Describing it as a place where people will “come into real contact with God,” Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades blessed a new chapel that has been constructed at the University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne and dedicated its altar during a special Mass on Oct. 3.

“‘How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord, mighty God!’ Bishop Rhoades said, in opening his homily during the Mass. “These words of Psalm 84 resound in our hearts today as we worship the Lord in this beautiful new oratory. This will truly be the dwelling place of the Lord, since here the most holy Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ, will be celebrated and reserved.”

The voices of a USF choir and the capacity crowd in the 250-seat chapel filled the arched interior during songs and jointly recited prayers. Sunlight streamed in through the south windows, adding to the brightness of the cream-and light tan-colored walls.

Those attending the Mass included representatives of the USF student body, faculty and
Students of Sacred Heart School, Warsaw, pray the rosary during the Day of Prayer and Penance. At right, a woman reflects during exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at Sacred Heart Church.

St. Adalbert Parish, South Bend, conducted a Holy Hour for the victim-survivors of sexual abuse.

St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Fort Wayne celebrated a 6:30 p.m. Mass, followed by a holy hour with benediction. At Holy Cross Parish in South Bend, the 8:15 a.m. Mass in the Mary Chapel gave way to a Parish Prayer Service with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, recitation of the Sorrowsful Mysteries of the rosary, and praying of the Penitential Psalms. The parish also joined Christ the King Parish for Evening Prayer for Healing in the Catholic Church on Oct. 2. St. Therese, Little Flower in South Bend discerned a day of adoration, according to Youth Minister Abby Kyle, which began with the votive Mass, then exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. with two or more parishioners committing to pray at each hour for healing within the Church and in our hearts. Other parishes carried out similar liturgies and prayer services. Father Ryan Pietrocarlo, CSC, associate pastor of St. Adalbert Parish, South Bend, offered remarks on the importance of the day.

Reparation makes things complete again, making up for what’s lost, repairing that which has been damaged, making things whole. We read in the passion of Jesus that He was pierced for our offenses, and for the iniquity, as the prophet Isaiah put it, ’by His wounds we were healed.’

‘It’s one of the most beautiful and consoling mysteries of our faith that our sacrifices and sufferings, lovingly united to the Cross of Christ, can truly benefit others,’ she continued. ‘I have often pondered the striking claim that St. John Paul II once made: ’it is suffering, more than anything else, which clears the way for the grace which transforms human souls. Suffering, more than anything else, makes present in the history of humanity the powers of the Redemption.’”

The diocese is grateful to the parishes and individuals who participated in the Day of Prayer and Penance. For continued participation in offering reparation through the upcoming weeks, prayer resources can be found at https://dppfwsb.weebly.com. Additionally, the Litany of Reparation and additional prayers for a renewal of the priesthood can be found in the book “In Sinu Jesu: When Heart Speaks to Heart – the Journal of a Priest at Prayer” (Angelico Press, 2016).

The Body of the Lord was exposed for veneration and prayer at St. John the Baptist Church, New Haven.

As Christians are called now to continue in this dark time of the Church to dwell with hope, knowing that by Christ’s blood from His Sacred Heart, which pours forth around the world will heal the Church and make reparation to make it whole again. We have that hope that our Church may be whole; that it may be an instrument, not of damage, but of hope and of life. May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be our guide as we love in the world and raise the world to the heights that Christ did in His life.”
Diocese publishes amended list of credibly accused priests

FORT WAYNE — The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has published an amended list of the priests and deacons who have been credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor. Two additional priests have been added to the list and the number of allegations against a priest on the original list has been corrected.

On Sept. 18, the diocese released the first list of accusations that had been determined to be credible by the Diocesan Review Board and Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades. As stated in the initial release, “the list will be supplemented as appropriate based upon any future determinations of credible allegations.”

The amended list of those credibly accused was developed with the assistance of the Diocesan Review Board, which was established to assist the bishop in complying with the requirements of The Charter for Protection of Children and Young People and the Diocesan Sexual Abuse Policy. The Diocesan Review Board is comprised of mostly lay people, and its members assess all allegations of sexual abuse by a member of the clergy to listen to and support anyone who has been abused. Please contact Mary Glowaski, Victim’s Assistance coordinator, mglowas ki@dioscesefwb.org, 260-399-1458 or Father Mark Gurtner, JCL, vicar general, 260-399-1422.

The amended list includes: Michael Paquet, osc; and Bruce A. Schutt. Two more allegations have been added to the previously released name of Elden Miller. The addition of Paquet and Schutt were the result of further analysis by the Diocesan Review Board and Bishop Rhoades of additional information received by the diocese regarding open investigations. Michael Paquet was previously named by his religious order, the Crosiers, as someone against whom credible allegations of sexual abuse of minors were made. The number of allegations with respect to Elden Miller, as originally released on Sept. 18, was corrected. The original number included on the list was an error. The spelling of Miller’s first name was corrected as well.

The amendment to the list with these new names was not the result of new allegations or accusations of abuse incidents. The entire list of names of those credibly accused in its entirety can also be found on the diocesan website. A “credible accusation” against a priest or deacon of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is an accusation that, after a thorough investigation and review of available information, appears more likely than true to not in the judgment of the Diocesan Review Board, and is accepted as credible by the bishop.

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend stands firm in its commitment to investigate any allegations of sexual abuse by a member of the clergy and to support anyone who has been abused. Please contact Mary Glowaski, Victim’s Assistance coordinator, mglowaski@dioscesefwb.org, 260-399-1458 or Father Mark Gurtner, JCL, vicar general, 260-399-1422.

Detailed background for each credibly accused priest

Michael Paquet, osc Date of Ordination: May 28, 1978
Removal from Ecclesiastical Ministry: November 18, 2002
Diocese from Clerical State: September 16, 2005
Number of Credible Allegations: 1
Places Served: 1978-1979 — Crosier Assignments outside the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend; 1979-1985 — Ministry Center Retreat Director, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Bruce A. Schutt Date of Ordination: May 29, 1965
Loss of Clerical State: May 9, 1975
Number of Credible Allegations: 2

Elden Miller Date of Ordination: May 8, 1954
Retired: July 15, 2003
Removed from Public Ministry: December 18, 2006
Number of Credible Allegations: 4
Deceased: July 26, 2008

Prayer to St. Michael sees resurgence in response to abuse crisis

BY CAROL ZIMMERMANN

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In response to the Church abuse crisis, many parishes around the country have been bringing out the big guns in a spiritual sense — calling on St. Michael the Archangel to help the Church.

