Mass of thanksgiving celebrated for canonization of St. Katharina Kasper

BY JENNIFER MILLER

Viva Katharina! Viva Katharina!” came the cry from the choir loft, concluding the celebration of a Mass of Thanksgiving for the Canonization of St. Katharina Kasper on Sunday, Nov. 4. Sister Carole Langhauser, PHJC, led the shouts of joy, accompanying them with two hand bells.

For the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, the canonization of their foundress, Mother Maria Katharina Kasper, is a confirmation of what they knew and believed. Their gratitude stemmed from the universal Church recognizing God’s goodness as manifested in her, and sharing St. Katharina with the world.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrated the Mass, concelebrating with Bishop Timothy Doherty of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana, along with a Spiritan priest from Nigeria, Father Matthias Alonyenu, C.S.Sp., chaplain of the PHJC motherhouse in Ancilla Domini Chapel, Donaldson. The PHJC congregation observed its 150th anniversary of serving God’s people this summer.

St. Katharina was canonized on Oct. 14 in St. Peter’s Square in Rome, Italy, along with six other holy men and women of great charity. One of them was Pope

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New name of diocesan bookstore revealed

BY BARB SIEMINSKI

Cathedral Books & Gifts was christened with a more inclusive name on Friday, Nov. 2, during a ribbon-cutting and all-day open house. The store is now called Good Shepherd Books and Gifts.

Kara Slocum has managed the store for more than 10 years.

“The bookstore was originally located in one of the classrooms of the old Cathedral School, thus the name ‘Cathedral Bookstore,’” she said. “Because the bookstore is owned by the diocese, we were able to move to this present space, here in the Archbishop Noll Center, when it became available. What a pleasure that was, to move from one classroom to a roughly 3,000-square-foot space!”

Several years after that move, however, it was discerned that there was a problem with the store’s name. It no longer made sense, and caused bewilderment.

“When some customers are looking for us, they assume because of the name that we are located at the Cathedral church,” the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, she said.

“Another reason for the change is our desire to serve other Christian faiths. Since the closing of the Family Christian stores, there are very few gift shop choices for Christians. From a business standpoint, but also from an ecumenical one, it makes sense to want to serve all Christians. We offer many gift items that would appeal to any Christian, not just Catholics. So, we were looking for a name that would make non-Catholic Christians feel welcome to shop here.”

Roughly 200 entries were submitted for a recent diocesan bookstore-naming contest, according
St. Mary Catherine Kasper, Pray For Us!

IN TRUTH AND CHARITY
BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

The following is the text of the homily of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades at the Mass of Thanksgiving for the Canonization of Mother Mary Catherine Kasper on Nov. 4 at Ancilla Domini Chapel in Donaldson:

Todays we give thanks to God for the canonization of our beloved Mother Mary Catherine Kasper. Three weeks ago, in St. Peter’s Square, Mother Mary Catherine was officially declared a saint of the Church, together with six other holy men and women. One of those new saints was Pope Paul VI, who 40 years ago had beatified Mother Mary Catherine. I don’t know if there has ever been a canonization of a pope along with someone he had beatified. In his homily at Mother Mary Catherine’s beatification Mass in 1978, St. Paul VI said that Mother Mary Catherine’s filial love for God was total and found its authentic expression in unlimited love of neighbor. He noted that this is the perfect joy which Mother Mary Catherine left to the Church and to the world, love for God put into action through charity towards our neighbor.

At the beatification Mass, Pope Paul VI said that he was honoring all the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, whom he said the Church was inviting to emulate the luminous example of their foundress and to faithfully conserve their spiritual heritage. And what is that heritage? It is fun- damentally this: love for God put into action through charity towards our neighbor.

St. Paul VI said that the piety and the apostolate of Mother Mary Catherine had these essential characteristics: personal poverty, love for the poor, simplicity, humility and dedication to the service of neighbor out of love for Christ. He quoted the words of Mother Mary Catherine: “all our religious should become saints, but hidden saints.” Pope Paul VI spoke of Mother Mary Catherine as a model of fidelity and responsibility in the small and insignificant duties of each day. She once said: “All is great that is done in God’s love; nothing done for God is small.” This is good for us all to remember.

Pope Paul VI also called Mother Mary Catherine a model of longing to fulfill God’s will in all the situations of life. As you well know, Mother Mary Catherine’s life was focused on being available to God, on doing God’s will. In one of her letters, she prayed: “Only You I want to serve and obey according to Your liking. Only You I want to love according to your most holy will, only You I want to honor and praise as you like it.” I am hoping and praying that many more people will learn about Mother Mary Catherine Kasper, now that she is St. Mary Catherine Kasper. I am hoping to foster even greater devotion to her here in our diocese. What a beautiful example of the love of Christ. Gospel! Answering the question of the scribe about which is the first of all the commandments, Jesus recites the Shema Israel that we heard in the first reading from the book of Deuteronomy: “Hear, O Israel! (Shema, Israel). The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength.” And then our Lord adds to this a commandment from that same Shema: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Jesus is the first one known to have explicitly combined these two commandments, showing us that they are inseparable. St. Mary Catherine knew they were inseparable. Her love for God, which was so deep and beautiful, was concretized and expressed in her love for fellow human beings, especially the poor. As Pope Paul VI said at her beatification: Mother Mary Catherine’s great love for God was expressed in her unlimited love of neighbor.

Today’s readings remind us of the centrality of love in both the faith of Israel and in the Christian faith. There is new depth and breadth, however, with the coming of Christ. There is new depth because “God so loved the world that He gave His only Son” (John 3:16). There is new depth in that Jesus united into a single precept the commandments of love for God and love for neighbor, making them inseparable. And Jesus the Son revealed to us the depth of God’s love for us. His crucifixion is “love in its most radical form.” Indeed, Jesus shows us that “God is love.” We are commanded to love because love has first been poured out by Christ. Mother Mary Catherine believed this with all her heart. Love blossomed in her life as a response within her to the experience of God’s love. She encountered in her life, especially in her prayer, God’s love for her. She had a living relation-ship with the Lord Jesus and His love. And that is why she wanted to become His poor handmaid. She learned to see others with the same eyes that Jesus saw them. She learned to love others with the same love that God had shown her. And that relationship with God is arid and loveless. We are unable to see and love our neighbor as ourselves or to love one another as Christ loves us unless we love in God’s love for us, like St. Mary Catherine did. Her capacity to love and serve others was renewed every day in her daily encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist. The same with us – we need to be nourished with the sacrament of love if we are to live Jesus’ commandment of love.

The great commandment of love for God and neighbor is not imposed from outside. It does not call for the impossible. It is a response from within, born from an experience of love from within, God’s love for us. By its very nature, His love must be shared with others, this love that comes from God and unites us to Him. Yesterday, we celebrated All Souls Day. We were reminded that at the end of our earthly life, every one of us will face God’s judgment. At the moment of death, we will receive our eternal retribution in our immortal souls: either entrance into the blessedness of heaven immediately or through a purification (purgatory) or everlasting damnation. When I think about this judgment, I always remember the words of St. John of the Cross: “At the sunset of our lives, we shall be judged on love.” When Mother Mary Catherine died, she was judged on love. We all know the result of that judgment for her. She is now a saint! St. Mary Catherine teaches us that the path to heaven is the path of love. May she help us with her prayers to walk that path and to grow in holiness! Of course, that path of love is the way of the cross. This and every Eucharist, we participate in Christ’s sacrifice in which He loved us to the end. May His Body and Blood nourish and strengthen us, as it nourished and strengthened St. Mary Catherine and all the saints, to do God’s will, to love Him and to serve Him and all our brothers and sisters! St. Mary Catherine, pray for us!
Catholic Answers apologist Trent Horn addresses the ‘isms’

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

Catholic Answers is a popular, multiplatform resource for Catholics and non-Catholics alike to learn more about the faith. On Friday, Trent Horn, an apologist with Catholic Answers, visited Fort Wayne and spoke to the students of Bishop Dwenger High School and parishioners of St. Vincent de Paul Parish.

