her home country haven’t changed. Children are still left alone for long hours while parents work. Because of the local brick-making industry, homes in Cholula are at least better built than some in other parts of the country, the women said, but Telez said the roofs were often made from aluminum or asbestos, making them uncomfortably hot or cold.

Coming to America

Tochimani came to the U.S. first, in 1993, at the age of 19. She immigrated to New York, where she met her husband, Juventino Cuatlacuatl. They had a baby girl, and Tochimani worked from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. The busy lifestyle was too much for her, and she returned to Mexico for a couple of years.

In the meantime, her husband stayed in the U.S. and moved to Indiana, where his brother had immigrated.

The brother, Jesus, worked to raise money to bring his family here. His wife, Telez, joined him after a year later, leaving their two sons with an aunt for three years. The children were only 5 and 7 years old at the time.

Although it was difficult, Telez said she took advantage of the time away from her children to work two jobs so they could get ahead and pay for the children to come. The family was reunited in 1999, when David was 10 and Federico was 8. They are now 29 and 27, and their daughter, Jessica, is 17.

Tochimani and her husband also had more children, two more daughters.

The women said life was still hard when they first came. Language was a barrier, and they came with nothing but had to find jobs, a place to rent and transportation. They also had to pay back a loan to the person who brought them to the U.S.

Because Tochimani remembers going to school with an empty stomach, she made sure her daughters always had breakfast before going to school — even if she had to go to work. And as time went on life became easier for the two families. Tochimani said there is more access to food in the U.S. and they get paid more money and more promptly for the work that they do. Telez and her husband struggled a little when her two sons were in college at the same time, though, because as immigrants they were not eligible for any scholarships or grants.

Relying on their faith

Telez and her family have been parishioners at St. Michael Parish in Plymouth for close to 20 years, Tochimani and family about 16. Both cantors at the Spanish Masses, and both are in charge of quincenera preparation. Tochimani is also in charge of the lectors and the eucharistic ministers.

The sisters-in-law rely heavily on their faith. Telez said she’s gone through a lot of tests, trials and difficult times in her life.

“Through those times, God was the only one who could help. I held onto that — especially when I was separated from my sons. I was always thinking of them and worrying about them, I worried when they crossed over (to the U.S.). Every day, I asked for my faith to sustain me.”

Even now there is an every-day fear just driving, because they’re undocumented, so she prays for God to protect them while they are out.

Tears begin to flow as Telez is overcome with emotion, and she struggles to continue speaking.

“It feels like God always listens. My children were able to meet their goals. Even though I’m going through a difficult time now, my faith gives me strength through every day.”

Tochimani said she’s had difficult times too; in particular, difficulties between her and her husband were what brought them back to the Church.

“My husband and I, through our faith, understand that as a family we’re tied together. That makes it easier to encourage one another,” she said. “And as Angela said, always hold on to your faith.”

Telez said she realizes as time goes on it will bring more difficulties but with her faith she gets the strength she needs. “As long as I have my health, work and life, I’m thankful for that.”

Tochimani said she’s also afraid because of political decisions in the country right now.

“I’m thankful for all the opportunities this country has given us — and that my children have had all these opportunities,” she said. “She asks God to protect them and to protect their jobs, because she realizes that without their jobs, “you would not be able to have a life here.”

Note: This interview was conducted with the aid of interpreters.
Catholic Charities awarded grant to ensure college completion

FORT WAYNE — Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has been awarded the first-ever replication site designation for Stay the Course, a program designed to help low-income community college students graduate and thereby increase their earnings potential. CCFWSB will collaborate with the University of Notre Dame, which will monitor the new program in Fort Wayne.

This opportunity was awarded by Catholic Charities Fort Worth, Texas, which, along with Notre Dame, created Stay the Course to provide high-level case management to improve the graduation rates for low-income community college students.

“We are thrilled that we have been chosen to participate in this project and will be staffing up right away to implement it,” says Catholic Charities of Fort Wayne-South Bend CEO Gloria Whitcraft. “We have been operating a similar program for more than 20 years, so we know the great value that Stay the Course will add to our community.”

The agency is now offering the opportunity for qualified professionals to be a part of this new project in Allen County. By Aug. 1, it will hire a Stay the Course program manager, three navigators to provide the intensive case management to eligible students, and one program specialist to assist the entire team.

“By boosting the potential for participating students, we believe the success of Stay the Course will have a positive impact on economic development in our area,” said Whitcraft.

Four years ago, Catholic Charities Fort Worth partnered with the Wilson Sheehan Lab for Economic Opportunities at the University of Notre Dame to create Stay the Course.

“All this work means more evidence for the interventions, more influence with policymakers, and a sustainable path out of poverty for so many individuals and families,” said Heather Reynolds, president/CEO of Catholic Charities Fort Worth.

Early results

Early results from Fort Worth are very encouraging.

After three years, Stay the Course students were two times more likely to stay in school, and female Stay the Course students were almost four times more likely to stay in school. Also, 25 percent of female Stay the Course students completed a degree or certificate after three years compared to almost no one in the relevant comparison group; and after completing one year in the program, the second cohort of students were two times less likely to drop out of school than the relevant comparison group.

According to Lisa, a recent graduate of the Fort Worth program, “those at Stay the Course may not realize it, but they may be one of the few people in a person’s life who are investing in them, who are encouraging them and who are believing in them by taking a chance … Today, I’m at the University of North Texas and I’m looking really good for the future.”

The graduation rate for community college students is generally poor. Stay the Course has proven to make a significant impact on improving graduation rates in Texas. Because of these positive results, Stay the Course is now ready for replication across the nation.

“We will continue to rigorously evaluate the program at the new site in Fort Wayne as it impacts student persistence and completion at Ivy Tech Community College,” said a statement from James Sullivan, Rev. Thomas J. McDonagh, C.S.C., Associate Professor of Economics at Notre Dame. “This important work will inform service providers and policymakers about how best to improve outcomes for low-income students at community colleges.”

How the program works

Stay the Course addresses two of the most common barriers to completion of college: personal obstacles as well as social and institutional barriers.

A Stay the Course navigator works one-on-one to understand each student’s situation, build rapport and identify goals. Navigators have a maximum caseload of 40 students, so they are able to work with each person to create a customized path to success.

Students create their own goals and navigators work with them to design the action steps needed to achieve them. Action steps are frequently revisited to evaluate progress and make changes as needed.

Because research shows unexpected financial shocks, (e.g. a broken-down car or large medical expense) can contribute to high dropout rates, Stay the Course students can apply to receive up to $500 per semester (capped at a total of $1,500) to address these issues.