Some pastors have asked their parishioners to say the prayer at the end of Masses and some bishops have urged all diocesan parishes to recite it. And Pope Francis also recently urged Catholics worldwide to recite it during the month of October.

But for some parishes, saying this prayer at the end of Mass is nothing new.

In 2015, when Father Jose Manuel Campos Garcia was assigned to St. Joseph Parish in Roseburg, Oregon, he started praying the prayer to St. Michael after daily Mass not long after a shooting occurred at the nearby Umpqua Community College that left 10 students dead.

After he began leading the parish in this prayer after daily Mass, he said he saw a change.

“For us, it’s been a journey of healing relationships and healing the community,” he told the Catholic Sentinel, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon.

And now this parish will be joined by other parishes in the archdiocese in reciting the prayer which calls on the saint to "defend us in battle" and to “be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil.”

The prayer reads in full: “St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of heaven...”

“Every Life: Cherished, Chosen, Sent” is theme of Respect Life Month

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Each year the U.S. Catholic Church observes October as Respect Life Month, which calls Catholics “to cherish, defend and protect those who are most vulnerable, from the beginning of life to its end, and at every point in between,” said the chairman of the bishops’ pro-life committee.

For this year’s pro-life observance “we become even more aware of the need for messengers of God’s love and instruments of his healing” due to the clergy sex abuse crisis and other assaults on human dignity. New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan said Oct. 5.


The theme for this year’s Respect Life Month is “Every Life: Cherished, Chosen, Sent,” which highlights “our call to build a culture of life as mission- ary disciples, the cardinal said.

This year’s theme draws on the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Juan Diego. Mary appeared to him as a pregnant indigenous woman. She “sent him with miraculous flowers in his cloak to tell the bishop to build a church where people could receive her Son and her loving, tender care.”

“By embracing the mission entrusted to him, St. Juan Diego helped bring Christ’s transforming love to cultures gripped by oppression and death,” says the reflection. “Like St. Juan Diego, let us embrace our daily mission to help others encounter God’s transforming, life-giving love.”

Cardinal Dolan said: “We are called and sent to be messengers of God’s love, treating one another as cherished and chosen by Him. In doing so, we help build a culture that respects all human life. The Body of Christ needs you. The world needs you.”

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Pope Francis began the synod with an invitation that every participant “speak with courage and frankness” because “only dialogue can help us grow.”

But he also asked participants to be on guard against “useless chatter, rumors, conjectures or prejudices” and to be humble enough to listen to others.

Many of the synod participants arrived in Rome with the text of the three-minute speech they intended to give, but Pope asked them “to feel free to consider what you have prepared as a provisional draft open to any additions and changes that the synod journey may suggest to each of you.”

A willingness to “change our convictions and positions,” he said, is “a sign of great human and spiritual maturity.”

The synod is designed to be an “exercise in discernment,” the pope told them. “Discernment is not an advertising slogan, it is not an organizational technique or a fad of this pontificate, but an interior attitude rooted in an act of faith.”

Discernment “is based on the conviction that God is at work in the world, in life’s events, in the people I meet and who speak to me,” he said. It requires listening and prayer, which is why the pope has added a rule that after every five speeches there will be a three-minute pause for silent reflection and prayer.

Listening to the Spirit, listening to God in prayer and listening to the hopes and dreams of young people are part of the Church’s mission, the pope said. The preparatory process for the synod “highlighted a Church that needs to listen, including to those young people who often do not feel understood by the Church” or feel they “are not accepted for who they really are, and are sometimes rejected.”

Listening to each other, especially young people and bishops listening to each other, he said, is the only way the synod can come to any helpful suggestions for leading more young people to the faith or for strengthening the faith of young people involved in Church life.

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Women must fight clericalism to heal Church, publication says

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In response to current scandals, clericalism and the need for reform, Catholic women must take the initiative and make their voices be heard, according to a series of articles in a Vatican magazine.

The October edition of Women Church World, published Oct. 1 in conjunction with the Vatican newspaper, L’Osservatore Romano, dedicated its monthly issue to “Women Confronting the Crises of the Church.”

“We wanted to give voice to a critical reflection from the point of view of women,” Lucetta Scaraffia, the magazine’s director, wrote in the opening editorial.

The first article, titled “Holy Rage,” was a Q&A with Sister Veronique Margron, a moral theologian who works with abuse victims, is president of the Conference of Religious in France and is provincial superior of the Conference of Religious of Charity of the Presentation.

She said one major factor behind the “omerta,” or culture of silence in the Church, lies in the image the Church often has of itself as being a family, which, when it comes to incidences of sexual abuse, “has disastrous consequences.”

The image of a family is meant to describe the beauty of reciprocal care and love for each other, she said. However, just like when abuse is experienced in a family, that abuse is rarely talked about and finds support in sayings that warn against “airing your dirty linen in public.”

Just being angry or upset about abuse is not enough, she said. “Courage is a virtue” and is needed to get people to do something about what they hear and know.

“A holy rage is needed,” she said, as well as a clear awareness that “the difficulties that we will have to face if we speak out are nothing compared to what the victim has suffered.”

Sister Margron spoke about the problem of abuse of power and conscience, which affects men and women equally.

A kind of “incestuous environment” can affect a religious community, she said; it distorts and abuses the vow of obedience as one person puts another under his or her control.

“When you enter religious life, you are trusting and your guard is down, something which is entirely normal,” she said. For these men and women who have given their lives completely to God, any act of abuse “gives rise to a tragic sense of shame,” so deep that it becomes impossible to talk about it.

Christian life is built on faith, trust and promises, which is why suspicion is “poison for a community.” The challenge is to establish procedures and checks, exactly for safeguarding the quality and decency of relationships.

Scaraffia, a historian, wrote in the article “Feminism and Clericalism” that women have to be given more leadership roles if their voices are ever to be heard or have any authority.

“It is true that women, even the most obedient, do not truly feel part of the church, but at most (they feel like) obedient daughters,” she wrote.

If they did feel they were a welcome part, then they would fight no matter what their role “with all the weapons they possess, which are not trivial things,” for the Church to fol-

low Christ’s teachings.

But, she said, clericalism is also when the people of God sit at closed doors waiting to be called in.

“This is the clericalism Catholic feminists must heal because the condition of women in the church will change only if women have the courage to begin to change things from below, with denunciations if necessary, with questions that are never asked.”

So often the absence of women in leadership or decision-making is not because of dogma or canon law, she said, but just deeply entrenched and outdated traditions.

