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TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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Baptism is first step on path of humility, pope says



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis baptizes one of 32 babies as he celebrates Mass on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican Jan. 12.

BY JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In asking to be baptized, Jesus exemplifies the Christian calling to follow along the path of humility and meekness rather than strutting about and being a showoff, Pope Francis said.

Addressing pilgrims in St. Peter's Square Jan. 12, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the pope said that Christ's humble act shows "the attitude of simplicity, respect, moderation and concealment required of the Lord's disciples today."

"How many — it's sad to say — of the Lord's disciples show off

about being disciples of the Lord. A person who shows off isn't a good disciple. A good disciple is humble, meek, one who does good without letting himself or herself be seen," Pope Francis said during his midday Angelus address.

The pope began the day celebrating Mass and baptizing 32 babies — 17 boys and 15 girls — in the Sistine Chapel. In his brief homily before baptizing the infants, the pope told parents that the sacrament is a treasure that gives children "the strength of the Spirit."

"That is why it's so important to baptize children, so that they grow with the strength of the

Holy Spirit," he said.

"This is the message that I would like to give you today. You have brought your children here today so that they may have the Holy Spirit within them. Take care that they grow with the light, with the strength of the Holy Spirit, through catechesis, through helping them, through teaching them, through the examples that you will give them at home," he said.

As the sounds of fussy children filled the frescoed chapel, the pope repeated his usual advice to mothers of infants, encouraging them to make their children comfortable, and to not worry if they start to cry in the chapel.

"Don't get upset; let the chil-

dren cry and scream. But, if your child cries and complains, perhaps it's because they feel too hot," he said. "Take something off them, or if they are hungry, breastfeed them; here, yes, always in peace."

Later, before praying the Angelus with pilgrims, Pope Francis said that the feast of the Lord's baptism "reminds us of our own baptism," and he asked the pilgrims to find out the date they were baptized.

"Celebrate the date of your baptism every year in your heart. Do it. It is also a duty of justice to the Lord who has been so good to us," the pope said.

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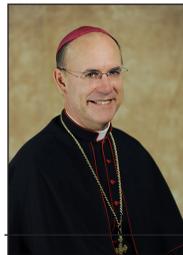
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'Do You Accept Being Drawn Into God's Trinitarian Life?'



IN TRUTH AND CHARITY

BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

The following is the text of a homily given to the Cor Jesu Young Adult Group at St. John the Baptist Church, Fort Wayne, on Jan. 8.

Every year during the Christmas season, the entirety of St. John's first letter is read at the liturgy, beginning on Dec. 27 and ending on the Saturday after the Epiphany. In a marvelous way, First John unfolds the mystery of the Word made flesh and reveals to us what we are to become as the children of God.

Today is Wednesday after the Epiphany, and we heard part of the fourth chapter of this letter of St. John. A major theme of the letter is that a genuine Christian life must be a life of love — love for God and for one another. It is not enough that we say that we love God: We must demonstrate this love through real and concrete action toward our brothers and sisters. What is foundational, however, is St. John's teaching that this love originates in God, that "God is love." God not only shows love; God is love. As the Catechism says: "God's very being is love. By sending his only Son and the Spirit of love in the fullness of time, God has revealed his innermost secret" (CCC 221).

This gets to the greatest and most unique truth of our Christian faith, namely that there is one God in three Persons. The Trinity is the center of our Christian faith and life. God is not some static deity who manufactures a world unrelated to Him. The God revealed to us in Jesus Christ, the God we believe in as Christians, is a continual gift-giving between Persons united in love. God is a Love so powerful that, while Three, He is utterly One.

In His inner life, God is a communion of love. God the Father holds nothing of Himself back from the Son, whom He loves; and the Son holds nothing of Himself back from the Father. The Holy Spirit is the seal and the fruit of this love. This is the mystery of the Holy Trinity. God is love! This is God's innermost secret that He has revealed to us. It's pretty astounding. St. Augustine once expressed in a homily how astounding this is. He said: "If nothing at all were said in the other pages of the scriptures, and this were the one and only thing that we heard from the voice of the Spirit of God, that *God is love*, we wouldn't have to look for anything else."