The navigator-student relationship is based on mutual expectations to stay in frequent contact. Navigators will serve as a resource for students and are embedded on campus. They work closely with campus staff on issues including enrollment, attendance and financial aid.

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend awarded the first-ever replication site designation for Stay the Course, a program designed to help low-income community college students graduate and thereby increase their earnings potential. CCFWSB will collaborate with the University of Notre Dame, which will monitor the new program in Fort Wayne.
A twin, a saint and grace lead young adult to Catholic faith

By Natalie Hoefer

Nearly 1,500 years ago, St. Benedict and St. Scholastica were more than just twins. They were best friends. They shared their devout Catholic faith, and are believed to have spent long hours discussing religion and spirituality.

How apt, then, that Jenna Knepper, 27, chose St. Scholastica as her patron saint when she completed her initiation into the Church during the Easter Vigil Mass this year at St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis. The reason becomes clear as she shares her story.

“We were baptized Catholic,” said Knepper of her and three siblings, including her twin brother Joseph. “But growing up, Mom didn’t take us to Mass much. She was a single mom… We grew up not knowing much about Catholicism, or Christianity for that matter.

When Knepper was a freshman at Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis, she became involved in Protestant ministries, Scripture studies and worship. So later in college when Joseph, who attended Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, told her he was joining the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, she was dubious.

“To me that wasn’t compatible with what I was learning in the Protestant church,” she said. “I thought he was wrong. Faith alone — I was all in on that. I started praying for my brother out of concern for him entering RCA.”

Yet she witnessed a “clear transformation in his life.” By the spring of 2016, he was accepted as a seminarian of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

“I knew my brother. I love my brother. He’s my best friend. And something curious was going on,” said Knepper. “He had a successful career. To see him discern the priesthood was incredible to witness.”

Like St. Benedict and St. Scholastica, the Knepper twins had “hundreds of conversations” about God and the Catholic faith. Through such discussions and through the witness of her brother and some Catholic friends, and “by grace,” said Knepper, “God slowly started to reveal to me the beauty of the sacraments, the Real Presence of the body and blood.”

She started worshiping at St. Joan of Arc Parish in 2016. But it was a trip a year ago to visit Joseph at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, that propelled her faith forward.

“To see these [seminarians] and God using them to witness to me, [the faith] became very real to me through my brother’s life and their lives,” said Knepper. “After that I discerned and kept praying about RCA. I knew for a few months before RCA that this was the journey for me.”

That journey was enhanced by choosing St. Scholastica as her confirmation saint, rather than St. Scholastica pursuing her, she said.

“It was St. Scholastica’s feast day [on Feb. 10],” Knepper recalled. “My brother sent me a reading about her feast day without realizing she was a twin. He said she reminded him of me.”

Shortly afterward, Melinda Rivelli, a pastoral associate at St. Joan of Arc Parish, mentioned the saint to Knepper as a possible patronsaint.

“I was like, ‘Oh my gosh!’” she said. “St. Scholastica was clearly pursuing me. Knowing her story — her brother was a monk, her love and devotion for her brother. The one thing known is she loved him so much. … [It’s] that sibling love that’s been so foundational to my faith calling.”

“Grace” is a word Knepper uses time and again when speaking of her faith journey.

“The things I questioned the most [about Catholicism] have been the most filled with grace,” she said of the sacrament of reconciliation and calling upon the Blessed Mother’s intercession.

“And then you have two twins growing up without a faith, but through God’s grace and his pursuit of us, leading each of us to the Church in our own unique way — it’s just grace.”

Natalie Hoefer is a reporter for The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Article reprinted from The Criterion, with permission.

Father Solanus Casey Vocation Society names life member

By Deb Wagner

The Father Solanus Casey Vocation Society is an organization whose purpose is to promote vocations within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and provide support for the vocations director. Members of the organization can be found providing the labor behind the annual Andrew Dinner for men who are discerning a call to the seminary, summer picnic and Christmas dinner for diocesan seminarians and dinner for religious sisters. The Father Solanus Casey Vocation Society also sponsors an hour of prayer for vocations, the Little Flower Holy Hour at St. Mother Theodore Guerin Chapel in Fort Wayne.

The society used to be known as the Serra Club. The Serra Club in South Bend remains, but three years ago Fort Wayne’s Serra Club changed its name to the Father Solanus Casey Vocation Society. The name of Father Solanus Casey was chosen because the Capuchin priest, now beatified, was the epitome of what the organization embraced, and he had been assigned to Huntington from 1946-56.

One man has dedicated so many hours to the organization that they have rolled into years. Ernest Evans II, 84, has been a member of the organization since 1988. A few months ago, members honored his dedication by making him a life member. Dr. Michael Mastrangelo is only other living life member of the organization.

In early 1988, Evans said, Today’s Catholic ran an ad for people wanting to work for the diocese in fostering vocations. He answered the ad, met with a representative from the then-Serra Club and quickly learned he knew many people who were already involved. He joined the club, served at the club’s Mass the first Friday of that month and was hooked.

Evans kept his commitment to vocations through the years, even when his son became ill and he withdrew from all else. While he might have put a few activities back on his plate now, he joked that “Some day, I just might die serving Mass.”

Evans currently serves the society as one of two people who schedule servers for the St. Mother Theodore Guerin Chapel. He said he has served in all offices of the organization over the years. When complimented on his versatility in answering the call to serve in any needed capacity, the former attorney humorously replied that he had done so “because when there was a vacancy in an office, I wasn’t quick enough or smart enough to say ‘No.’”

In addition to the Little Flower Holy Hour Masses that the society supports, in the early years, the club’s own Masses were celebrated at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Today they are said at St. Joseph Hospital in Fort Wayne on the first Friday of every month at 11:30 a.m. A luncheon is provided after Mass, with a presentation given by a priest, deacon or other member of the Catholic community. All are welcome to attend.

The Father Solanus Casey Vocation Society of Fort Wayne recently named Ernest Evans II a life member of the organization, in honor of his many years of service to the society and to supporting vocations to the priesthood.
Father Barry England: A life of gratitude and generosity

BY JEANNE EWING

“Priesthood is a gift,” said Father Barry C. England, who celebrates his 50th jubilee of priestly ordination this summer. Indeed, when one chooses to enter Father England, it’s evident that his life has been filled with gratitude and generosity: gratitude because of the immense appreciation he has for everyone who has been part of his journey, and generosity because of his willingness to serve God and His people wherever he was called to go.

Father England was ordained to the priesthood in 1968 after attending Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio. His parents were from Fort Wayne, which was the deciding factor for Father England to become a diocesan priest. His first assignment was at St. Mary Church in Huntington, which surprised him. “At the time, I had no idea where Huntington was,” joked Father England. His time there, which included teaching at Huntington Catholic High School, was what he called “a learning experience and challenging.”