Anne-Marie Pelletier, a French biblical scholar who won the Ratzinger Prize for her contributions to theology, advocated in her article for a Church guided by the “two voices” of all men and women.

Pelletier wrote that getting the entire people of God dedicated to living a life of conversion and holiness is the “exact antidote to the venom of clericalism that lies behind the criminal abuses of power.”

While recognizing there are women who are “ready to adopt clerical behaviors,” all too often it is women who see and experience the abuse of power in the Church, in which the hierarchy is predominately male, she wrote.

Religious or laywomen, Pelletier wrote, “know all too well the haughty, condescending, disdainful gaze turned their way” and they daily experience an obedience imposed by men who jealously hold for themselves “the prestige of knowledge and authority.”

The Church needs two voices, male and female, if it is to “rediscover a truly evangelical intelligence of power as service” and for change to really happen, she wrote.

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Guardian angels are life’s traveling companions, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christians have guardian angels to encourage and guide them so they won’t become sluggish on their journey in life, Pope Francis said. Without the guidance of angels, men and women who become set in their ways and put “their life on hold” are in danger of becoming like stagnant water, the pope said.

Oct. 2 in his homily during morning Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae. “So many people don’t know how to walk or are afraid of taking a risk and they remain still,” the pope said. “But we know the rule is that a person who is stationary ends up stagnating like water. When water is still, the mosquitoes come, they lay eggs and ruin everything. The angel helps us, he pushes us to walk.”

Commemorating the day’s feast of the Guardian Angels, the pope quoted from the Book of Exodus in which God promises the people of Israel that he is “sending an angel before you, to guard you on the way and bring you to the place I have prepared.”

Guardian angels, the pope said, are the help “the Lord promises His people and us who walk along the path of life.”

‘Unthinkable pain, raw emotion’ remain a year after shooting, says bishop

LAS VEGAS (CNS) — This last year “has been a time of unthinkable pain and raw emotion for the Las Vegas community and for families devastated” by the mass shooting of Oct. 1, 2017, Bishop George L. Thomas said at an interfaith prayer service at Guardian Angel Cathedral.

“It has also been a time when Las Vegas has revealed the best the human family has to offer — the resilience of the human spirit in the face of incalculable odds,” said the bishop, who heads the Diocese of Las Vegas. He delivered the remarks during the evening service Sept. 30, where he was joined by a dozen leaders of other faiths.

Described by many as an emotional gathering, it came on the eve of the first anniversary of the shooting, which left 58 people dead and 852 others injured. From his room on a top floor of a high-rise hotel, the shooter, later identified as 64-year-old Stephen Paddock, fired bullets down on a crowd gathered below for an outdoor country music festival on the Las Vegas Strip. As a refrain through his remarks, Bishop Thomas used lyrics from a song written in 1971 by Barry and Robin Gibb: “How can you mend a broken heart?”

The words, he said, are “like the 1971 hit song by the Bee Gees, help us to capture the struggles and challenges we are facing as a Las Vegas community.”

He was 87. He was bishop of the Diocese of Dodge City, Kansas, from 1976 to 1982, when he was named the ordinary for the Diocese of Wichita. He retired in 2001. A funeral Mass will be celebrated the morning of Oct. 9 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Interment will be at Ascension Cemetery in Wichita.

Eugene John Gerber was born at a hospital in Kingman, Kansas, April 30, 1931, to Cornelius and Lena Tiesmeyer Gerber. They lived on a farm at Waterloo about 16 miles east of Kingman. He was the fourth of seven children. Two days after his birth, on May 1, Eugene was taken to St. Peter’s Church in Waterloo, where Father Bernard Garmann baptized him. He graduated from St. Louis School in Waterloo, a school staffed by Sisters of the Sorrows Mother.

Eugene began high school studies in the fall of 1945 at Conception Seminary in Concord, Missouri. As the result of a football injury, he returned home and finished his high school education at Kingman High School, where he graduated in 1949.

Storm hit basilica, school hard, but parish says it will emerge stronger

WILMINGTON, N.C. (CNS) — Six parish and school buildings take up about two blocks in historic downtown Wilmington. It’s the type of place where walls and brick, window frames are wooden and the school auditorium, known as the “upper room,” was built in 1871. But, since Hurricane Florence made landfall Sept. 14, it’s also the type of place where water was trapped behind walls after the brick, roods sustained structural cracks and property suffered extensive flooding. Repair estimates currently total about $5 million. That monetary assessment is conservative, according to Richard Wilkins, a parishioner who is leading the restoration effort for St. Mary School and its parish church, the Basilica Shrine of St. Mary. The storm spared no building on the church-school campus, although some properties were less damaged than others.

The Tileston Building, which houses parish offices, the rectory and the kindergarten, received the most damage. The building’s walls, which were built of brick and concrete, sustained structural damage and property losses were estimated at $1 million. The church itself, which has more than 1,000 pews, sustained at least $1 million in damage. That monetary estimate does not account for insurance that will cover some expenses. The school, which has served students for 118 years, also took damage. The school’s roof “lost 30 percent of its shingles,” and the parish church and school suffered structural damage that is estimated at $3 million.

The basilica, which was damaged by a large chunk of a tree that fell on its roof, also had to close its doors.

A CARnegative test for a driver that has been in school district classes for 16 years, is expected to pick up as many people return to the area.

CRS responds to Indonesian earthquake, tsunami

A Catholic Relief Services worker walks with a man along a destroyed road. Oct. 3, five days after a 7.5-magnitude earthquake and a tsunami hit Indonesia’s Sulawesi island. Catholic aid agencies were among those working to assess the needs and get relief to the island after the disasters left more than 1,900 people dead. Among those killed were 34 Christian students trapped while attending a Bible class. "They are Catholic and Protestant students who were on a retreat in the location when the earthquake occurred, causing the church to collapse," said Albert Podung, a Church worker who lives in Palu, a devastated coastal city.

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‘The Christian in the Public Square’

FORT WAYNE — In anticipation of midterm elections, Zion Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne will present an evening of talks from three denominational perspectives on the role and duties of Christians when it comes to voting.

Part of Zion’s Theology in the Parish series, “The Christian in the Public Square” takes place from 1:30-4 p.m. Oct. 27 at the church, located at 2513 Hanna St.

Presenting the Lutheran view will be Pastor Peter Brock of St. John Lutheran Church — Bingen, Decatur. Pastor Brock is the fourth vice president of the Indiana District and serves regularly as an adjunct professor at Concordia Theological Seminary.