Horn’s presentations centered around the flawed idea of relativism. Relativism refutes any doctrine that denies the reality of absolute truths. Horn defined two types of truth for the students: objective truth and subjective truth. He referred to subjective truth as “ice cream truth.” Ice cream truth is a truth that is valid only in the eyes of the individual. For example, the declaration that chocolate is the best ice cream flavor may be true for a number of people, yet for others the best flavor is vanilla. The subject, he who perceives, determines what is true. Therefore, subjective truth is not absolute, like objective truth.

Objective truth cannot change based on an individual’s perception. An objective truth is universal — true for every person.

Horn then discussed three types of relativism that he said students will encounter throughout their lives.

The first, he said, is universal relativism. Universal relativism is the idea that there is no absolute truth; think of the idea that the best flavor is vanilla. The idea that there is no absolute truth, cannot condemn what the Nazis did as evil, because this idea claims only one religion can be true. How do we prove that Jesus is the Lord, not a liar or a lunatic?

Horn suggested using Lewis’s trilemma, which proposes three answers for the question, “Who was Jesus?” First, was Jesus a liar? Would Jesus and the Apostles have been tortured or even killed for a lie? Horn said that this was unlikely. Next, was He a lunatic? Horn said that his wife has had experience with mentally ill patients who “claim that they are Jesus,” but that not one of them sounds like the true Jesus.

Horn said that in fact, Jesus sounds like the sanest person in the entire Bible. Therefore, he concluded, Jesus must be who He says He is: the Lord. If Jesus is who He says He is, the Son of God, this refutes the other religions. It not only disproves the idea of religious relativism, but proves which religion is the Truth.

Saturday evening, Horn also spoke about defending the faith at St. Vincent de Paul Parish. He began by addressing the main fear he thinks Catholics have when defending the faith — that they do not have enough knowledge to answer religious questions. Horn said a person can be a great defender of the faith even with little knowledge about it because the key does not lie with the right answers, but the right questions. This is what is known as the Socratic method.

The Socratic method answers a question with another question, in an attempt to get someone to rationalize their stance with reasoning. Horn said that the greatest question in this method is a simple three-letter word: “Why?” The theory is that if you can get the person to process their position, they will begin to notice the gaps in their reasoning. This is a great approach, Horn said, because even Jesus used the Socratic method on the Pharisees.

He addressed what he said was another concern among Catholics, which is the fear they may be seen as “too preachy.” He said that preaching itself is, in itself, an absolute statement, so universal relativism refutes itself.

Next, Horn discussed moral relativism; the idea that you represent. He said that preaching is. Horn said to think of the idea of oneself not as a preacher, but as an inquirer; someone who is getting others to think for themselves.

Horn also said it is best not to be too defensive when attempting to discuss the faith with others. Remember that while it may seem that the individual is mad at you, they are actually mad at the idea that you represent. He comically described this experience as being a “verbal punching bag for Christ.”

Horn signs books following a presentation at St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Fort Wayne, Nov. 3. He spoke to parishioners about how to defend the faith in conversations with others.

Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend publishes amended list of credibly accused

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend announced Tuesday, Nov. 6, that Gerald Funcheon, who was a member of the Crosier congregation, is on the list of those credibly accused of abuse of a minor published by the Crosier Fathers. He has been added to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend list of those credibly accused of at least one act of sexual abuse of a minor because of a credible accusation of abuse that took place while assigned in the diocese.

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend also announces that it will keep its list of credibly accused priests on the diocesan website and will update the number of credible accusations against those priests if there are any additional credible accusations.
Listening in: Bishop hears young adult intentional disciples

BY JENNIFER MILLER

As the synod on young people was ending in Rome at the end of October, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades was beginning an expansion of young adult ministries in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. On Oct. 24, he met with Sean Allen, director of Young Adult and Campus Ministry, and young adult representatives from 14 different parishes to listen to their perspectives on the state of parish life in the area.

All of the young adults present were trained through the Intentional Discipleship program and active in at least one young adult ministry. Developed from the content of Sherry Weddell’s book, “Forming Intentional Disciples,” the series included presentation material, training videos and practical skills for sharing one’s story and God’s story, as well as one-on-one mentoring. Allen described it as a “series designed for young adults who are already trying to follow Jesus as His disciple.”

“The sessions focused on two goals: personal growth and reaching out. The participants learn the stages of a faith journey in order to recognize these stages along their own personal journey and identify the next step for them to intentionally grow in discipleship. Using the same stages of a faith journey, they identify where others are along their faith journey in order to determine the best way to meet them where they are and accompany them to the next stage.”

The young adults gathered for dinner, conversation and evening prayer with the bishop. Coming from a variety of backgrounds — some cradle Catholics, some converts — the majority were single women. They attended more than one parish, including weekday Masses. Allen said the timing of many young adult programs and commitments were difficult for many young families with children, who often found a niche in parish life via school programs.

Since the Intentional Discipleship program began in the fall of 2015, more than 80 young adults have participated, from Elkhart to Mishawaka. Allen expressed appreciation for their passion and hopes to continue growing the program.

“The series is for young adults who are leaders or potential leaders within the young adult community and in their parish. Those who participate are regular participants in other diocesan young adult activities in order to be considered. Pastors can also recommend people who will be working in young adult ministry, since this series doubles as ministry training for reaching young adults,” he explained.

The Intentional Discipleship program has made a significant impact on their present lives, the participants said.

“(It) rekindled my desire to have conversations with others about the Lord at the water cooler at work and in new settings. The tools have been helpful in engaging others in conversation about faith,” Liz Loughran mentioned.

Stephen Horton found, “The Intentional Discipleship program was a confidence booster; a safe place to talk things out and to fear less about what we were trained.” Mary Flynn agreed, recalling how the program “gave me the words to map and understand where people are at with their faith, how to phrase things … And helping me to get them to the door of the church.” She found learning “how to evangelize was super helpful,” especially after learning about “the situation of our generation.”

Flynt felt compelled to act and aid “to set afire to the Church. What are we going to about it?” she asked herself.

“A personal commitment to the new evangelization was expressed by many young adults, focusing on a pro-active approach. Once they knew and loved the Lord, they deeply desired to share this true joy with their peers.”

“The solution is obviously us. Christ himself invested in 12 people,” Joseph Torma said. He shared how he encountered difficulty finding a niche in his local parish and so turned outward to begin a Bible study to share his faith with others. “You have to put yourself out there,” he encouraged, echoing the call of missionary discipleship.

Setbacks and disappointments with the current state of young adult life in many parishes were also expressed. From feelings of isolation and a lack of “being understood and belonging” to a committed place, the young adults shared stories of wanting to be known and loved. Bishop Rhoades asked to know more about the roots of their emotions, hearing that many felt pressure, stress, broken relationships, a lack of trust and constant moving were some of the many challenges.