Much like the rest of his assignments following the first, Father England paid attention to what he was supposed to learn from the other, seasoned priests who mentored and guided him. One of the most formative for his priesthood, he said, was the late Msgr. Edward J. Hession, at St. Charles Catholic Church in Fort Wayne. “I learned a lot from him about priesthood,” explained Father England. “He was very kind. It was obvious that he was truly a man of prayer, because I always observed him praying the rosary or Divine Office. He was just a good example of a priest.”

It was during his assignment as associate pastor at St. Charles that Father England became involved with the building committee. It started as a conversation with Msgr. Hession and turned into a very beneficial field of knowledge for Father England. At nearly every subsequent assignment, Father England had to tackle some very challenging structural issues pertaining to the parishes or parish schools: at Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne, renovations to the roof and school building; at St. Anthony Padua, South Bend, construction in the sanctuary and school. Two weeks after the completion of renovations at St. Anthony, Father England was transferred to St. Bavo Parish in Mishawaka – and there were more building projects in the works there, too. “We don’t know which direction we’re going to be led by God,” he shahed; “but the different experiences we have in life can build upon another. Whatever we learn always has its purpose for the plans God has in mind for us.”

As he reflected upon the last 50 years of his priestly vocation, Father England summarized his life as one of gratitude. While each parish challenged him as a priest, he said, each was also an incredible gift to him. “The beauty of being a diocesan priest is that we get to participate where the action is,” he said of the first aspect of his thankfulness – for the priesthood itself. “You are with families from birth to death, joyous occasions and sad situations. I’m just grateful to God for the opportunity to serve many people throughout our diocese.”

In addition, Father England is also appreciative of the support he’s received from staff and encouragement from parishioners. He said he prays for Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades to get the priests he needs, who will continue to serve the diocese. He also prays for the seminarians who are discerning their vocation.

A refrigerator magnet he kept from his mother reminds him to be grateful. “It says, ‘if the only prayer we ever say in our lives is thank you, that will be enough.’”

It’s certainly enough to keep Father England aware of the needs of other priests, young and old, whom he remembers in both prayer and service.

Despite the fact that Father England has been retired for three years and currently lives at Holy Cross Village in South Bend, he still volunteers to help out priests who need a substitute for Mass. “I recently said Mass and heard confessions at St. Anthony’s so that the pastor could attend the diaconate ordination,” he said.

He decided on a quiet, more intimate celebration of his 50th jubilee. “I wanted to celebrate with my siblings and extended family,” he said. “The Saturday before Mother’s Day, we had Mass in the afternoon at the Village chapel and then shared a meal together.”

To new priests, Father England shared this wisdom: “Be willing to learn from the wisdom of your pastor. Be open to whatever challenges come your way on a daily basis and be available to the needs of the parishioners. Always put God first, your parishioners next and yourself last.”

A priest for a quarter century: Father Tyrell Alles, OSB

BY DEB WAGNER

Father Tyrell Alles, OSB, was born and raised in Sri Lanka, where his parents still reside. He is the oldest sibling to a brother and sister. He said he heard God’s call to become a community priest at a very young age. After much prayer and contemplation, he joined the Order of Saint Benedict, hence the OSB behind his name. More specifically, Father Alles belongs to the Sylvestro Benedictine Congregation, which is a branch of the Benedictine Confederation. Becoming a part of a religious community is a process, he said, just as it is a process to become a diocesan priest. Father Alles completed his college education and later found employment with a private company in order to gain some experience in the world. He joined the OSB in 1987 and served his community as a religious brother while being engaged in monastic formation in a Benedictine monastery in Sri Lanka. At the same time, he attended the National Seminary in Sri Lanka for his philosophical and theological studies. He was ordained to the priesthood on Aug. 28, 1993. Thereafter, he spent his first few months of the priesthood preparing himself for studies in sacred Scripture. He spent much of his priesthood studying and later teaching sacred Scripture at The National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka and other theological institutions in Sri Lanka. In addition, he was involved in the academic and spiritual formation of seminarians prior to coming to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend three years ago. He said that almost all his work in this diocese has been serving as the pastor of St. Peter Parish. It is his first experience as pastor.

Father Alles recalled that teaching and forming seminarians to the priesthood, celebrating the sacraments and being a friend to parishioners of St. Peter are among his favorite parts of being a priest. “Most importantly, every Mass I pray is a memorable event,” he said. He added that he feels he has been blessed with other memorable events in his 25 years as a priest as well, including his studies at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome; learning other languages in Germany and France; doctoral studies in sacred Scripture at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.; and meeting St. John Paul II in Rome on three occasions.

Father Robert Van Kempen celebrates 25 years as priest

BY DENISE FEDOROW

Sometimes a person knows early in life what their vocation is. That was the case for Father Robert Van Kempen. Father Bob, as he is known, said it was probably when he was in second grade that he first thought he might be called to be a priest. He attended Christ the King School in South Bend and said the Holy Cross priests and sisters there were always talking about religious vocations. “I always had it in the back of my mind that it would be a neat thing to do,” Father Van Kempen said.

He was born in South Bend to Henry and Mary Grace Van Kempen. He has two sisters, Linda and Kathy. They were parishioners at Christ the King and he attended the school until eighth grade. He attended Clay Middle School and graduated from Clay High School. He worked at the local McDonald’s for a couple of years before entering the seminary.

“It wasn’t until 1985 when a priest said, ‘If you think you have a calling, you have to give it a try.’” Father Van Kempen remembered.

He attended St. Meinrad
As the anniversary of his ordination approaches, Father Alles will not be celebrating with the customary acknowledgements and fanfare, but rather he said he will be “prayerfully thanking God for the gift of my priesthood in a simple eucharistic celebration for all the blessings He has showered upon me during the past 25 years. I plan to reflect on the good, bad and the ugly experiences of life, the lessons I have learned for myself, and how I can become a good and holy priest, pleasing to God.”

“I thank God for my parents and family members who journeyed with me during the past 25 years,” he said gratefully. “I thank God for the gift of my priesthood and for all who have enriched my priestly life and who pray for me. I thank all my formators both academic and spiritual. I thank the Sylvestro Benedictine Congregation for the monastic formation I received. I thank the bishop and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend for inviting me and for trusting me with my first experience of being a pastor, at St. Peter’s Parish. I thank the staff and parishioners for accepting me, a foreign priest, as their pastor, and for their love, concern and treasured friendship.”