Judge Kenton Kiracofe will present the Catholic view. Judge Kiracofe is the Wells County circuit court judge and a former prosecutor in Wells and Marion counties. He is president of the Fort Wayne St. Thomas More Society.

Darryl Hart, distinguished associate professor of history at Hillsdale College in Michigan, will present the Reformed view. He is the author of “From Billy Graham to Sarah Palin: Evangelicals and the Betrayal of American Conservatism” and other books.

The presentations will be followed by a hymn festival, “Sacred Song of Zion: Hymns of the Reformation.”

Admission is $5 for adults, children and younger are free. For more information call 260-744-1389.

Advent Day of Contemplative Prayer

DONALDSON — Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center will host an Advent Day of Contemplative Prayer on Saturday, Dec. 8, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. EST in Donaldson.

Sister Coletta Wrasman, PHJC, will lead participants into the silence of the day through an ancient Christian form of contemplative prayer. There, they will listen for God’s love within them. God invites everyone to be present to His presence throughout the day. Short presentations will help guide the prayer, and there also will be time to be alone with God. Mass will be celebrated in the Catherine Kasper Home Chapel at 11:15 a.m.

The cost of the retreat, refreshments and lunch is $35. Register at Linenwood.org by Dec. 1. For more information, email linenwood@poorhandmaids.org or call 574-935-1780.

Located at 9601 Union Road, Plymouth, Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center is a part of The Center at Donaldson, sponsored by The Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ.

Ancilla College hosts Marshall County Promise

DONALDSON — Ancilla College was taken over by kindergarteners and first graders Oct. 4, as over 1,400 students visited the campus for the Marshall County Promise “Walk into My Future” program.

Instructors, coaches and other staff were on hand to give the young college hopefuls a glimpse into the world of academia.

The children walked through 10 different stations that covered college topics. They were able to interact with the goats from the goat farm while learning about agriculture, handle plastic replicas of body organs for science class, write a story and even learn some deep-breathing coping exercises. A recycling station was also in place, thanks to help from The Marshall County Recycle Depot.

All of this gave the students a glimpse of what college life is like. “Hopefully we can impress upon the kids how fun college can be and stress the importance of furthering their education,” said Emily Huthoff, director of Institutional Advancement at Ancilla College. “If we plant these seeds at an early age, they may be more likely to continue.”

“Marshall County Promise celebrates the dreams of all youth by integrating a visit to Ancilla College. This experience allows each of our young learners an interactive campus experience that can help them visualize college,” said Kelsey Flynn, Marshall County Promise co-director. “Marshall County Promise appreciates and is thankful for the partnership that our community has with Ancilla College.”

Living rosary at Saint Joseph High School

Catholics gathered at Saint Joseph High School, South Bend, Sunday, Oct. 7, to participate in Rosary Coast to Coast, an initiative to pray living rosaries in every diocese across the U.S. at the designated time of 4 p.m. EST.

Clergy and members of several South Bend-area parishes, as well as the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, were among those who prayed.
Red Mass draws legal professionals

By Katie Murray

Red Mass was celebrated at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, Tuesday evening, Oct. 2, and many practicing Catholic professionals attended. Vested in the red robes traditional to the feast day of St. Thomas More, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrated the special Mass in honor of the Holy Spirit.

The Red Mass has a history dating to the 13th century. The first Red Mass was celebrated around the year 1245 in Paris, France, and its roots of Catholic marriage.

The Red Mass has a long and distinguished history. It has been celebrated in Paris since the beginning of the 13th century, and it has been an important event for judges and lawyers for centuries. The custom originally was for all the “Bench and Bar” to attend, and the Mass was scheduled for the beginning of the four terms of court.

The first term began around the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, which was when the courts, parliament and universities began their legal activities for the year.

The Red Mass was given its name due to the color of the celebrant’s vestments, a symbol of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord. These gifts are to shine in dispensing judgment in the courtroom as demonstrated by judges, lawyers, law school professors and students, and all elected government officials. During this time, the Church prays for all in the legal profession, that the Holy Spirit may be with them in mind, heart and word.

During the Mass, Bishop Rhoades reminded the congregation that as a jurist, St. Thomas More refused to take the Supreme Oath, announcing the King of England as the head of the Church, and he became a martyr as a result. St. Thomas More had the gifts of the Holy Spirit within him, and knew that he was God’s servant first.

Of the first reading of the feast day, in which Solomon prayed for wisdom, Bishop Rhoades said Solomon, putting wisdom first, realized that it was the kingdom of God that he should seek before all else. He reminded his peers to do the same and asked that others pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit for those in the legal profession.

State Sen. Liz Brown, R-Fort Wayne, said of the Red Mass: “I think it’s important to honor and emulate the memory of St. Thomas More, who realized that his faith was more important than, at that time, the role of the king and I think it’s a good reminder for elected officials and lawyers to remember that our faith isn’t something we leave at the courtroom or statehouse door.”
Seven Sisters Apostolate offers prayers for priests, bishops

BY JANET PATTERSON

Every Friday afternoon, Tammie Schenkel enters the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at Fort Wayne’s St. Vincent de Paul Church. While her 11-month-old daughter naps in the stroller, Schenkel spends an hour in prayer for Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades.

Schenkel is one of 19 women praying daily for Bishop Rhoades as part of the Seven Sisters Apostolate, an international ministry of prayer for priests and bishops. Her group is one of 10 in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend that have formed in the last few months.

“This is a quiet apostolate,” Schenkel said. The idea is simple: seven women committing to pray for a specific bishop or priest for one hour, one day a week, for one year. There are no meetings, and the priest for whom each group prays does not have to do anything with the group beyond accepting their gift of prayer.”

The inspiration for the Seven Sisters Apostolate began with Janette Howe of St. Paul, Minnesota. Howe had been praying for her pastor, Father Joseph Johnson, at the Cathedral of St. Paul. Without telling him, she made a commitment to pray at 3 p.m. on Thursdays. As she was praying on March 24, 2011, she felt a prompting from the Holy Spirit to invite six other women to join her in prayer as spiritual sisters to the priest.

“When Howe proposed the idea of the Seven Sisters to Father Johnson, he encouraged her to start the apostolate in seven parishes where seven women would pray for their pastors. After a one-year trial period, “it was embraced and the doors were opened wide in 2012,” Schenkel said. Schenkel started the first group for Bishop Rhoades in early September after hearing about the apostolate from her stepdaughter, Mindy Haffner, who started a Seven Sisters group at Our Lady of Good Hope for Bishop Mark Gurtner and Father Daniel Whelan.