Bishop Rhoades expressed his gratitude for their faithfulness to Christ and His Church, as well as the great depth and breadth of their conversation. He asked them to continue sharing their unique gifts with their parishes, reaching out to their pastors asking how they can help and praying for the development of the young adult ministry.

“It’s not just business as usual,” he explained. “It can’t be. Young disciples, stay rooted in your prayer. The cross is a part of it, too. The cross is our saving cross. The Church needs you!”
On All Souls Day, bishop and Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration pray for departed loved ones

BY MOLLY GETTINGER

“Pope Benedict XVI has a great quote about purgatory being a chance for God to ‘put the pieces back together’ in our broken, disordered lives.” shared Sister Margaret Mary Mitchel, OSF.

“Once someone has died, he or she depends on our prayers to help God in this process.”

Praying for the deceased is why, on All Souls Day, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades joined the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration to celebrate Mass and bless the resting site of the sisters.

The Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration have had a cemetery on the grounds of their Mishawaka convent since the first sister was buried there in 1945. The cemetery, which includes a Stations of the Cross and altar, is now the resting place for 545 deceased sisters.

Sister Rose Agnes Pfautsch shared about the importance of the cemetery — which includes an altar, a large crucifixion scene, and Stations of the Cross — as being a special place of prayer, “a place where Sisters go for fresh air, fellowship, and exercise, and a place where they remember the great legacy on which they stand.”

Bishop Rhoades affirmed this in his homily, saying: “This cemetery is also a holy place because the ground and the graves here have been blessed, and also because this is a place of prayer, where you can pray the rosary or the Stations of the Cross. Here we can practice the spiritual work of mercy of praying for the dead.”

In his homily, Bishop Rhoades spoke of the importance of All Souls Day for all Catholics.

“It expresses something very natural within us — the urge to pray for our departed loved ones. This is a holy responsibility: to pray for the holy souls in purgatory, thus helping them to reach the heavenly kingdom, that they may see God face to face and obtain the joy of the saints in heaven.”

“We pray for the faithful departed because we believe that their life is changed, not ended,” he continued. “Their bodies are in the tombs of this and other cemeteries. The bodies of the dead decay, but their souls have gone to meet God. And, through the power of Jesus’ Resurrection, on the last day, God will grant incorruptible life to their bodies by reuniting them with their souls.

This union with Christ is what Sister Ann Joseph Nelling, OFM, said is the sisters’ desire when they enter religious life, and this is what they desire in praying for their deceased sisters. She stated, “Praying for our deceased sisters draws us all closer to the heavenly marriage banquet. It also keeps alive in our memories the many examples of joy and strength we have received from our deceased sisters, and it urges us to ‘live in a manner worthy of the call we have received’” (Eph. 4:1).

The sisters were overjoyed and honored to have Bishop Rhoades say Mass, said Sister Angela Mellady, OFM. “Each year we hold a service at the cemetery on All Souls Day, and having the bishop provided an added solemnity to the occasion, reminding us of the great reality of the communion of saints — militant, suffering, and triumphant — present at every Mass.”
Egyptian Christians carry the casket of a victim during a Nov. 3 funeral Mass outside Prince Tadros Orthodox Church in Minya for a group of pilgrims killed by gunmen as they headed to a monastery Nov. 2. Seven Christians were killed and at least seven others — including children — were injured after armed gunmen attacked two buses near the Monastery of St. Samuel the Confessor in Minya province. “I pray for the victims, the pilgrims killed for the sole reason of being Christian,” Pope Francis said Nov. 4. He asked that Mary, the Mother of God, would “console the families and the entire community,” and he led those gathered in St. Peter’s Square in praying the Hail Mary.

Panel examines low numbers of Latino students in Catholic schools

WASHINGTON (CNS) — If admitting there is a problem is half the battle, then Catholic leaders and educators are halfway there by talking about it and not finding troubling: the small percentage of Latino children attending Catholic schools. The issue was highlighted two years ago in a Boston College report, “Catholic Schools in an Increasingly Hispanic Church,” which examined the disparity between the number of Latino students who are Hispanic and the number of these students — 2.3 percent — enrolled in Catholic schools. Although that number is now closer to 4 percent, it’s still a very small percentage and quite noticeable in a Church with a growing Hispanic population and at a time when Catholic schools are experiencing overall enrollment decline. Church and education leaders gathered at The Catholic University of America Oct. 30 to discuss this issue during an event sponsored by the university and America Media, the umbrella group for a group of Jesuit media platforms, including America magazine. The afternoon event included a luncheon, a closed panel discussion and a town hall meeting that was essentially preaching to the choir since many in the audience were Catholic educators, but its livestream broadcast gave it a broader reach.

New coordinating body for Catholic charismatic activities announced

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The two international bodies that had been supporting and coordinating the international activities of Catholic charismatic movements will cease to exist June 9, Pentecost Sunday. “As a body in the service of all the realities of Catholic charismatic renewal,” the Vatican said, “Chars will not exercise any authority over these realities. Each single charismatic reality will remain as it is, fully respected in its own identity and under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical authority upon which it currently depends.”

Fidelity is for every vocation, not just marriage, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Sixth Commandment’s mandate against adultery is a call to fidelity that applies not only to married couples, but to all Christians called to love others through their vocation, Pope Francis said. Married men and women, priests and those in religious life are ultimately called to live out their vocation faithfully and follow the “path of love that goes from receiving care to the ability to offer care, from receiving life to the ability to give life,” the pope said Oct. 31 during his weekly general audience. “Every Christian vocation is spousal because it is the fruit of the bond of love in which we are all renewed, the bond of love with Christ,” he said. Starting from (Christ’s) fidelity, his tenderness, his generosity, we look with faith at marriage and at every vocation, and we understand the full meaning of sexuality.” Among the pilgrims present at the audience were the members of the Together in Hope choir, an ecumenical choir comprised of Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist, Reformed, evangelical, and nonreligious people based in Minneapolis. Accompanying the choir was Archbishop Bernard A. Hebda of St. Paul and Minneapolis, and Lutheran Bishop Ann Svennungsen, head of the Minneapolis Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, who were greeted by Pope Francis after the audience.

High court to consider if 40-foot-cross war memorial endorses religion

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Supreme Court announced Nov. 2 that it would hear oral arguments in a case that considers if a 40-foot cross in Maryland endorses religion or is simply a secular memorial. The cross in question sits at a busy intersection in the Washington suburb of Bladensburg, Maryland, and memorializes soldiers who died in World War I. Last year, the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals based in Richmond, Virginia, ruled 2-1 that the 93-year-old monument is unconstitutional and must be removed or destroyed. “(It) has the primary effect of endorsing religion and excessively entangles the government in religion,” known as the Bladensburg Cross or the Peace Cross, the cement and marble memorial was erected by the Snyder-Farmer Post of the American Legion of Hyattsville, Maryland, to recall the 49 men of Prince George’s County who died in World War I. The cross, whose construction was funded by local families, was dedicated July 13, 1925. The American Humanist Association, a Washington-based group that represents atheists and others, filed suit against the memorial because it is in the shape of a cross. It argued that having religious symbols on government property violates the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

Pope: Christians can’t pick and choose with neighbor to love

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The commandment to love one’s neighbor does not mean Christians get to choose who gets help and who doesn’t, Pope Francis said. “It is not about pre-selecting my neighbor,” he said. “This isn’t Christian, it is pagan.” Christians must encounter everyone with the heart and eyes of Jesus, listening to and being near those in need, the pope said before reciting the Angelus Nov. 4 with people gathered in St. Peter’s Square. The pope reflected on the day’s Gospel reading (Mk 12:28-34) in which Jesus says the greatest of all the commandments is to “love the Lord, your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength,” followed by the commandment to “love your neighbor as yourself.” The two commandments — both parts of the same coin — cannot be separated and, therefore, must both be lived, the pope said.
OSV Institute relaunches to impact issues facing the Church

HUNTINGTON — After more than 100 years of supporting thousands of initiatives throughout the U.S. Catholic Church, Our Sunday Visitor (OSV) is relaunching its OSV Institute with a strategic vision for serving the future of the Church in the U.S.