As for himself, Father Ndayambaje recounted his early childhood and the strong influence of devout parents who shared their faith with him and his four siblings through home prayer, good example and attendance at Mass and the sacraments. He recalled, as an 8-year-old, being awed by the holiness of a missionary priest and by the thongs of parishioners that lined up for confessions. But he credits the influence of the same kindly missionary priest who visited his village church and shared his tea with the children there for opening his mind to the possibility of a religious vocation.

At the age of 14, that discernment prompted him, along with two of his close friends, to apply for seminary training. The aspiring priest attended St. Mary’s Minor Seminary in Fort Portal, Uganda, for six years. He then attended Kitigondo National Major Seminary, where he received a bachelor’s degree in philosophy, and Ggaba National Major Seminary, where he got a theology degree. He was ordained a priest by Bishop Robert Mwiruza of the Diocese of Fort Portal, Uganda, on Aug. 22, 1993.

Like many others from his country, Father Ndayambaje said he greatly admires and prays to the Ugandan martyrs, “men who gave up their lives and died for their faith.” They remain an inspiration to himself and millions of others. He noted the recent June 3 commemorative date which was observed at the Ugandan Martyrs’ shrine Namugongo in his home country.

As he reflected on his 25-year jubilee, Father Ndayambaje said that if he were to give advice to the current seminarians, it would be that prayer should be the first tool in their ministry, then devotion to our Mother, Mary. He would advise them to listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, “to focus” and to remember why they decided on a vocation. “A priest’s mission is to help people know and love God,” he said. “Having walked this journey, I promise them my prayers ... I know it’s not easy.”

As for himself, Father Ndayambaje said he simply wants to be a good priest and to carry out his priestly ministry the best he can in the years to come.
Felician sisters say they will miss St. Adalbert Parish

BY WILLIAM SCHMITT

Mexican pierogi — products of an adapted Polish dumpling recipe — are just one sample of the connections of faith and culture made by the Felician sisters who have been based at St. Adalbert Parish in South Bend since 1911. But in the middle of July, the diverse members of St. Adalbert, where they serve, and nearby St. Casimir Parish, where they are in residence, must disconnect from relationships of prayer, service, formation, friendship and food with the two remaining Felicians, pastoral minister Sister Anthony and school business manager Sister Catherine.

New assignments announced by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Felix of Cantalice, more commonly known as the Felician-Franciscan congregation, will end the order’s century-long presence in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Sister Mary Anthony Kubat, CSSF, and Sister Mary Catherine Ryzewicz, CSSF, will leave for new duties at the Felician-run Maryville Retreat Center in Holly, Michigan.

Sister Anthony and Sister Catherine said they look forward to new forms of service and new expansion prospects at Maryville, but they will miss the unifying ties they have built with many parishioners in South Bend.

Sister Anthony described her 21 years of ministry at the parish as an outreach that included bringing the holy Eucharist to the homebound and hospitalized; attending Mass in person still finding joy through the Church. They ask the sisters about the news going on among parishioners of all backgrounds, she said.

Sister Catherine, who has been at the parish since 2009, said change can be difficult, but trust in God’s will is a Felician watchword. “As we’re preparing for this move,” she said, “I keep hearing the Scripture (in which Jesus said), ‘I have to go so the Holy Spirit may come. We have to depart so that something new can be born here.’

The two sisters live in the former rectory at St. Casimir Parish. A building on the St. Adalbert grounds, now the parish offices, was a convent for more than a decade, they said. “They knew they were loved and cared for, and they know they’re going to continue to be,” she reflected. “They know they were loved and cared for, and they know they’re going to continue to be.”

She added that those unable to attend Mass in person still find joy through the Church. They ask the sisters about the news going on among parishioners of all backgrounds, she said.

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The two sisters live in the former rectory at St. Casimir Parish.

Robust Hispanic population, as well as groups with other histories.

Broad support for the eucharistic procession for the feast of Corpus Christi — the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ — “just gives me chills,” Sister Anthony said. She recalled observing many seeds of faith planted and growing in profound ways during her South Bend years.

The transition to largely Spanish-speaking assemblies is just one of the local changes the Felician sisters have seen. Others include social and economic shifts, as well as the closing of the nearby St. Stephen Parish in 2005, the merging of administration with St. Casimir and the switch from diocesan priests to Congregation of Holy Cross pastoral leadership.

“I like to think that our presence has helped the people through those things because we have remained constant during some of those changes,” Sister Catherine said. “They still offer widespread words of comfort and understanding, ‘or just a smile.’

Amid any changes or uncertainties, Sister Anthony said, “love is the thing that holds together.”

The sisters, while not bilingual, lauded the growth and energy of the Spanish-language gatherings, as well as adult engagement in the strengthening of St. Adalbert School.

They have helped guide various programs of English-language prayer and faith formation at St. Casimir, part of the dynamics giving the parishes and various groups or generations additional common ground.

They assist with liturgical ministries, scheduled group activities and everyday encounters with people — such as cooking.

“It’s a lot of work, but it’s a lot of fun, too,” Sister Anthony said of their kitchen volunteerism, whether it be for fish fries, or bingo lunches or corn-and-sausage roasts.

A few years ago, they accepted the challenge of producing a food for the St. Casimir corn-and-sausage festival to symbolize cultures coming together. They said they made many dozens of Hispanic-style pierogis in addition to traditional Polish flavors. Their new recipe contained chihuahua-style melting cheese.

After the community around and beyond St. Adalbert and St. Casimir — various parishes or goodbyes to Sister Anthony and Sister Catherine on July 14, the sisters’ outreach of making connections, planting new possibilities and optimizing change will adopt a new flavor, too — at Maryville.

But they said they expect the basics to hold true at the new location, envisioning a Michigan lakeside retreat center that can build bridges between the Diocese of Lansing and the Archdiocese of Detroit and allow people from many backgrounds to find more fertile time and space for prayer.

“If there’s one thing we know,” Sister Catherine said, “people hunger for the Lord.”

As a community sponsored by the Brothers of Holy Cross, Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame offers ways in which you can strengthen your faith. Attend Mass and rosary, worship privately or join a group for Bible studies. Holy Cross Village is an interdependent community energized by Holy Cross spirituality and hospitality, and dedicated to providing a nurturing environment focused on dignity and respect.

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Eleven to be ordained to the diaconate

BY JODI MARLIN

Eleven men, most of Hispanic ethnicity, will be ordained to the diaconate at a Mass celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades at 11 a.m., June 23, at St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend.

The candidates have been preparing for their ordination for four years, and represent the inaugural group of candidates in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend to be comprised entirely of Spanish-speaking men who received their formation in that language. Their Mass of ordination will also be celebrated in Spanish.