Schenkel registered the Seven Sisters group for Bishop Rhoades with the apostolate. After sending him a letter that the group had been formed and would be praying for him and his intentions, the bishop sent a letter of thanks, expressing his gratitude for their continued prayers.

The coordinator for each group of Seven Sisters is called the anchoress, an ancient term that referred to a woman who withdrew from the secular society of the Middle Ages to lead a Eucharist-focused life of prayer and fasting. While the Seven Sisters anchoresses may not be called to such a radical life, their coordination and guidance help to keep the group focused on their mission of prayer. She is also the point of contact with the member of the clergy for whom the group prays, and relates any special prayer requests he might have.

The sisters in a group promise to respect their commitment to one hour of prayer one day a week focusing solely on the priest for whom they are praying, and to pray for his deepening devotion to the Blessed Mother. Schenkel said each group is asked to make a one-year commitment, generally from June to June around the feast of the Sacred Heart. The feast was instituted in 2002 as a special day of prayer for priests.

Delaine Stump is anchoress of a group at St. Vincent de Paul.

Her Seven Sisters prays for the pastor, Father Daniel Scheidt. “I learned about the Seven Sisters Apostolate from Father Jonathan Norton, newly assigned pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw. He was our associate pastor for three years at St. Vincent’s, fresh from ordination,” Stump said. “He shared with me that a group of his new parishioners had gifted him with this apostolate.”

“Everyone has to be accepted,” Stump said. “This is a beautiful apostolate that’s doing something for the good of the Church.”

One of those parishioners is Denise Wack, who had seen Seven Sisters founder Janette Howe on Eternal Word Television Network in June. “The Holy Spirit moved me to pray for our new pastor and to get a group started.”

When she proposed it to Father Norton, he took some time to consider her proposal. “I wanted to get his blessing,” said Wack, who has two brothers-in-law who are priests. One, Father William A. Wack, CSC, was named bishop of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee last year. Father Norton accepted and the group began praying.

The Seven Sisters Apostolate provides a booklet to help members better understand their ministry and to suggest prayers to include in their holy hours. Schenkel said she has been inspired by the stained-glass windows, prayer alcoves and paintings at St. Vincent. “I spend time begging each of them for their intercession for the Bishop.”

Social media has been a help in passing the word about the

Seven Sisters Apostolate. Mindy Haffner started one of the groups at Our Lady of Good Hope when she learned about the apostolate from a women’s prayer group on Facebook. “I immediately felt a burst of excitement,” she said. While the notice for the group was about St. Vincent Parish, Haffner was encouraged to pray for the priests at her own parish. “Absolutely!” she said. “Why not? What a beautiful gift to give to my priests and parish community and school.”

Each of the anchoresses said that she had little difficulty in recruiting women to fill the seven prayer slots in their groups. Many invited friends from already-existing prayer groups, and some found members just by word of mouth.

To learn more about the Seven Sisters Apostolate, go to www.sevensistersapostolate.org. For more information about forming a Seven Sisters group, contact diocesan coordinator Tammie Schenkel at 260-446-5339 or tammieschenkel@gmail.com.
Ava’s Grace, a new ministry for grieving parents

BY JENNIFER MILLER

What happens when one’s personal life and professional life suddenly collide? Often, the movement of the Holy Spirit may be found.

Lisa Everett, director for Marriage, Family and Pro-Life Ministry for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, can attest to such a mysterious working of grace, as her family and work life recently coincided in unexpected ways. The result is a new ministry being launched this month, Ava’s Grace, the purpose of which is to provide spiritual, emotional and practical support to parents who experience miscarriage, stillbirth and infant loss. The heartbreaking impetus for Ava’s Grace is from Everett’s personal life.

On April 16, 2016, Everett conducted a daylong training for Miriam’s Blessing, a diocesan program that offers concrete support to families who receive a difficult prenatal diagnosis. Part of the training that day included a session on perinatal bereavement, so that peer ministers could be equipped to help families whose babies die before or shortly after birth. Exactly one month later, Everett found herself in the labor and delivery unit of St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, awaiting the delivery of her granddaughter, Ava Madeleine, who had just died in utero at 39 weeks.

The shock and sadness were overwhelming, as Everett struggled to deal with a double grief: the death of her granddaughter and the heartbreak of Ava’s parents, Kate and Dale. But she saw God’s hand in the timing of her training, which had given her a good idea of how to accompany Kate and Dale as they grieved the loss of their beloved baby.

In the two years that followed, Everett became aware of many misconceptions that exist about how to help parents who are grieving the loss of a baby before or after birth. Parents who experience the loss of a child at any stage of pregnancy or infancy are often overwhelmed by grief that is intense, isolating and sometimes invalidated by others, usually unintentionally.

Occasionally, people of faith think that they are helping parents contextualize the loss of a baby by saying things like “God doesn’t give you more than you can handle” or “Now you have a little angel in heaven.” Besides being theologically problematic, these kinds of statements often add to the feelings of isolation and invalidation that grieving parents experience. Their loss is real and enormous, and it needs to be acknowledged. Everett said. Every human life is invaluable and sacred from the very moment of conception, and Catholics should mourn the loss of these little ones who die before or after birth.

Even the words themselves — “miscarriage,” “stillbirth” or “infant loss,” are topics not widely spoken about in Catholic communities or understood in the fullness of Church teaching.

The idea for Ava’s Grace unites what Everett believed as a Catholic woman, wife, mother and grandmother, and what she heard and saw in her work in marriage, family and pro-life ministry.

“Early last fall, I really felt in my heart a strong desire to start something in honor of Ava,” she explained. She continued to think and pray about it over the next few months, asking Our Lady’s intercession to let her know how to best honor her granddaughter’s brief life on earth. Clear confirmation came in multiple forms around the feast of the Immaculate Conception in December, after she prayed a novena. She felt the Holy Spirit moving as she began to hear more testimonies of pregnancy and infant loss and the lack of resources to help families deal and begin to heal from a Catholic perspective. With Kate and Dale’s blessing and Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades’ approval, Ava’s Grace was announced publicly on May 17, the two-year anniversary of Ava’s stillbirth.

Consultation and development took place over the summer months. The ministry is being formally launched this month, October, which is Respect Life Month and national Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month in the United States. Ava’s Grace hopes to offer practical, emotional and spiritual support to grieving families and to bring the rich resources of the Catholic faith to bear on the heartbreaking loss of a child.