The institute is expanding its reach by focusing on three specific challenges facing the Church: millennial re-engagement, Hispanic outreach and Catholic parenting resources — areas that have a great impact on the future of the Church and need more resources to cultivate results and broaden impact.

"By zeroing in on these three initiatives, we can target our resources to maximize impact in the Church and help it thrive in the 21st century," said Jason Shanks, president of the Institute.

True to the vision of its founder, Archbishop John Francis Noll, profits made from OSV’s printing and publishing are not only reinvested in the Church, but intentionally appropriated to causes that will make the most impact.

Over $75 million has been invested in the Church from the OSV Institute since its founding, in support of thousands of initiatives and events.

"The Church is changing," said Shanks. "And so is the way we approach our reinvestment in Catholic initiatives."

OSV Institute seeks to serve the Church by supporting innovative and effective Church-related programs that help Catholics of diverse ethnicities, ages and stages of life come closer to Christ.

One of the initiatives supported by the OSV Institute is Bishop Robert Barron’s Word on Fire Institute, which focuses on providing content to support the new evangelization.

"Getting after the ‘nones’ should be priority number one — find them, bring them back, engage them, answer their questions," wrote Bishop Barron in his book, “To Light a Fire on the Earth: Proclaiming the Gospel in a Secular Age,” when referring to millennials who identify as not religious. "We’re losing young people in droves, and we need to get them back."

Dioceses, Catholic ministries and apostolates can apply for grants within these three new initiatives directly at the new website, www.osvinstitute.com.

Support group for divorced Catholics

FORT WAYNE — The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will host a 12-week support group for divorced men and women from 7-9 p.m. Monday evenings beginning Jan. 7 and continuing through March 25 at the Archbishop Noll Catholic Center in Fort Wayne.

The gatherings will feature Ascension Press’ “Surviving Divorce” DVD series, which covers topics such as shock and grief, anger and forgiveness, money issues, helping children cope, and annulment and remarriage. It is based on the teachings of the Catholic Church and is open to anyone who needs comfort, counsel and clarity after divorce.

The cost of the program is $20 and includes a personal guide for each participant. To register, contact Allison Sturm at asturm@diocesefwsb.org or 260-399-1452. For more information, visit www.diocesefwsb.org/Divorce-Ministry. Registration deadline is Friday, Jan. 4. This group is limited to 12 people.

New priest welcomed at St. Bernard

Father Levi Nkwocha is welcomed as administrator of St. Bernard Parish in Wabash on Sunday, Oct. 28, with a party at the Father Pettit Council Knights of Columbus Hall. The parishioners and friends of St. Bernard showed their appreciation for Father Nkwocha with delicious dishes that were prepared and served to everyone.

Sandwiches for the soup kitchen

The Young Vincentians from St. Matthew Cathedral School, South Bend, recently made 140 sandwiches for the soup kitchen at St. Augustine Church as part of a service project. Staffed by volunteers from throughout our community, the St. Augustine Soup Kitchen serves those in need by offering soup, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, bread, sweets, seasonal produce and a cold drink.
All is great that is done in God’s love

In one of her letters, she prayed: ‘Only You I want to serve and obey according to your liking. Only You I want to love according to Your most holy will, only You I want to honor and praise as You like it.’

Love your neighbor as yourself

The Gospel reading for the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time aptly described St. Katharina’s ministry; a “love for God put into action through charity towards our neighbor.”

What a beautiful example she is of today’s Gospel,” Bishop Rhoades preached. “Answering the question of the scribe about which is the first of all the commandments, Jesus recites the Shema which included Leviticus: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

The Shema is the core, daily prayer that every faithful Jew prays, from Jesus’ time to the present day.

Jesus is the first one known to have explicitly combined these two commandments, showing us that they are inseparable.”

A life that reflected God’s goodness

The provincial of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, Sister Judith Dilz, expressed gratitude that the world now recognized the holiness of Katharina Kasper, whom we lovingly call Mother Mary.

“As we share our joy in following her footsteps, as we share with the Church and the world what we know of her holiness, we find that this canonization is also an opportunity to look again, to look anew, at her life and to discover previously unseen gifts and virtues,” Sister Judith said.

She asked those present to share their experiences of “how you hear her speaking to you of God’s presence and love, and the call for each of us to make God more present in our world. Share what virtues you find in her that speak to be imitated. Such sharing will make this canonization truly a Churchwide event. Our mutual sharing of insights of St. Katharina will plant seeds that will grow into new ways of appreciating our new saint and appreciating our great God, who is the source of all goodness.”

Present at the Mass were members of St. Katharina’s family: Norma Vollmer Thiman and Jan Glasser Burke of Louisville, Kentucky, her nieces. The new saint is also Thiman’s great-grandmother’s godmother.

Thiman spoke of her family coming to southern Indiana from Germany, and the family’s “stubborn streak” that St. Katharina must have had to follow God’s will and start a new order of women religious.

“We all have that potential in us, and it all comes down to the choices we make,” Thiman reflected.
s love’
— St. Katharina Kasper

A Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ sister carries the shoes of the order’s foundress, St. Katharina Kasper, during the entrance procession. The Mass was celebrated at Ancilla Domini Chapel, which celebrated 150 years of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ in America earlier this year.

Bishop Rhoades spoke with Sister Judith Diltz, provincial of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, following the Mass.

The life of St. Katharina Kasper

St. Katharina Kasper was born May 26, 1820, to Heinrich and Katharina Fassel in Derbach, Germany. The poor and devout peasant family farmed on the country’s west side. She was the eighth child of the Kaspers.

As a child, Katharina had an incredible love for and a devotion of God. She loved to read, most especially the Bible and a copy of the “Imitation of Christ” by Thomas à Kempis. She displayed an extraverted personality, attentiveness to others and strong moral character, and enjoyed traveling to a nearby Marian shrine, Our Lady of Heilborn, with her mother. They often took other children with them, singing songs and sharing stories about Jesus and Mary.

She began doing small acts of charity in her village even as a young girl, and early on felt called to the consecrated life. Her father died when she was 21, and the family’s fortune and possessions were given to the children of his first wife, Anna Margaret Kasper, according to German law at the time. Her brother died shortly afterward, and Katharina and her mother, although only 36 years old but in poor health, had to rent the house of Matthias Mueller. Katharina was hired out for 10 cents a day to work as a farmhand. She also sold clothavings and split stones for road construction to support her family. Her hard work and ordinary, simple acts of charity inspired other villagers. Kasper later gathered with other like-minded women in a “little house” to pray and read the Bible, as well as nurse the sick and care for children.

After her mother died, with the encouragement of her spiritual director, Katharina and four other women formed a religious community, the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ. While she might have preferred joining an established order, there were no female religious congregations for poor women in her area to join, so she had to start her own. Katharina looked to Mary, the first handmaid, as her model. Like Mary, she listened attentively to the Spirit and responded with courage to the will of God. These “Dernbach Sisters” entered religious life, taking a habit and pronouncing public vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience on Aug. 15, 1851, to Bishop Peter Joseph Blum of Limburg, who had accompanied them along the way.