Now, besides talking about this astounding mystery about God's inner life, which surpasses our complete understanding, there's something else that is astounding. God revealed Himself, His being as Love, to us, by sending us His Son, by becoming one of us (the Incarnation). Why? Not only to reveal Himself to us so that we know who He is in His innermost life, but in order to share that life with us. As we heard in our reading today: "In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him." He did this out of love for us. As today's reading also says, "God sent His



Joshua Schipper

The young adult ministry group Cor Jesu, Latin for "Heart of Jesus," celebrated its first anniversary with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Wednesday, Jan. 8, at St. John the Baptist Church, Fort Wayne.

Son as expiation for our sins." He sent us His Son to take away our sins. Jesus came to reconcile us to the Father and to bring us eternal life. Jesus offered Himself to the Father out of love for us so that we might become His friends.

The Christian faith is pretty shocking, if you think about it — this magnificent plan of God to share His life of love with us. God opens His heart to us and invites us to share in His own divine life. He did this by taking on our flesh. In Jesus, God bound Himself to us in love. He established a new and eternal covenant with humankind through Jesus Christ. This is an incredible gift. God shares His life of communion with us. He has not only had mercy on us, He has welcomed us into His life, eternal life.

God, who is a Trinity, has destined us to share in His own eternal life of love. We long for this, because, remember, we were created in the image and likeness of God, of the Trinity. So we have this longing for love, for communion, for covenant, for friendship, deep within us. That longing is only fulfilled in God, though we get a taste of it in our experiences of human love. Sin often gets in the way, however. The commandments to love God and to love one another as Christ loved us are the greatest. It's when we love one another, St. John says, that God remains in us, and His love is brought to perfection in us.

It is important also for us to realize that this communion of love with God is a gift

not only to us in isolation as individuals. It is given to all of us together. Jesus Himself instituted a communion of fellowship that we call the Church. The Second Vatican Council taught that the Church is "a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." Though the Church, you and I, are still imperfect in love, we are gathered together by God to live in His love and to bring His love to others. There's so much division, discord, hate, violence, etc. in the world. Our mission is to mirror the love of God in the world. In other words, to proclaim and live the Gospel. We are to serve Christ's work of redemption. This is what the Holy Spirit equips us to do.

I remember a great question Pope Benedict asked the young people at the night vigil in Sydney, Australia, at World Youth Day. I'll never forget the beautiful dark skies and stars and the hundreds of thousands of youth carrying candles, and the pope asking them: "Friends, do you accept being drawn into God's Trinitarian life? Do you accept being drawn into His communion of love?" I think they are the ultimate questions. When we say yes to those questions, our lives change. We enter into God's freedom. We allow God's threefold Love to give form to our lives. We follow along the humble path of Jesus, the way of the cross, the path to glory. We live in God's life. We live in the Eucharist. There's nothing more beautiful.

Pope sets special day to honor, study, share the Bible

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The newly established “Sunday of the Word of God” is an invitation to Catholics across the world to deepen their appreciation, love and faithful witness to God and His word, Pope Francis said.

By papal decree, the third Sunday in Ordinary Time — Jan. 26 this year — is to be observed as a special day devoted to “the celebration, study and dissemination of the word of God.”

A day dedicated to the Bible will help the Church “experience anew how the risen Lord opens up for us the treasury of his word and enables us to proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world,” the pope said in the document establishing the special Sunday observance.

Dioceses and parishes have been invited to respond with creative initiatives, helpful resources and renewed efforts for helping Catholics engage more deeply with the Bible at church and in their lives.

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, said added emphasis on the importance of the word of God is needed because “the overwhelming majority” of Catholics are not familiar with sacred Scripture. For many, the only time they hear the word of God is when they attend Mass, he told Vatican News Sept. 30, when the papal document, titled “Aperuit Illis,” was published.

“The Bible is the most widely distributed book, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands,” the archbishop said.

With this apostolic letter, the pope “invites us to hold the word of God in our hands every day as much as possible so that it becomes our prayer” and a greater part of one’s lived experience, he said.

In his letter, Pope Francis wrote, “A day devoted to the Bible should not be seen as a yearly event but rather a year-long event, for we urgently need to grow in our knowledge and love of the Scriptures and of the risen Lord, who continues to speak his word and to break bread in the community of believers.”