There are many types of prayer and liturgical rites within the context of the Church,” Everett explained. For example, there is a beautiful ritual for naming and commending infants who die before baptism that was developed by the Archdiocese of St. Louis. There is also a moving blessing for parents after a miscarriage or stillbirth, from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishop’s Book of Blessings. Also, many people do not realize that according to the rip, a child of any gestational age whose parents intended to baptize him or her, is entitled to a Christian funeral and burial. And there is practical help available as well. For example, in helping to plan Ava’s funeral, Lisa’s husband, Deacon Frederick Everett, discovered that the Trappist monks of New Melleray Abbey in Iowa, as part of their ministry, offer beautiful, hand-crafted wooden caskets for infants in compassion and faith at no cost to families who have lost a child.

Ava’s Grace webpage, www.diocesefwsb.org/avas-grace will go live on Oct. 15, national Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day. It will feature the new ministry’s logo, painted with muted watercolors with the name and two olive branches on either side. The Everetts’ youngest daughter, Maria, came up with the idea of the two olive branches: one symbolizing life after death, the sign that the dove brought to Noah after the Great Flood in the Old Testament, and the other symbolizing peace — the peace that only Christ can give, in the New Testament.

The page will contain information to help families face the loss of an infant before or after birth, with the help of the rich resources of the Catholic faith, from liturgical rites and burial services to grief resources; as well as recommended books, an array of articles and blogposts for grieving parents and those who love them.

Everett knows that not a day goes by that parents and grandparents do not think of their beloved little ones who had such a brief life on earth. And this doesn’t diminish the love they have for their child and for the relationship, which continues to exist.

Ava’s Grace will sponsor memorial Masses on each side of the diocese later this month in honor of a child who was lost at birth. The Fort Wayne-area Mass will be celebrated at St. John the Baptist Church on Tuesday evening, Oct. 23, at 7 p.m., and the South Bend-area Mass will take place at St. Therese, Little Flower Church on Thursday, Oct. 25, at 7 p.m.

On Saturday, March 23, Ava’s Grace will offer a day-long retreat at the Sacred Heart Parish Center, Notre Dame. This retreat will be geared for couples who have suffered miscarriage, stillbirth or infant loss, but individuals will be welcome as well. The retreat will be designed to help couples to turn toward each other and toward God as they journey through their grief.

The patron saints of Ava’s Grace are Sts. Louis and Zelie Martin, parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower, who were parents who lost four children — three in infancy and one in early childhood. Like these parents whose path to holiness passed by way of this painstaking cross, Ava’s Grace hopes to help couples to cherish the time on or earth that they had with their child, to entrust him or her to Our Lord and Our Lady, and to look forward to the life that will never end.

That heartfelt cross, Ava’s Grace plans to offer a “companion” outreach, in which men, women or couples would be matched with others who have experienced a similar loss. “There is a beautiful empathy born of a shared suffering and a shared faith,” Lisa reflected. “And there is great value in getting to know someone who has lived through this heartbreaking loss of a baby and has started to heal.”

The phrase “heal the broken-hearted” has lingered in Lisa’s heart over the past few weeks. It is one of the phrases from Luke 5:31. “Jesus is at His home synagogue and is handed a sacred scroll of Scripture and opens it to read aloud: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the broken-hearted.”

“Christ alone can fully bind up the broken hearts of parents who have lost a child,” Lisa said. “Ava’s Grace hopes to be a channel of the love of Christ, which draws close to us in our suffering and heals our deepest wounds.”
Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration celebrate jubilees

MISHAWAKA — The Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration in Mishawaka honored six of their sisters Oct. 6 at a Mass celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades at St. Francis Convent in Mishawaka. Six sisters achieved jubilees of 75, 60 and 50 years of religious life.

Naming each of the jubilarians and their years of espousal in fidelity, love and mercy to the Lord, Bishop Rhoades noted how, “with the grace of His love, they said ‘yes’ and professed their love to Him through the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. They left all things to follow their spouse, to center their lives on Him and on His Gospel, on the will of God. They embraced the happiness of poverty, the freedom of obedience, and the radicality of chastity.”

“The only way to attain perfect religious life is by four means: the Eucharist, the Rosary, the Sacrament of Penance and fraternal charity. This is the path to perfection, by which the soul is made perfect in holiness. St. Paul shared with the Philippians the wonderful thing as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus (his) Lord,” the bishop noted: “St. Paul came to know the Eucharist is the sacrament of love which fills our souls with graces,” and where Jesus remains with us until the end of time, he said.

Sister jubilarians, thank you for your witness and fidelity to Christ,” he concluded. “Thank you for your love and service of His Body the Church! May the Lord continue to bless you with His love and His grace; and may Mary, the beautiful handmaid of the Lord, intercede for you always with her maternal love.”

The sisters who were honored at the jubilee Mass are:

**75th anniversary**

_Sister M. Helen Minich_

Sister M. Helen Minich entered the Sisters of St. Francis from St. Joseph Parish, LaPorte, on Aug. 12, 1958. Sister has ministered in several schools staffed by the sisters and as a teacher and principal in Indiana and Illinois including St. John the Baptist School, South Bend. Sister M. Helen served as superior of St. Francis Convent in Mishawaka for 16 years. Sister M. Helen oversees the Main Dining Room at St. Francis Convent, Mishawaka.

**Sister M. Helen Minich**

**60th anniversary**

_Sister M. Michael Ann Durrer_

Sister M. Michael Ann Durrer was born in Walkerton, Ontario, Canada and entered the Sisters of St. Francis on Aug. 12, 1943. She was a science teacher who taught in several schools staffed by the sisters including Marian High School in Mishawaka, St. Mary School in Huntington, St. Andrew School, Bishop Luers High School and the University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne. Sister M. Michael Ann resides at Our Lady of Angels Convent, Mishawaka.

**Sister M. Michael Ann Durrer**

**Golden jubilee**

_Sister M. Dorothy Speckhals_

Sister M. Dorothy Speckhals was born in Berger, Missouri, and entered the novitiate of the Sisters of St. Francis on Aug. 12, 1958. Sister served as a teacher in various schools including St. Mary School, Huntington, and Queen of Peace School, Mishawaka. Sister Dorothy also served for many years in the formation program of the province. She resides at St. Francis Convent where she teaches religion classes in the novitiate. Sister M. Dorothy has ministered as a teacher and principal in various schools staffed by the sisters since 2000.