The candidates are:

- **Juan Manuel Campos** of Ligonier. His wife is Martha Díaz de León. They are members of St. Patrick Parish and have four children: Esteban, 24; Alondia, 21; Isaac, 14; and Simon, 4.
- **Marco Castillo Gómez** of Warsaw. His wife is María de Jesús Vasquez. They are members of Our Lady of Hungary Parish, South Bend, and have four children: Christian, 11; and Emanuel, 3.
- **Jose Ruvalcaba Sánchez** of Goshen. His wife is Virginia Muñoz. They are members of Our Lady of Hungary Parish, South Bend, and have four children: Tayriz, 15; Joshua, 14; Isaac, 10; and Elias, 6.
- **Ricardo García Ramos** of Mishawaka. His wife is Juanita García. They are members of Our Lady of Hungary Parish, South Bend, and have four children: Jorge, 37; Natina, 34; Jario, 29; and Jazmin, 27.
- **Giovani Muñoz Reyes** of Goshen. His wife is Virginia Muñoz. They are members of St. John the Evangelist Parish and have four children: Camila, 9; Xochitl, 7; Carim, 6; and Gian, 6 months.
- **Alejandro M. García García** of Mishawaka. His wife is Juana García. They are members of Our Lady of Hungary Parish, South Bend, and have four children: Tayriz, 15; Joshua, 14; Isaac, 10; and Elias, 6.
- **Blas Olayo** of Mishawaka. His wife is María Olayo. They are members of St. John the Evangelist Parish and have four children: Mariel, 8; Elias, 6; de María, 18.
- **Frederick Everett** of South Bend. His wife is Lisa Everett. They are members of Corpus Christi Parish and have three children: Joseph, 20; Michael, 18; and Maria, 15.
- **Ricardo Garcia Ramos** of Mishawaka. His wife is Christina Gomez. They are members of St. Patrick Parish, Ligonier, and have four children: Tayriz, 15; Joshua, 14; Isaac, 10; and Elias, 6.
- **Giovani Muñoz Reyes** of Goshen. His wife is Virginia Muñoz. They are members of St. John the Evangelist Parish and have four children: Camila, 9; Xochitl, 7; Carim, 6; and Gian, 6 months.

Subsequent to their ordination, the deacons will be assigned to serve at parishes within the diocese. All are welcome and invited to attend the Mass.

**Congratulations to**

**Ricardo García Ramos & Juan Manuel Campos**

AND ALL THE DIACONATE CLASS ON YOUR ORDINATION

from Father Wilson Corzo and Saint Patrick Parish, Ligonier

**Congratulations to**

**Jose Ruvalcaba Sánchez**

AND ALL THE NEWLY ORDAINED DEACONS

Father Paul Ybarra, C.S.C. and St. Aladjusted Church, South Bend

**Congratulations to**

**Deacon Fred Everett**

AND ALL THE 2018 DIACONATE CLASS ON YOUR ORDINATION

from Father Daryl Rybicki and your friends at Corpus Christi Parish, South Bend

**ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE**

Join Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Saturday, June 23, at 11 a.m. at St. Matthew Cathedral, 1701 Miami St., South Bend

**ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST PARISH, GOSHEN CONGRATULATES**

**DEACONS BLAS OLAYO, CHRISTIAN NIEVES, AND GIOVANI MUÑOZ**

ON THEIR DIACONAL ORDINATION.

¡Que el Señor bendiga su ministério y lo haga fecundo!

May the Lord bless your ministry and make it fruitful!
Soon after Carolyn Woo, Ph.D., retired as president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services in 2016, she began working on a major project that utilized her many talents, contacts and passions: a dialogue on “Energy Transition and Care for Our Common Home.”

As Dean of Notre Dame’s Mendoza College of Business from 1997 to 2011, she had both knowledge and contacts with leaders in the world’s energy field. At CRS, she observed firsthand the plight of the world’s energy-deprived and materially poor. So it was no surprise that she was an invited speaker when Pope Francis launched discussions surrounding his 2015 encyclical, “Laudato Si’” or “On Care for Our Common Home.”

June 8-9, the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development hosted 17 CEOs and board chairmen representing the world’s major oil and gas companies, renewable energy companies and major investors. The event was sponsored by Notre Dame’s Mendoza College of Business and carried the same name as the dialogue, Energy Transition and Care for Our Common Home. Besides Woo, planning was masterminded by emeritus professor Leo Burke and current Mendoza Dean Roger Huang.

According to Father John Jenkins, president of the University of Notre Dame, “They managed to assemble for the first time in one place those people best positioned to respond to Francis’ environmental challenges as articulated in Laudato Si’. They also made real Mendoza’s mission of making business a force for good in the world. Global warming is not only a technological or business problem, but a moral challenge.”

Pope Francis addressed the delegates during Saturday’s audience. “Civilization requires energy, but energy use must not destroy civilization... Environmental and energy problems now have a global impact and extent,” he said. “Consequently, they call for global responses, to be sought with patience and dialogue and to be pursued rationally and perseveringly…” as in this meeting.

“It is my hope that, having demonstrated your aptitude for innovation and for improving the lives of many people by your creativeness and professional expertise, you will use those skills in the service of two great needs in today’s world: the care of the poor and the environment… he continued, applauding and encouraging their “resolve and courage to work together to serve our common home.” Carbon-based fossil fuels now account for 82 percent of the world’s energy, and yet there are 1.2 billion people whose development is blocked because they have access to no power at all. In the next 50 years that percentage should drop to 42 percent, but oil and gas companies, with their reserves, infrastructure, industries and jobs, will continue to play a major role. Whatever technologies and regulations govern the energy transition, the Holy Father and Woo are keenly aware of the moral imperative to avoid making progress at the expense of the world’s poorest citizens.

Delegates to the meeting strongly agreed on the urgent need for transition to a low-emissions economy that simultaneously provides energy to those who currently do not have access. Although sometimes portrayed as narrowly focused on the bottom line, the CEOs took a long-term view that involves a drastic change in priorities. A closing news release said, “Above all, the energy transition must be governed by care for people and their wellbeing, especially the poor, and including future generations.”

During the gathering, there was a good spirit of collaboration and engagement and an honest exchange concerning the challenges that entail, including: How rapidly can change occur, and at what cost? How can companies be more forthright about their strategic plans without misleading investors? As elders in the human family, how can we give proper weight to the moral dimension of our actions?

During two full days of meetings, there were no lectures or committees. Instead, the full group met for intense dialogue in five sessions. Each session began with a brief reflection from one energy executive and one investor, then proceeded to consider the moral as well as the practical dimensions of a complex transition.

As part of the ongoing dialogue, the group will distill the points that emerged from their conversation and send them back to the Holy Father. Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the dicastery, supports ongoing dialogue, which must expand to include other sectors.