They quickly attracted other women and the order spread to the nearby low countries. Just 17 short years after their founding, the PHJC order received a letter from the then-wilderness of Indiana.

In the aftermath of the Civil War, the bishop of Fort Wayne wrote to Mother Maria Katharina, petitioning her to send sisters to minister to the German immigrants who had settled there. She sent eight sisters, selected from the hundreds who eagerly volunteered, to serve the immigrants of Indiana. They worked at Hessen Cassel, serving the parish church, running a school and establishing their first hospital in America, St. Joseph Hospital in Fort Wayne, within a year of their arrival.

In 1875, the sisters were asked to go to Chicago to establish an orphanage for poor children. They also established a hospital there, and took care of many; among them was a woman named Mrs. Gluntz, of Chicago. Later, in 1918, Mr. Gluntz sold the PHJC order his hotel property on a beautiful 63 acres of land in Donaldson on Lake Gilbraith. The new space was used for retreats and the establishment of the order’s motherhouse. It is now also the home of Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center, Ancilla College and a retirement home.

On June 1, 1870, the Vatican endorsed and confirmed the congregation. Mother Maria Katharina became the first superior general of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ and served five terms.

In 1880 the PHJC came to Mishawaka to begin to serve the sick. They joined with the Sisters of Holy Cross to establish Saint Joseph Hospital South Bend.

On May 21, 1890, the congregation received the final approval of its constitutions from Pope Leo XIII. However, even before the final approvals from Rome, the Poor Handmaids attracted followers and spread their ministry outside Germany to England, the Netherlands, India, Mexico, Brazil, Kenya, Nigeria and the United States.

Mother Maria Katharina suffered a heart attack on Jan. 27, 1898, and died in the congregation’s Dernbach motherhouse at dawn on the feast of the Presentation, Feb. 2. At St. Katharina’s death, there were 1,725 women religious.

Her new feast day is Feb. 1.

The new saint’s given name in German is Katharina Kasper. The name Maria was taken when she joined religious life. The title, “Mutter” or Mother, was given when she was superior of the congregation. When canonized this year, the original German name was used, Maria Katharina Kasper. The English translation of her name is Mary Catherine or Mother Mary Catherine.
Catholic aid agency looks back on 75 years of service

Looking back on 75 years of history

The organization began as War Relief Services after an outpouring of concern from Catholics in the United States led U.S. bishops to help thousands of World War II survivors and refugees. From the very beginning, CRS’ operating principal was to assist people based on need, regardless of race, creed or nationality, and in partnership with local organizations, particularly Catholic Church agencies.

CRS’ first project helped shepherd some 1,500 Polish refugees into Colonia Santa Rosa, Mexico, where the agency set up a safe haven for education, training and rehabilitation.

It’s hard to express gratitude for everything you guys do for all the refugees throughout the world,” said Julek Plowy, a Polish refugee who was helped by CRS as a child at Santa Rosa.

As Europe regained its balance after World War II, CRS expanded its operations and opened offices in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America in order to serve those who could benefit most from the assistance of Catholics in the United States. Over the last 75 years, CRS has responded to numerous emergencies, from the Ethiopia famine of the 1980s, to the global HIV epidemic of the 1990s and 2000s, to the myriad natural disasters that can strike anywhere in the world at any time.

“CRS got its start by helping refugees, but what’s amazing is that we’re still working with refugee populations all over the world,” said Callahan. “What’s changed is that unfortunately, for so many refugees today, the period of displacement is much more protracted than it might have been in the past. Therefore, our assistance to these populations has changed to reflect that new reality.”

In addition to helping the poor and vulnerable overseas, during its 75-year history CRS has also created impactful programming that engages U.S. Catholics in living out the Church’s mission to serve the world’s poor. For instance, in 1977, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted Operation Rice Bowl as CRS’ official Lenten program. Since then, CRS Rice Bowl has become a Lenten tradition in thousands of parishes and schools across the United States, providing a tangible way for families to pray, fast, give and learn about our poorest brothers and sisters around the world.

Looking toward the future

Today, CRS implements programming in emergency response and recovery; agriculture; education; and health. Since it was founded, the agency has helped more than 130 million people worldwide. “We’re trying to create a more just and prosperous world for all,” Callahan said of the agency’s ongoing mission. “And we also continue to seek ways to foster within the U.S. Catholic community a sense of global solidarity, providing inspiration to live out the spiritual tradition of compassion and service to the world.”

He noted that CRS wouldn’t be able to do any of its work without its vital supporters in the U.S. Catholic Church. “Our U.S. Catholic community brings CRS to life. They’re such a vital part of our past, present and future, and we couldn’t do it without them.”

To explore more about CRS’ rich history, visit 75.crs.org.

Information provided by Catholic Relief Services.
Solemn high Mass commemorates faithful departed with tradition, mystery

By Christopher Lushis

From the early days of Christianity, following the example of Jewish custom, the Church has sought to offer prayers and supplications for its deceased members. As the development of liturgy progressed in later centuries, a Mass for the commemoration of the faithful departed was elevated to a universal prayer of the Church and is now celebrated annually on Nov. 2.

In recalling the memory of deceased loved ones, an experience filled often with sorrow and the pain of loss, many look to the transcendent beauty of the liturgy and compassion of God for comfort and strength. Recent years have seen an increased attraction on this day for men and women to visit St. John Cantius Church in Chicago, where a sung requiem Mass is offered in the extraordinary form. One of the most famous and beautiful pieces of music written in the history of western culture, this experience has also initiated many to the mystery of the Traditional Latin Mass and provided an additional opportunity to grieve in the presence of God and offer supplication for the dead.

Aware of this interest, Father Jacob Meyer, pastor of St. Monica Parish, Mishawaka, chose to coordinate with local pastors Father Chris Lapp and Father Royce Gregerson in offering a sung requiem Mass at his parish on the feast of All Souls.

This style of the extraordinary form of the Mass, known as a solemn high Mass because it involves the collaboration of three ordained clergy working together as priest, deacon and sub-deacon, was the first of its kind to be celebrated at St. Monica since before the Second Vatican Council.

Father Lapp, who served as priest for the Mass because of his experience and familiarity with the extraordinary form, indicated that “there is a lot of love for the traditional Mass that we wanted to share, especially with the young people of the diocese who have no experience with it at all.” Father Meyer added that “now having priests and musicians in our own diocese who are willing and able to offer it provides greater exposure to the beauty of this form of the Mass.”

The music selected for this Mass was originally composed by Tomas Luis de Victoria in the early 17th century and was performed by University of Notre Dame Sacred Music students under the direction of Katrina Keat. A music intern at St. Monica Parish, Keat offered her gratitude to be able to perform at this Mass, sharing a great love for All Souls Day and that this particular arrangement is one of her “absolute favorite pieces of music.”

Stephen Horton, music teacher at Mishawaka Catholic School, further explained, “The beauty of music is that as we devote our lives in sacrifice, offering ourselves and giving more greatly to God, our ministry goes in a similar way as that of the priest, as it has the ability to transport the congregation into being in God’s presence. Oftentimes, when music is done well, it can make our hearts vulnerable to receive the mercy that God is waiting to give us. This is powerful effect it can have on a person’s soul.”