“We need to develop a closer relationship with sacred Scripture; otherwise, our hearts will remain cold and our eyes shut, struck as we are by so many forms of blindness,” he wrote.

Sacred Scripture and the sacraments are inseparable, he wrote. Jesus speaks to everyone with His word in sacred Scripture, he said, and if people



CNS photo/Paul Haring

Pope Francis holds the Book of the Gospels as he celebrates Mass marking the feast of the Epiphany in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican Jan. 6. The pope has established the third Sunday in Ordinary Time as “Sunday of the Word of God.” It will be celebrated for the first time Jan. 26.

“hear his voice and open the doors of our minds and hearts, then he will enter our lives and remain ever with us.”

Pope Francis urged priests to be extra attentive to creating a homily each Sunday that “speaks from the heart” and really helps people understand Scripture “through simple and suitable” language.

The homily “is a pastoral opportunity that should not be wasted,” he wrote. “For many of our faithful, in fact, this is the only opportunity they have to grasp the beauty of God’s word and to see it applied to their daily lives.”

Pope Francis encouraged people to read the Second Vatican Council’s Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, “*Dei Verbum*,” and Pope Benedict XVI’s apostolic exhortation on the Bible, “*Verbum Domini*,” whose teaching remains “fundamental for our communities.”

The pope also suggested pastors provide parishioners with the Bible, a book of the Gospels or other catechetical resources, “enthroned” the Bible in order to emphasize the honor and sacred nature of the text, bless or commission lectors of the parish and encourage people to read and pray with Scripture every day, especially through “lectio divina.”

“The Bible cannot be just the heritage of some, much less a collection of books for the benefit of a privileged few. It belongs

above all to those called to hear its message and to recognize themselves in its words,” the pope wrote.

“The Bible is the book of the Lord’s people, who, in listening to it, move from dispersion and division toward unity” as well as come to understand God’s love and become inspired to share it with others, he added.

The celebration of the Sunday of the Word of God also “has ecumenical value, since the Scriptures point out, for those who listen, the path to authentic and firm unity,” he wrote. The third Sunday in Ordinary Time falls during that part of the year when the Church is encouraged to strengthen its bonds with the Jewish people and to pray for Christian unity.

The document was published on the feast of St. Jerome, patron saint of biblical scholars and doctor of the Church, who said, “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.” The title, “*Aperuit Illis*,” is based on a verse from the Gospel of St. Luke, “Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.”

The pope said it is impossible to understand the Scriptures in depth without the Lord, who opens people’s minds to His word; yet “without the Scriptures, the events of the mission of Jesus and of His Church in this world would remain incomprehensible.”



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, January 19: 10 a.m. — Byzantine Divine Liturgy, Chapel of Mary, Seat of Wisdom, Malloy Hall, University of Notre Dame
 Sunday, January 19: 5 p.m. — Vespers and Dinner, Old College, University of Notre Dame
 Tuesday-Wednesday, January 21-22: Meeting of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Catholic Education, Washington, D.C.
 Friday, January 24: 9:15 a.m. — Youth Mass for Life, Capitol One Arena, Washington, D.C.
 Friday, January 24: 1 p.m. — National March for Life, Capitol Mall, Washington, D.C.
 Saturday, January 25: 9:30 a.m. — Mass for Diocesan Pilgrims at March for Life, Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C.



DIOCESE OF
FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

Report abuse

It remains important for our Church to protect children and young persons from the evils of abuse. The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend remains committed to upholding and following its guidelines, policies and procedures that were implemented for the protection of children and young people. These can be reviewed on the diocese’s website, www.diocesefwsb.org, under “Youth Protection.”

If you have reason to believe that a minor may be a victim of child abuse or neglect, Indiana law requires that you report this to civil authorities. If you or someone you know was abused as a child or young person by an adult, you are encouraged to notify appropriate civil authorities of that abuse. In addition, if the alleged abuser is or was a priest or deacon of the Catholic Church, you are encouraged to contact Mary Glowaski, victim assistance coordinator, at (260) 399-1458 or mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org; or Rev. Mark Gurtner, vicar general of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, at P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801; at (260) 399-1419; or at mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org. The diocese is committed to helping prevent the abuse or neglect of children and young people and to assist those who have suffered harm as a result of such abuse.