Helping facilitate this dialogue “warmed my heart,” said Woo, whose understanding of retirement has nothing to do with rest and everything to do with freedom to pursue her passions. A member of St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend, she was happy her son Justin Bartkus was able to provide logistical support for the gathering. Bartkus holds theology degrees from Notre Dame and has been living in Rome as rector of Notre Dame’s Rome Villa. Observing the interactions among these world leaders was “a most unusual experience for a 50-year-old,” in her mother’s words.
Sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind: A reflection on the Irish referendum

I will confess that as a person of Irish heritage on both sides of my family, I found the events in Ireland last week particularly dispiriting. Not only did the nation vote, by a two-to-one margin, for the legal prerogative to kill their children in the womb, but they also welcomed and celebrated the vote with a frankly sickening note of gleeful triumph. Will I ever forget the unnerving looks and sounds of the frenzied crowd gathered to cheer their victory in the courtyard of Dublin Castle? As the lead-up to the vote — and this is because abortion has indeed become a sacrament for radical feminism, the one, absolutely sacred, nonnegotiable value for so-called progressive women. One of the features of the lead-up to the vote — and this has become absolutely commonplace — was the almost total lack of moral argument on the part of the advocates of abortion. There was a lot of political talk about “rights,” though the rights of the unborn were never mentioned; and there were appeals to “rights,” though the rights of the child were never mentioned. Everything about “rights,” though the rights of the unborn were never considered with the neutrality that the free exercise clause requires. There were appeals to the neutrality that religious objection “was not considered with the neutrality that the free exercise clause requires.”

A recent Supreme Court decision ruled that a Colorado baker, Jack Phillips, was correct in declining to bake a custom wedding cake for two men, because his faith held that marriage is only between one man and one woman. He was sued, and he was found guilty of violating Colorado’s law against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The Court took the extremely unpopular position that there is a constitutional right to have one’s religious beliefs offended.

The Supreme Court decided 7-2 that Colorado’s civil rights commission violated Phillips’ First Amendment right to free exercise of religion. Seven justices agreed that one or both of the following facts, which may or may not apply in future cases, were decisive. First, the commission exhibited hostility toward Phillips’ faith, with some members suggesting that Phillips was likely to refuse the commission’s request to bake a cake for an anti-gay marriage couple. Second, the commission rejected claims against bakers who refused to bake cakes with messages against gay marriage. The commission went after Phillips because he is not a man of faith, and/or because his particular religious beliefs offended them. Justice Anthony Kennedy’s majority opinion found that Phillips’ religious objection was not considered with the neutrality that the free exercise clause requires. Here the consensus ends.

Of wedding cakes and our tenuous freedoms

On June 4, in Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission, the U.S. Supreme Court delivered a limited victory for religious freedom.

Jack Phillips, a devoutly Christian baker, declined to use his artistry to create a custom wedding cake for two men, because his faith holds that marriage is only between one man and one woman. He was sued, and he was found guilty of violating Colorado’s law against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The Supreme Court decided 7-2 that Colorado’s civil rights commission violated Phillips’ First Amendment right to free exercise of religion.

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Sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind:

A reflection on the Irish referendum

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God wants us to experience eternal life with Him

The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Luke 1:57-66, 80

T he mere scheduling of celebrating a saint’s feast day on any Sunday sends a message. The Church long has preferred to observe Sundays in their proper sequence in Ordinary Time, Lent, Advent and so forth. When a saint’s feast preempts this pattern, the Church is saying that the saint, and the saint’s life, have extraordinary lessons for us. This weekend, instead of noting the Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Church calls us to reflect upon St. John the Baptist. Prominent in the Gospels, he is a kinsman of Jesus and Mary, and highly revered among Christians since the time of the Lord on earth.

The series of readings for this feast all enable us to think about the birth of John the Baptist as the great model of discipleship; as a figure, human in every respect as are we, who devoted everything to the person of Jesus.

The Baptism of Jesus

Is 49:1-6 Ps 139:1-3, 13-15

60:3-5, 12-13 Mt 7:1-5

Tuesday: 2 Kgs 19:9b-11, 14-21, 31-35a, 36 Ps 48:2-4, 10-11 Mt 7:1-5, 12-14


Thursday: 2 Cor 5:21 Ps 128:1b-4, 7b-9 Lk 6:12-19

Friday: Acts 4:23-28 Ps 147:13-20 Lk 6:10-16

Saturday: Acts 5:7-11, 14-15 Ps 149:2-4a, 15-16 Lk 6:17-26

Reflection

The Church offers John the Baptist as the great model of discipleship: as a figure, human in every respect as are we, who fully understood the purpose of life — namely, to be with God. He devoted everything to the person of Jesus in his life, and finally his life itself, to serving this purpose.

John’s life calls us to imitation, to see nothing as more important than to be with God. The readings remind us that God wills that we experience eternal life. He never impedes us in our way to salvation. The exact opposite is true. He even goes so far as to say that God, as our savior. The choice remains with us, Paul would insist. We must accept the fact that eternal life is everything. We must want to be with God.

The Sunday Gospel

The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Luke 1:57-66, 80

The series of readings for this feast all enable us to think about John the Baptist, his special place in Christian minds and hearts all through the centuries, and about the reasons for this ancient devotion.

In the first reading, the Book of Isaiah sets the stage. Typically eloquent, this book soars in its expectation that God will rescue them. It is about the birth of John the Baptist, the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth.

A noteworthy moment is when Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, loses his ability to speak. It is not a cruel act of a harsh god. Instead, it reveals that John the Baptist has been created by God and he will be sent by God, for that in that time and place salvation will come in the person of Jesus Christ. This special role of John the Baptist, and of its origin even in his conception and birth, is emphasized in the fact that God names him. Naming of persons, as of things, for the ancient Jews had a proprietary quality.

Parents asserted this, and still assert it in this culture, when they name their children — one of the most cherished privileges of being parents. John the Baptist belonged to God.

In turn, this aspect of John the Baptist’s life and mission reflects the fact that God wills that people be saved. He wills that they have eternal life. God sent John.

Of course, we may circumstance, or negate altogether God’s will.

The readings remind us that God wills that we experience eternal life. He never impedes us in our way to salvation. The exact opposite is true. He even goes so far as to say that God, as our savior. The choice remains with us, Paul would insist. We must accept the fact that eternal life is everything. We must want to be with God.
Finding refreshment

Many Catholic women try very hard to be Pivors’ 51 wives and mothers. It’s an excellent goal, but frankly sometimes it can be exhausting. Are we doing enough to see that Mom is the lady we want her to be? How can we best down the road to get to that place?