Patrick Gruver, a parishioner of St. Joseph, Mishawaka, and a freshman at Notre Dame, served as master of ceremonies for the Mass. He remarked with joy that “there were a lot of young people there, including college-aged students.” He continued, “They showed great reverence and you could almost see it in their eyes that they were enjoying it. The silence of what the priest says and the hiddleness and mysteriousness of this Mass conveys a beautiful parallel with the Paschal Mystery. You are brought closer to the Eucharist, which can then bring a heightened sense of reverence and focus when you attend Mass on a daily basis.”

Father Meyer, who offered the homily, further shared the importance and necessity of the Mass for the dead. He revealed, “This is indeed an invitation to enter into the mystery of wisdom of God. This wisdom is so hard for us to understand, yet is a wisdom that we need to seek out. At a requiem Mass, we come face to face with the reality that we will all one day die. And that in that death we have a judgment that will be a result of what we did in our bodies, whether good or evil. And the Lord in His infinite mercy and love, will not only offer us salvation, God-willing, but the beautiful offering of purification as well. Purgation is something many today do not understand as something that is necessary and is indeed a reality. There are sufferings that are caused to our souls because of the temporal effects due to our sins. We gather today to pray for all of the holy souls in purgatory, that through the merits of the holy Mass, through the intercession of all the saints, through indeed our prayers and sacrifices, that they may be sped through that purification and on to the gates of heaven.”

Father Meyer also acknowledged that while this experience of the Mass may be new to many, he reassured, “If you don’t understand, do not worry. Just allow yourself to enter into the beauty of it.” He called to mind that this form of the Mass is how the saints prayed for centuries throughout the history of the Church. He encouraged those present to explore how the mystery present before them had come to draw so many holy men and women into deep and intimate communion with Christ.”

In closing, Father Meyer expressed his gratitude for those in attendance and invited all to continue this spirit of remembrance for the deceased throughout this month dedicated to the Holy Souls.

A sung Traditional Latin Mass, called a requiem Mass, is offered at St. Monica Parish, South Bend, in the extraordinary form on All Souls Day.
On not being a vegetable

O
ditions are game-changing: Rehabilitation Research. This along with other experts and the Terri Schiavo have established a ethics and the law. Court cases become the only effective way to stable patients because “a denial these helpless but medically
They may live a long time in this state, they will not get bet
and nourishment; but the reign
They may live a long time in this state, they will not get bet
and nourishment; but the reign

A more descriptive term for “vegetative state” is “unresponsive wakefulness syndrome.” This will be welcomed by fami
bles who don’t appreciate their ailing loved ones being compared to broccoli.
— There is a significant chance for rehabilitation (some
times allowing patients to return home and resume employment) has been in this state for a year or more, so “continued use of the term ‘permanent vegetative state’ is not justified.” The term “chronic” should be used, as it does not imply irreversibility. Protocols are recommended for enhancing the prospects for rehabilitation.
— Studies show that the like
lihood of misdiagnosing the condition is about 40 percent. This includes cases where patients diagnosed as “vegetative” actu
ally had locked-in syndrome, where they cannot respond but are fully conscious, and so they can hear their doctors call
them vegetables.

One study found that 32 percent of patients with severe traumatic brain injury died in the hospital — but 70 percent of the deaths were due to withdrawal of life support and such with
threw away the facility where care was provided than with the severity of the symptoms.

In short, our medical system has been giving up on far too many of these patients, pre
maturely assuming their deaths based on faulty diagnoses and self-fulfilling hopeless predic

tions.

I have seen these conclusions before. In 2004, I attended a con
ference on the “vegetative state” co-sponsored by the Pontifical Academy for Life. There medical experts presented findings very similar to what the American Academy of Neurology now says (including the 40 percent misdiagnosis rate) — but at that time they were on the cutting edge of medicine, ignored or dismissed by many as being too optimistic.

At that conference, then-Pope John Paul II gave an address affirming our moral obligation to provide basic care, generally including assisted feeding, to patients in this condition. He cited some of the medical findings, though he based his moral
statement chiefly on the dignity of our fellow human beings that endures regardless of their condi
tion.

Some say there is a divide between the Church and science, including medical science, in their stand on end-of-life issues, the most divisive being the question of withdrawing life support, and such with

RICHARD DOERFLINGER

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

A MORE HUMAN SOCIETY

During a lecture at an Asian university on how busi
nesses and the students’ future careers in this sector can bring about constructive social and environmental change, a question shot out of the blue.

“Dr. Woo, I have problem engaging on this macro question. I feel like I am moving all the pressures
I feel. You know we are dealing with the ‘quarter-life crisis.’ Can we talk about this? Can you help us?”

This question, totally unre
related to the topic, developed a life of its own and the discussion gobbled forward.

Halfway around the world on the campuses of American universities, the students often go through the same or similar predic
aments; I think about the question of whether to stay or go, what to do next, where to live, what to study.

The course offers recommendations: to find contentment in the present rather than hunting for the next best thing, to have real flesh-and-blood friends rather than virtual versions and to focus less on our own misery by turning our energies to the aid of others.

All sound, tried and true clas
sics but not sufficiently radical.

CAROLYN WOO

Radical, derived from its Latin origin “radicalis,” means going back to the root. At the root, we will be
be loved and by whom, be different if we situated ourselves in God and define our identity in God? For my part, this has helped me look at happiness, achievement and appearances dif
ferently, slowly developing a sense that does not line up with culture’s images of success and beauty.

In Portland Magazine, under its late editor Brian Doyle, every portrait presented was captivating.

The people featured were young, old, fresh, weathered, poor, rich, farmer, professor, man, woman, artist, mechanic, ordinary, extraordinary, but they are all witnesses and pro

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Those who trust in the Lord are rich in the Spirit

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Mark 12:38-44

T

The First Book of Kings furnishes this weekend’s first reading from the Scriptures.

The phrase “governance, in the minds of the ancient Hebrews, was not the chief function of their kings. Rather, assuring the nation’s faithful love to God and to the law of God given through Moses, was their kings’ primary duty.”

Since this religious aspect was so vital, it is not surprising that many stories in the Books of Kings prominently include stories about the prophets who were active at the time. Prophets called the people to God. Sure enough, this weekend, the central figure in the story is Elijah, the prophet. In this reading, Elijah appears at the gate of a gate, a charwoman collecting twigs and branches to use as firewood.

She is evidently quite poor. She

stole for her food. She

needs to find food to provide for her son.

In fact, it is poor so she

tells Elijah that after she and her

son consume whatever she can bake using the meager amount of flour and oil in their store, she

and the son will die. There is nothing else for them to eat.

Elijah tells her that she and the son will die, but God will provide for her son. The impression left is that she was a widow, and her son was a child.

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The wise are humble.
Humility is about recognizing that we belong to God, and that God is supreme. The wise trust in God. We can never truly control our futures in this world. Reversals may, and do, come. We must keep our eyes on genuine security, a place in eternity, by loving God and obeying God.

Caroline C. W. Woo

Readings

Sunday: 1 Kgs 17:10-16 Ps 146:7-10
Heb 9:24-28 Mk 12:38-44
Monday: Ti 1:1-9 Ps 24:1-6 Lk 17:1-6
Tuesday: Ti 2:1-8, 11-14 Ps 37:3-4, 18, 23, 27, 29 Lk 17:7-10
Wednesday: Ti 3:1-7 Ps 23:1-6 Lk 17:11-19
Thursday: Phlm 7-20 Ps 146:7-10 Lk 17:20-25
Friday: Jn 4:9-19 Ps 111:2-10, 17-18 Lk 17:26-37
Saturday: 3 Jn 5-8 Ps 112:1-6 Lk 18:1-8
Physicians unite to prepare for battle

I was blessed in September to be able to attend the 87th annual educational conference of the National Catholic Medical Association in Dallas, Texas. The conference title this year was “Restoring Healthcare in a Technocratic Age: Building Parallel Structures to Deliver Compassionate Care.”