**Sister M. Dorothy Speckhals**

_Sister M. Felicity Dorsett_

Sister M. Felicity Dorsett was born in Oak Park, Illinois, and entered the novitiate of the Sisters of St. Francis on Aug. 11, 1968. She has taught in several schools staffed by the sisters including St. Therese School, Fort Wayne. Since 1995, Sister Felicity has been teaching in the theology department at the University of Saint Francis, Fort Wayne.

**Sister M. Felicity Dorsett**

_Sister M. Duane Ankenbruck_

Sister M. Duane Ankenbruck entered the Sisters of St. Francis from St. Vincent Parish in Fort Wayne and received the habit on Aug. 12, 1958. Sister served as a lab technician in various hospitals staffed by the sisters from 1982-95 she served in Honduras, Central America. Presently, sister is assigned to St. Francis Convent, Mishawaka, where she works in various areas.

**Sister M. Duane Ankenbruck**

Blessing of animals for feast day

A blessing took place Sunday, Oct. 7, in the parking lot of Marian High School, Mishawaka, sponsored by Immaculate Conception Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order. Father Finian, OFM, accompanied by Sister Agnes Marie Regan, OSF, blessed the pets with holy water.

Rosary Coast to Coast in LaGrange

Parishioners of St. Joseph, LaGrange, and Father J. Steele, CSC, prayed the rosary in front of the statue of Mary that faces busy SR 9 on Oct. 7 for the Rosary Coast to Coast initiative.

William Schmitt

Warren Patka
In praise of middle children

There’s something new to worry about these days: the disappearance of the middle child.

One of the side effects of shrinking family size is that middle children are disappearing. With more and more people having only one or two children, society is losing one of its great assets.

When Jesus said “blessed are the peacemakers,” he may have been referring to middle children. Born between the older and the younger children, the adult oldest and the baby-of-the-family youngest, middle children grow up negotiating a complicated family dynamic.

Middle kids are stereotyped as being resentful of their lack of status and power. They have a birth order chip on their shoulder about the glory hogs above them and the spoiled babies below. Think Jan Brady from “The Brady Bunch.” That has not been my experience, however, and it’s not what researchers are finding.

Indeed, middle children, one expert said, are “social beings and great team players.” According to Katrin Schumann, co-author of “The Secret Power of Middle Children,” a majority of our presidents have been middle kids. She identifies other positive traits of the middle child as independence, cooperation, heightened empathy and principle-driven rather than ambition-driven.

It sounds like society could use a few more middles these days. Alas, the demographics are moving in the opposite direction. According to data from Gallup, in the 1970s three children was the ideal U.S. family size and only 20 percent of families had two children. In 2014, the ideal has become two, with 60 percent of families having one or two children. (Only 20 percent have three and 10 percent have four or more.)

I grew up in a family of seven, which I considered “average.” I knew several families with more than seven, and being a competitive oldest child, I thought my parents weren’t trying hard enough.

Being seven, it fell to one of my sisters to be exactly middle. Her lot in life was to be too old for the youngest quadrant and too young for the oldest. She was the one who stayed home to babysit when the “big kids” got to go out. At the same time, she was often forgotten when the younger or older, not necessarily the unfortunate middle.

Yet being put in a situation where she had to maneuver between the big kids and the babies, she became a peacemaker, a leader, a negotiator. Her empathetic skills are darn near legendary, making her an effective caregiver.

According to Schumann, middles “can see all sides of a question and are empathetic with judge reactions well. They are more willing to compromise,” and “since they often have to wait on the side of the aisle, they’re more patient.” On top of all that, they score high on marital happiness, are more willing to compromise, “are the mini-adult in which they live.”

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Reflection

The readings this weekend are fundamental, intense, wide-ranging and radical. The story of the rich man is crucial to the lesson of this weekend’s Liturgy of the Word. This rich man already obys God’s Commandments. He wants to be with God. Jesus calls him to absolute commitment. It is more than lip service. Indeed, it is more than obeying the Commandments. It is the total imitation of Christ’s own sacrifice, an expression of total commitment to, and trust in, God.

The man cannot accept this blunt suggestion. He cannot forsake what he has of this world’s things. Sadly, he walks away.

In the first reading, true wisdom was seen as being in divine revelation, not in limited human judgment. All things of earth, including human judgment, are subject to flaw.

The story has wider applica- tion to those of us who know real fear, pain and how to be better human beings. The story has wider applica- tion to some, a necessary institution.

We must be humble enough to accept that some people who criticize or leave the Church are not those who do not care, who do not seek God or who are overtaken with worldly priorities. They may actually care deeply about their journey to and with God but simply do not know where to turn to as we have turned to you in the name of Christ for forgiveness, the cure for hope and healing.

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A new apologetics: Bishop Barron’s youth synod intervention

NOTE: On Oct. 4, Bishop Barron offered the following intervention at the Vatican during the 2018 Synod on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment.

Jesus’ encounter with two erstwhile disciples on the road to Emmaus provides a beautiful temple for the Church’s work of accompaniment across the ages. The Lord walks with the couple, even as they move away from Jerusalem, which is to say, spiritually speaking, in the wrong direction. He does not commence with a word of judgment, but with attention and quiet encouragement. Jesus continues to listen, even as they recount, accurately enough, all the data having to do with Him. But then, knowing that they lack the interpretive pattern that will make sense of the data, He upbraids them (cf. Luke 24:25), and then He lays out the form (“beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them”), and then He lays out the content (“beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them”). He listens with intimacy, how to behave — is often counter-indicated, since the ideology of self-assertion is so firmly established. However, the third transcendental, the beautiful, often proves a more winsome, less threatening path. And part of the genius of Catholicism is that we have so consistently embraced the beautiful — in song, poetry, architecture, painting, sculpture and literature. All of this provides a powerful matrix for evangelization. And as Hans Urs von Balthasar argued, the most compelling beauty of all is that of the saints. I have found a good deal of evangelical traction in presenting the lives of these great friends of God, somewhat in the manner of a baseball coach who draws young adepts into the game by showing them the play of some of his greatest practitioners. When Jesus explained Himself to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, their hearts began to burn within them; the Church must walk with young people, listen to them with attention and love, and then be ready intelligently to give a reason for the hope that is within us. This, I trust, will set the hearts of the young on fire.

Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

WORD ON FIRE

WORD ON FIRE

BISHOP ROBERT BARRON

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Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.
A penitent receives absolution at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, where the World Apostolate of Fatima, Fort Wayne-South Bend Division, celebrated Mass on Saturday, Oct. 6.

In addition to an opportunity for the sacrament of reconciliation prior to the WAF Mass, a rosary was prayed.