These thoughts were swirling in my head recently, and I wanted to offer a few ideas. Doing the right thing is important: Being the right person is equally so. We are not machines. We are human beings, who need connection, interaction, encouragement and rest.

Taking a planned vacation is good and healthy. So too is planning a night out with your spouse. But we also need to find moments each and every day that refresh and renew our spirits so we can be channels of grace to our families. It’s okay to rest. It’s okay to rest!

(Get the picture?)

As I write this, I am sitting near an open screened door. A gentle cool breeze is wafting in and I hear a stop-and-start melody of various birds, chirping near an open screened door. A gentle cool breeze is wafting in and I hear a stop-and-start melody of various birds, chirping


The point is, to be the women we are called to be — and this is also relevant for men — we must take time to refresh. We must allow God to pour His grace into us, so we can offer that to others. Peace.

Theresa Thomas is the wife of David and the mother of nine children.

BARROW, from page 16

“until 15 years ago, the unanimous judgment of all generations and all societies.”

Ironies abound in the Justices’ opinions. Kennedy’s opinion is ironic because the prejudice against religious views of marriage that he criticizes in Colorado officials can be found in his own 2015 opinion on same-sex marriage. While he gave lip service to the idea that “reasonable accommodation” may disagree with the court, he also suggested that such people are guilty of bigotry and ignorance. So Kennedy’s rhetoric helped create the problem in Colorado. Either he has mellowed since or he is not very self-aware.

There is also irony, perhaps deliberate, in conservative justices’ argument for Phillips’ freedom of speech. To those who say decorating a custom wedding cake is not speech, they cite past decisions sacred to the most liberal judges: It is at least as much “nude dancing, cross burning by white supremacists and flag burning.”

And in answer to those who say Phillips’ views are too offensive to protect, they cite a past court decision declaring that other people’s finding a view offensive “is a reason for according it constitutional protection.” The court said that in defense of the free speech of Hustler magazine.

For now, Christians who accept the millennia-old definition of marriage have as much constitutional protection as racists and pornographers. And some justices disagree even with that.

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

SCRI P T U R E  S E A R C H

Gospel for June 24, 2018

Luke 1:57-66, 80

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

ESSENTIALS OF LITURGY

DOERFLINGER, from page 16

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Across: 1 Redeem

2 Lids

3 St. Thomas was one

4 Abraham’s nephew

5 Kind of circular shape

6 Northwest by west

7 Thin strand

8 Capital of Nationalist China

9 Third strand

10 Not working

11 Require

12 North west by west

13 Browser’s need

14 Left out of gear

15 Baker’s need

16 Badly done

17 Two-door

18 Baker’s need

19 Dented into

20 Called from birth

21 Crossword puzzle

22 Bread maker

23 Bread maker

24 Birds shall dwell

26 Declares

27 Kind of circular shape

28 Rent

29 Take away

30 Commandments

31 Bread maker

32 Chances of winning

33 Should run on time

34 Tool

35 Decor

36 Beauty notice

37 Opaque gem

38 Consumer

39 Environmental protection agency (abbr)

40 Birds shall dwell

41 Crossword puzzle

42 Birds shall dwell

43 Animals went in ark by

44 Sickle used when

45 Chances of winning

46 Decor

47 Weather

48 Fishermen used

49 Being noticeable

50 Sign language

51 Fishermen used

52 Certified public accountant

53 Holds the grain

33 Speech

56 Environmental pro-

57 Mail

58 Otherwise

59 Sticky black stuff

DOWN

1 Shade tree

2 Ghost’s greeting

3 Attractive

4 British thermal unit

5 Euros

6 Pressure unit

7 John would not unfasten these

8 Capital of Nationalist China

9 Thin strand

10 Not working

11 Require

12 Northwest by west

13 Browser’s need

14 Left out of gear

15 Baker’s need

16 Badly done

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18 Baker’s need

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45 Chances of winning

46 Decor

47 Weather

48 Fishermen used

49 Being noticeable

50 Sign language

51 Fishermen used

52 Certified public accountant

53 Holds the grain

Answer Key can be found on page 19
YARDLEY, Pa. (CNS) — The following books are suitable for summer reading:


“The Miracle of the Bread, the Fish and the Boy” retells the famous story from the Gospel of John in which Jesus miraculously multiplied enough bread and fish to feed a crowd of thousands. It is told from the viewpoint of that little boy, spotted by Andrew in the crowd, who had just five small loaves and two small fish to share. In this adaptation, we learn that the little boy had intended to use that food as a gift to his mother, who desperately needed a break from hard times. Not only became a miracle for the thousands, it also created a special miracle just for his family. The illustrations are bright enough to grab the attention of younger listeners while the text is appropriate for a broader age range of readers. Enjoy reading aloud while not worrying about revealing its title, and see how your children discover the familiar miracle unfolding as told through their perspective. Ages 4-8.


Resist the temptation to wince when the book’s title reveals its title, and see how your children discover the familiar miracle unfolding as told through their perspective. Ages 4-8.


This sweet book will give your child (or godchild) all they need to know at a young age. He or she is special because he or she was created by a loving and all-knowing God, Jesus is our gift from God, and Mary is Jesus’ mother. Within these pages, author Angela M. Burrin speaks directly to children letting them know these simple, yet profound truths that will set them up for a foundation of faith. The book is a journal, and children are encouraged to draw pictures and write about special memories and milestones. Parents can guide younger children, making it appropriate for a broader range of ages. Ages 4-6.


Young lovers of Pope Francis and cats beware: You’ll be hooked by this new series that displays the tenderness of an already beloved pope. True to his form of loving all of God’s creation, Pope Francis adopts a stray cat who needs a little tender loving care (and a bath) before becoming more comfortable in the papal quarters. This first novel in a series (to be followed by “Margarite’s Night in St. Peter’s”) introduces us to Margaret, a sweet stray cat in need of a warm home and food. We learn just a little bit about her and a little bit about the pope’s daily life, making readers eager for more. Ages 4-8.


This sweet book will give your child (or godchild) all they need to know at a young age. He or she is special because he or she was created by a loving and all-knowing God, Jesus is our gift from God, and Mary is Jesus’ mother. Within these pages, author Angela M. Burrin speaks directly to children letting them know these simple, yet profound truths that will set them up for a foundation of faith. The book is a journal, and children are encouraged to draw pictures and write about special memories and milestones. Parents can guide younger children, making it appropriate for a broader range of ages. Ages 4-6.


Following the universal Church’s first celebration of the feast of Mary, Mother of the Church, a book just for children on Marian consecration seems quite timely and fills a needed void on bookshelves. Similar to adult Marian consecrations, the days lead up to a Marian feast day that will become special to your children as they prepare and potentially throughout their lifetime. Simple, practical and fun, the book is full of meaningful anecdotes, special prayers, facts about saints and interesting revelations about the Church.