Nearly 600 health care workers, including 550 physicians from all over the country, gathered to hear presentations, share ideas and break bread together. These national CMA meetings are very much like attending a retreat. Every day starts with Mass at 7 a.m., and one was happy and amazed to see that almost every conference attendee was at Mass every single day. We were blessed to have a dozen priests consecrate these Masses. There were many priests and sisters attending, with quite a few of the sisters being practicing physicians. Confessions were available to us multiple times per day and there was an adoration chapel set up in a quiet corner of the hotel that was available and attended 24 hours a day.

We discussed how, in some respects, health care is changing for the worse because of technology and the growing bureaucracy largely mandated by governmental regulations. One example is the government-mandated electronic medical record system that has been forced upon the practicing physician. There are certainly positives to electronic medical records, but for an obvious negative, just think about your last physician appointment. I suspect the majority of you would confirm that your doctor gazed into the computer screen as he or she asked you questions, rather than looking you in the eye. How can a Christian physician see the face of Christ in his patients when all he sees is the computer screen? Blessed are those Catholic physicians who have remained independent and fought hard not to be splayed open to the newer technologies hinder who have remained independent is the computer screen? Blessed in his patients when all he sees is the computer screen. However, I thought of all his patients when all he sees is the computer screen? Blessed in his patients when all he sees is the computer screen?

Earlier this year in Ontario, Canada, a court ruling said that physicians must refer patients for abortion and assisted suicide if the patient requests it. We as physicians have steadfastly resisted that this type of refer ral makes us complicit with the act. The court actually ruled that “equitable access” to health care services is of “sufficient importance to warrant overriding” the right of religious freedom. This ruling shatters the concept of freedom of conscience in Canada and makes us concerned that this could happen right here in the United States in the future.

The Catholic Medical Association leadership has discerned that health care workers need to be politically involved to shape the future of medical care in this country. Therefore, there were talks and discussions about physician-assisted suicide and how we can combat this evil practice at the state level. We need to be leaders in medicine and practice as authentically Catholic physicians. There has been a dramatic increase in the membership of the CMA over the past decade, in part because Catholic physicians know that we must be united to fight back. The CMA is positioning itself to be more influential both at the state and national level. We must be ready to resist the secular changes that are being forced upon us and even be ready to be persecuted for our beliefs if necessary.

I left the conference with great hope. In the last several years, through the generosity of its members, the CMA has set up a scholarship fund to allow medical students and young physicians in training to come to the national conference for free and help solidify their Catholic values as they prepare to practice medicine. A special annual retreat for medical students and young doctors called “Boot Camp” has been a huge success, in which leading Catholic physicians mentor these young men and women as they prepare to practice medicine in the secular world. The testimonials that I heard from those who had attended boot camp warmed my soul. These young medical professionals are on fire for Jesus and they will contribute greatly to maintaining Catholic teaching and values in patient care in the future.

Catholic health care workers must unite to combat this culture of death that is gaining strength in our society. I invite all providers to consider joining the CMA and to learn more at www.cathmed.org. The next national conference will take place Sept. 26-28, 2019, at the Gaylord Opryland Resort in Nashville, Tennessee. We hope to have 1,000 people attend as we build fellowship and strategies for the future of health care.

Carolyn Woo

Dr. David Kaminskas is a board certified cardiologist and member of The Dr. Jerome Lejeune Catholic Medical Guild of Northeast Indiana, www.fortwaynemcma.com.

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tagonists in chapters of life, love, hopes, disappointments. Fantasize and experience breaks and poorly healed breakages.

Each face beholds a story I want to hear more often, of each expression speaks of grace that held them in the past and, for those living, will accompany them into their futures. Each face rusted with sweat and dust, smiles of victories that exceed the wildest imagination, eyes that speak gratitude or sorrow: Somehow you can see God in these faces.

I ponder the verse that we are “fearfully, wonderfully made” when I grieve over my brother, who has lost his leg to diabetes and experiences life 5 feet from the ground in a wheelchair, limited in the daily functions you and I take for granted. I hold this verse as I pray for my friend Robyn, who has early onset Alzheimer’s disease and does not know her friends anymore.

I do not know how to reconcile these physical breakdowns with the verse. Yet I know that our being “fearfully, wonderfully made” is not just a stage in our prime before time and loss make their claims on us. The verse characterizes our whole life, beyond our limited comprehension, relying on God’s design as we are still his masterpieces. We are not just a project for self-improvement or a machine with limited shelf life eventually outliving our usefulness. We are God’s unfolding masterpieces on a journey from and to him as he accompanies us.

God cherishes us. We should cherish us.
Landscape changed since bishops’ statement for those with disabilities

BY MARK PATTISON

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In the 40 years since the U.S. bishops approved their "Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on Persons With Disabilities" in 1978, the landscape for persons with disabilities has changed both within the Church and within society, and largely for the better.

"Some things have changed in the 40 years. If anything, disability is seen as part of a normal life. It’s ordinary, not exceptional," said Jan Benton, executive director of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability, who has been part of the organization since its founding in 1982.

Disability, she noted, is "part of the living process. People are born with disabilities, or have an accident, and (there’s) aging. With the design (accommodations) and the ADA (Americans With Disabilities Act) and all, people recognize that it’s a part of life and not unusual."

That makes the bishops’ statement "still as relevant and important as when it was issued in 1978," she said.

“Our role was to get it implemented around the country. Pastoral workers and families were pushing for it," Benton told Catholic News Service in an Oct. 31 telephone interview.

Persons with disabilities “have a life within the Church and they were very important to the Church,” she added. "Way back then, the bishops were saying things that they’re saying now, that everyone has gifts to bring to the Church community. The community is lacking if people are missing. My favorite quote is, ‘There can be no separate Church for people with disabilities.’”

The ADA played an important role in furthering the bishops’ statement, Benton said: “We influenced the ADA, but the ADA built a consciousness in people. ‘Well, if I can go to a restaurant and go shopping, then I should be able to worship in my faith community.’”

Today, there is “even more emphasis on the giftedness that people bring to the table. Everybody needs the grace of the sacraments. There’s even less of an emphasis on inclusion and a recognition of belonging,” Benton told CNS. “You hear the word ‘belonging’ a lot in secular and Catholic circles,” she added, because Catholics with disabilities belong “by virtue of their baptism. If you believe that, then you think differently in how you minister, how you set things up in the Church.”

Benton said, “There’s more an emphasis on relationship than there is on programming. When people come to church, they want to be appreciated for who they are, and make friends.”

One change is apparent even with the document itself. When first issued, it was titled “Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on Handicapped Persons,” and the word “handicapped” was used again in 1988 in a 10th-anniversary reflection by the bishops on the original text.

Benton said Loyola Press is now in the sixth year of presenting an award to parishes in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, Dallas, Philadelphia, Washington and the Diocese of Bismarck, North Dakota.

However, a parish need not win an award to make all of its members feel included. At the twice-yearly “Special Needs Mass” at Jesus the Divine Word Parish in Huntingtown, Maryland, in the Archdiocese of Washington, “we try to highlight the gifts of our special needs community. We invite them to be involved in whatever ministry they would like. They respond well,” said Father John Dakes, the pastor. “We try to make sure they (liturgical ministers) are all from the special needs community.”