Children dressed up as Lucia Santos and Francisco and Jacinta Marto, the Portuguese children who witnessed the appearances of Our Lady of Fatima.

A procession that includes an image of Our Lady of Fatima makes its way to the Grand Wayne Center.

Father Joseph Mary Wolfe, MFVA, speaks to those in attendance at a breakfast that followed the Mass.
$REST IN PEACE$

Decatur
Susan M. Bohlander, 65, St. Mary of the Assumption
Fort Wayne
John Kevin McMahon, 73, Our Lady of Good Hope
Ernest Walker, St. Joseph
Robert E. Gensheimer, 82, St. Vincent de Paul
Paul R. Meyers, Sr., 69, St. Vincent de Paul

Thomas C. Neuman, 83, Our Lady of Good Hope
Harold A. Rice, 85, St. Charles Borromeo
Mike St. John II, 97, St. Jude
Tom Biesiada, 93, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
Granger
Mary Margaret Derse, 80, St. Plus X
New Haven
Robert Mattingly, 82, St. John the Baptist

Plymouth
Ronald Peterson, M.D., 86, St. Michael
Lucy A. Schlosser, 87, St. Michael
South Bend
Joseph F. Kaybo, 61, St. Therese, Little Flower
Linda D. Russnak, 79, Our Lady of Hungary
Judith Wade, 77, St. Augustine
Mary M. Kovach, 100, St. Anthony de Padua

The CrossWord
October 7 and 14, 2018

DIE MIST US E MUS PIG S E L E C T E
YOU ASK ME END E R S O N "L I D
RISE K E E P E V E N N A D G R I P S
IN T R E E T E E K I S S O U R R E M E N T
I P E A WOK EDT B S M I R S K A M I E
N A I C E A D E T N A A N O N Y M O U S
L G S E P F E L E E R S A R E

Divine Mercy Funeral Home to offer complimentary Committal Service and Burial of your Catholic loved-one’s cremated body.

Wednesday, October 17, at 2 p.m.

The Catholic Rite of Christian Burial teaches us that the cremated body should be buried or placed in a marked mausoleum. Some families, however, choose to hold on to their loved-one’s cremated body – only to regret later that the remains didn’t receive a proper burial.

In our mission to carry out the corporal works of mercy in burying the dead, Divine Mercy Funeral Home and Catholic Cemetery is offering to receive your Catholic loved-one’s remains and place them at rest in the cemetery, free of charge.

A community-wide Committal Service and Burial will take place at Divine Mercy on Wednesday, October 17, at 2 p.m., with Msgr. Robert Schulte officiating.

Families wishing to make burial arrangements at the cemetery should call 260-426-2044 by Wednesday, October 10, to schedule an appointment with a cemetery advisor.

Divine Mercy hopes that this outreach will give comfort to those grieving for their loved ones, while enabling future generations to pay tribute, remember and pray for their deceased relative or acquaintance.
staff, along with donors, USF board of directors members and about 50 members of the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration religious order, which founded and still leads USF. Many of the sisters came from the order’s Immaculate Heart of Mary Province provincial house in Mishawaka.

The $4.7 million chapel, which stands on the east side of Mirror Lake on USF’s main campus, will be known officially as the Oratory of St. Francis of Assisi because it is not a parish church. USF’s president, Sister Elise Kriss, said during an interview a week before the blessing Mass. At the university, it will be called St. Francis Chapel.

“Here in this oratory, the community of this university will come into real contact with God through prayer and the sacraments,” Bishop Rhoades said during his homily. “Here you will worship Him in spirit and in truth. Here you can enter into God’s house and into communion with Him any time of the day or night.”

The building includes an adoration chapel that students, staff and faculty can enter 24 hours a day using their ID cards, Sister Elise said. The holy Eucharist won’t be on exposition, so people aren’t required to stay in the adoration chapel 24 hours a day.

While blessing the new chapel, the bishop walked around the interior and sprinkled it with holy water. He later dedicated the altar by inserting a relic of St. Francis of Assisi into the altar’s stone top. He then poured sacred chrism on the altar top and spread it over the entire surface with his hands.

Bishop Rhoades incensed the altar, after which USF chaplain Father David Metzner carried the censer through the chapel, spreading the incense throughout.

USF School of Creative Arts Woodshop Director Jay Herron crafted the altar base, ambo and tabernacle stand from wood with help from retired SOCA Dean Rick Cartwright, Sister Elise said.

Herron also made the large San Damiano cross mounted on top of the wall behind the altar. The cross has a duplicate side visible from the adoration chapel behind the sanctuary. St. Francis was said to be praying before such a cross in Assisi when he heard God call him to rebuild the Church.

A stand-alone chapel has been a longtime dream for the university, Sister Elise said. USF’s chapel has been housed since 1948 in various locations in Trinity Hall, which contains a dining hall, offices and dormitory rooms.

The new chapel is the faith component of USF’s $22.7 million Faith and Reason fundraising campaign. The reason portion of the campaign involves the expansion and remodeling of nearby Achatz Hall of Science.

St. Francis Chapel, at 76 feet high, intentionally towers over other buildings around it. “It is going to be visible from almost anywhere on campus,” she said, as well as from Spring Street and Leesburg Road.

The building also serves as a sign of USF’s Catholic identity and its efforts to attract more Catholic students, she added. Currently, about a third of the university’s approximately 2,500 students are Catholic.

Sidewalks and paths have been re-routed to bring students, faculty and staff past the chapel as they go to and from the academic buildings on the east side of the main campus.

Sister Elise hopes more people will stop in for Mass, which will be offered at 11:30 a.m. daily and at 8:30 p.m. Sundays. The public is welcome at both the daily and Sunday night Masses. USF also planned a special Mass in the new chapel Oct. 4 to celebrate the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi.

Sometime in the future, USF hopes to hold a campaign to raise the $600,000 to $700,000 needed to install stained-glass throughout the chapel, which currently has clear glass windows.

Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration from the Midwest region pause for a group photo in front of Mirror Lake and the newly constructed chapel at the center of the University of Saint Francis campus, on their way to the first Mass and blessing of the chapel by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades.

Deacon José Arroyo processes in to the newly constructed Oratory of St. Francis of Assisi on the campus of the University of Saint Francis, carrying a first-class relic of St. Francis that Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades embedded in the new chapel’s altar during the Mass.

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During the dedication, Bishop Rhoades pours sacred chrism on the altar before spreading it over the entire top surface with his hands.

Bishop Rhoades addresses his homily to those gathered for the Mass of blessing and dedication of the altar on Oct. 3.