These are the covers of “Saintly Rhymes for Modern Times” by Meghan Bausch and “Marian Consecration for Children: Bringing Mary to Life in Young Hearts and Minds” by Carrie Gress. They are reviewed by Regina Lordan.

Each year one collection of poetry stands out among the others, and “Hidden City” wins the prize. The beautifully illustrated poems will appeal to the city-dwelling or city-exploring child who may not notice or appreciate God’s beauty in nature amid the concrete wildernesses that is urban life. Creeping through the bricks, crouching in the bushes and hunting in the night are wildlife, moss and birds, feral cats and raccoons. The collage illustrations add to the feelings of a busy city alive with life; the poems rhythmically coincide with the changing seasons. Ages 4-8.

Books on saints, secrets, Mary for children’s summer reading
WHAT’S HAPPENING?

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

VdeP: St. Vincent de Paul’s music festival

FORT WAYNE — The St. Vincent de Paul music festival, VdeP, will be June 25 and 26, from 7-9 p.m. each evening. Enjoy local Christian singers Alanna Boudreau and Mike Mangione on Monday, June 25, and Maude-Jo+MA and Father Kevin Mcgoldrick on Tuesday, June 26 on the parking lot, 1502 E Wallen Rd. Admission is $5 or one toiletry item. Funds and items will go to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Bishop Luers networking ‘Knight’

FORT WAYNE — A fund-raising event for Bishop Luers High School will provide an opportunity for professionals to network in an informal setting. For $20 enjoy cocktails, appetizers, door prizes and a view of the Tin Caps baseball game. Proceeds benefit scholarships and tuition assistance. For information contact Tess Steffen at 260-456-1261 or tsteffen@bishopluers.org.

Patriotic concert planned at cathedral

FORT WAYNE — A free concert of traditional choral and instrumental music will be presented by the Immaculate Conception Cathedral Choir, Wednesday, June 27, at 7 p.m. Free parking, free admission, free ice cream!

Service to others is their calling.

Divine Mercy Funeral Home is honored to introduce our Funeral Directors, Bob Jesch and Monte Freeze. But for many in the Fort Wayne community, Bob and Monte need no introduction.

Bob is a Bishop Dwenger graduate and former hockey coach who has served as a Funeral Director for over 35 years. Originally from South Bend, Monte has served as a Funeral Director for over 20 years in Fort Wayne, where he lives with his wife of 17 years and two sons.

Bob and Monte are well known and respected for their experience, compassion, and dedication to the families they serve. Their patience and understanding puts families at ease. Just when they need it most.

We invite you to call Bob or Monte at 260.426.2044 for an appointment or visit the office at 3500 Lake Ave., 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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Sat 8 am – 7 pm
Sun 10 am – 5 pm
16619 Lima Rd, Huntertown
260-338-0022
Mon – Sat 9am-6pm
Sun 11am-5pm

Parishioners of St. Vincent de Paul
Work sessions

Attendees met in small groups to discuss specific issues and priorities. After lunch in the Morris Inn on Saturday, they then discussed jointly the areas of positive growth in Hispanic ministry within their parishes, as well as problems and opportunities within each area of focus.

Regarding vocations, for example, they said encouragement was needed for all their parishioners to spend time in prayer for vocations and promote vocations to young adults, and for the Church to provide bilingual priests. Opportunities mentioned included a rising tide of new Hispanic leadership to help individuals discern vocations, and the teaching of seminarians about other cultures; problems included a lack of general and Spanish-language information about vocations and lack of support within Hispanic families for vocations.

During a discussion about evangelization, the suggestions included developing new programs for young adults and children, bringing in both ecclesial and lay leadership in order to help parishes determine how to encourage Hispanic parishioners to evangelize. Among the obstacles noted was that some Hispanics see the parish as a government-type entity, rather than a place to increase their faith. Some also do not have an immigration status that would allow them to evangelize at will — for example, in prisons, which require identification to enter. Many also do not have an immigration status that would allow them to evangelize at will — for example, in prisons, which require identification to enter.

The Church evolves

Everett said what has come out of V Encuentro so far is an awareness of the need for more formation and more partnership between the clergy and the lay people. He said as the Hispanic population continues to grow in the U.S. it is a large part of the Church, and there are several different issues that must be addressed.

He said young people are questioning where they stand in the Church, and that the Church can no longer justify its action or inaction by saying "this is just what we do" — and relying on those who leave as teens or young adults to come back when they have children. "That’s shown to be false," Everett said. "If they are not experiencing Christ first and foremost the traditions and things they see as obligations will be seen as irrelevant.”

As to how the V Encuentro process is specifically going to help the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Everett said, “Now we can help keep the focus on what needs to be done and to motivate people on all levels. This is not a time to be apathetic or even discouraged — it’s a time to take stock of where we are and make changes.”

Rodriguez said she felt like the Encuentro process gave “hope for everyone. Most people don’t feel like they can talk. This is an opportunity to raise our voice,” he said. “We are the voice for everyone who is not close to the Catholic Church. It is also a great opportunity to feel we are all together in community in the United States — we are one Church.”

Nopal said she hopes the outcome will be “Everyone getting united — especially the Anglo and Hispanic communities. “There is still much work to be done, she added, as “sometimes there is even a barrier between even the bilingual and Spanish-speaking-only communities in parishes.”

Benetiz said he believes the Encuentro process can help the diocese as a whole, because the participants are discovering “weaknesses and strengths, and what we need to influence spiritual growth.”

Also, when we share our thoughts and feelings we make our voices count,” he added. “It helps the diocese grow more and lets the bishop know we are open and willing to work to make our faith, our diocese and our Church grow.”

Jose Ruiz, also from St. John the Evangelist, agreed. “The Encuentro is a great opportunity to express our thoughts and issues in the community and especially in the family, and the family is very important for the community and for the Church.”

Ruiz chose to participate primarily in the small-group discussions about family ministry. He said he hopes one of the end results of the Encuentro process will be to promote unity among immigrants. “We are in the middle of two cultures, because we can understand the Anglo culture and they (immigrants) can understand us. We are the same Church — one God, and one nation under God.”

Mirna Rodriguez from St. Patrick Parish in Ligonier said she learned at the regional gathering about the different aspects of Church life and the needs that people in different churches have. She felt the biggest concerns voiced were the need for support for catechists and the problem of keeping young people in the Church.

Rodriguez said she realized that different churches share these and other issues, and was encouraged that at the regional gathering participants shared different ideas to resolve them.