The parish also has an “Everyone Belongs” ministry to foster inclusiveness in parish life, he added. Faith formation for those with special needs also is offered.

Father Dakes told CNS the effort has started slowly. “Families feel constrained by pressure or something to keep their kids at home. They don’t want to cause distraction, they don’t want to cause tension,” he said. But it won’t deter him because “anything worthwhile is worth continuing doing,” the priest added. “I’ve been involved in this ministry in four parishes, three of which I’ve begun myself. In each it’s taken off,” including one that became its own non-profit organization.

In Redford Township, Michigan, which hugs Detroit’s northwest border, the former grade school at Our Lady of Lourdes Church has been made the home for the West Detroit Catholic Deaf community, which sponsors a weekly Mass with a deaf priest celebrating most Sundays.

Communication can be a problem, said Michelle Kulpa, community president. “We’re both using different languages. Sign language is a foreign tongue, if you will, because most hearing folks don’t really understand,” she told CNS in a Nov. 1 telephone interview with the aid of an interpreter. "We don’t really communicate too deeply unless we have access to an interpreter. If we have an interpreter, we can carry out some pretty nice communications."

“I can actually speak fairly well and sign, so I can communicate with people with my voice and read lips. I can’t actually hear them speaking. So, I’m kind of like the liaison between the deaf world and the hearing world,”

Kulpa said their usual priest, Oblate Father Michael Depick, heads to a northeast suburb, Roseville, to celebrate a second Mass for deaf Catholics nearby. That Mass is live-streamed to allow those who cannot attend in person to still participate.

“My goal, if it’s at all possible, is maybe suggest something for Pope Francis, to suggest for the cardinals that they go ahead and encourage the members so they watch the deaf Mass that we are providing. Then after they watch, they can get Communion,” Kulpa said. “It makes things so much easier and meaningful.”
**St. Vincent de Paul spaghetti dinner**

**What’s Happening?**

**Elkhart** — The annual SVDP spaghetti dinner will be at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 112 E. Lexington Ave., on Wed. Nov. 7, from 5-7 p.m. View the Young Vincentians picture contest artwork.

**Bishop Luers Open House**

**Fort Wayne** — Bishop Luers High School, 333 E. Paulding Rd., will host an open house on Thursday, Nov. 8, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Prospective new students and their families are invited to visit the website at www.bishop-luers.org for information.

**Women’s Morning of Reflection**

**Columbia City** — A morning of reflection will be Saturday, Nov. 10, at St. Joseph Church, Nix Settlement. 9889 S. S.R. 9. Mass will be celebrated at 8 a.m. in church followed by breakfast in the church hall. Talks and other activities will center on the remarkable life of Mother Cabrini, who did so much to help the poor, the homeless and immigrants in America. Proceeds will benefit Right to Life.

**Turkey Bingo at St. Joseph Hessen Cassel**

**Fort Wayne** — Turkey Bingo will be held at St. Joseph Hessen Cassel, 11521 Old Decatur Rd., on Sunday Nov. 11. Doors open at 2 p.m. and games start at 2:30 p.m. Cost per person is $25, which includes 10 games. Prizes will range from $25 to $100 and we will also give away turkeys. Must be 18 to play.

**Day of Reflection**

**Mishawaka** — A day of reflection will be held at the St. Francis convent Wednesday, Nov. 14, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The theme for the day is “Oscar Romero — Voice for the Voiceless.” Bring a Bible. The cost of the day is $20 and includes lunch. Register with Sister Barbara Anne Hallman at 574-259-5427.

**Not Your Grandma’s Craft Bazaar**

**Elkhart** — Not Your Grandma’s Craft Bazaar will be hosted by the Rosary Society of St. John Bosco Parish, 216 N Main St., Churubusco. On Friday, Nov. 16, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 17, from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Enjoy some of the best freshly baked cinnamon rolls and a cup of coffee in the morning. Stay for a lunch of delicious homemade soup, sandwich and dessert served all afternoon. Handmade crafts, hand-rolled noodles and homemade baked goods for sale. There is also a raffle with a chance to win one of several fine prizes.

**Christmas Bazaar at St. Mary**

**AVILLA** — St. Mary Parish, 232 N. Main St., will have a Christmas bazaar Saturday, Nov. 11, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Many craft tables, baked goods and candy as well as cookie decorating for children. Christmas Cafe and door prizes. Contact Rose at 260-318-2698 for information.

**An evening of American sacred music**

**Plymouth** — The Ancilla Domini Community Choir will offer “An Evening of American Sacred Music” Saturday, Nov. 10, at 7 p.m. EST. The concert is free and open to the public.

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**Our calling to serve keeps growing.**

Divine Mercy Funeral Home is excited to announce the addition of Stephanie Zelt to our staff of experienced funeral directors. Stephanie will join Bob Jesch and Monte Freeze in their calling to serve local families with compassion, understanding and kindness.

With nearly 75 years of experience between them, our funeral directors serve all faiths and will thoughtfully guide you through our traditional and cremation funeral service options, priced affordably to meet your budget. Also, if you’ve already pre-planned through another funeral home, you’ll be pleased to know that you can quickly and easily transfer those arrangements.

Divine Mercy Funeral Home… Serving all faiths.
“Sand Nativity” scene to display in St. Peter’s Square

BY JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Although sand castles and sculptures usually conjure up images of hot summers on the beach, the Vatican will unveil a massive Nativity scene made entirely of sand during the cold Roman winter.

According to the Vatican newspaper, L’Osservatore Romano, the Nativity scene displayed in St. Peter’s Square will feature a 52-foot wide sand sculpture from Jesolo, an Italian seaside resort town roughly 40 miles north of Venice.

The intricate sculpture, along with a 42-foot-tall red spruce tree donated by the Diocese of Concordia-Pordenone in the northern Italian region of Veneto, will be unveiled at the Vatican’s annual tree lighting ceremony Dec. 7.

Bas-relief sand sculptures, like the one that will be featured in St. Peter’s Square, are a tradition in Jesolo which, since 1998, has been the home of an annual sand sculpture festival.

At the helm of the sculpture project, dubbed the “Sand Nativity,” is U.S. sculptor Rich Varano from New Smyrna Beach, Florida. According to the city’s website for the Nativity scene, Varano is an accomplished sand sculptor with over 40 years’ experience. He has organized various international sand sculpture festivals, including the annual event in Jesolo.

Varano is joined by 11 artists from around the world, including Damon Farmer from Kentucky and Canadian artist David Ducharme, who are assisting in creating the massive “Sand Nativity” before its December unveiling.

Jesolo mayor Valerio Zogga presented sketch designs of the project in December 2017 to Archbishop Francesco Moraglia of Venice. The process of creating the sculptures involves compressing sand and water into blocks that are then sculpted to size figures.

Unlike the sand castles vacationers often see disintegrate by a single touch or the occasional passing wave, the compression allows for a more durable sculpture that is able to withstand light rain.

The “Sand Nativity” scene and tree will remain in St. Peter’s Square until the feast of the Lord’s Baptism Jan. 13, L’Osservatore Romano reported.

A depiction of Mary and Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem sculpted from sand is displayed in the Italian resort town of Jesolo in December 2017. Jesolo will donate a 52-foot wide Nativity scene made entirely of highly compressed sand to the Vatican. The sculpture will be unveiled during the Vatican’s annual tree lighting ceremony Dec. 7.

CNS photo/Jesolo Tourism Office