Es importante para nuestra Iglesia proteger a los niños y jóvenes adultos de los actos malvados como el abuso. La Diócesis de Fort Wayne-South Bend se compromete a mantener y seguir las reglas, políticas y procedimientos que fueron implementados para la protección de niños y personas jóvenes. Estos pueden leerse en la página web de la diócesis, www.diocesefwsb.org bajo la sección de “Protección de Jóvenes” (“Youth Protection”).

Si usted tiene motivo de creer que un menor es víctima de abuso o negligencia, la ley de Indiana requiere que usted reporte esto a las autoridades civiles. Si usted o alguien que usted conoce fue abusado, ya sea niño o persona joven, por un adulto, le recomendamos que notifique a las autoridades civiles apropiadas. También, si el alegado abusador es o fue un sacerdote o diácono de la Iglesia Católica, se le insta comunicarse con Mary Glowaski, coordinadora de asistencia de víctimas, al (260) 399-1458 o mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org; o con el Presbítero Mark Gurtner, vicario general de la Diócesis de Fort Wayne-South Bend, al P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801; al (260) 399-1419; o al mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org. La diócesis se compromete a ayudar a prevenir el abuso o negligencia de niños y personas jóvenes y ayudar a aquellos que han sufrido daño como el resultado de tal abuso.

Residents fear what may come next after quakes, archbishop says

BY MARK PATTISON

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Hurricane Maria was a body blow to Puerto Rico in 2017, one from which it has yet to fully recover.

Then came the series of 5-magnitude-and-higher earthquakes that began Dec. 29 — topped off by three such tremors in a 30-minute span Jan. 7 and followed by a magnitude 5.9 quake Jan. 11 — that has resulted in only two confirmed deaths, but untold losses in property damage. And not only the earthquakes, but their many aftershocks.

Archbishop Roberto Gonzalez Nieves of San Juan lives on the northern part of the island, which was spared most of the worst effects of the quakes. But on a Jan. 10 visit to the island's southern region in the Diocese of Ponce — what he could see of it — the damage was much worse.

"I got around by car," Archbishop Gonzalez said. "But I wasn't able to go everywhere I wanted to because a bridge here or there collapsed."

Driving around Ponce, the archbishop told Catholic News Service in a Jan. 10 telephone interview from near San Juan, "I saw a number of people in Ponce now with their suitcases and looking for a place to find shelter."

"I can see lots of damage," he said.



Grocery items are seen on the floor of a market Jan. 8, following an earthquake in Guanica, Puerto Rico. Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, offered "my prayerful solidarity" to the people of Puerto Rico in a Jan. 7 statement, after a series of earthquakes killed at least one person and destroyed one Catholic church.

CNS photo/Marco Bello, Reuters



Cars lie under a collapsed house after an earthquake in Guanica, Puerto Rico, Jan. 6. A larger temblor of magnitude 6.4 rattled Puerto Rico before dawn Jan. 7. Aftershocks beneath the southern part of the island have been occurring since the night of Dec. 28-29.

CNS photo/Ricardo Ortiz, Reuters

Archbishop Gonzalez added, "I didn't see many buildings that had collapsed, but you see buildings with pieces of cement, pieces of the roof that have fallen off. It will take a while for structural engineers to make an assessment. The cathedral has been quite damaged. I say it might take a year or two to fix the cathedral."

People are sleeping in tents and spending most of their waking hours outside, he noted, fearing an aftershock might cause more of their homes to crumble.

Complicating people's quest to find shelter is the weather. It has been raining on the island. Archbishop Gonzalez, during the interview, said it was raining heavily, and that the quake also has affected telephone and internet service on Puerto Rico.

Another fear is people not knowing where their next meal is coming from.

"There are many people without food," Archbishop Gonzalez told CNS. He mentioned one district where "there are at least 400 people homeless. Caritas has been doing their best to provide them with food. Yesterday (Jan. 9) we purchased \$150,000 for our Catholic Charities for that group of 400 or so."

One difference Archbishop Gonzalez noted between a hurricane and an earthquake: "One can prepare for a hurricane —

'there's a hurricane on its way' — but you cannot prepare for an earthquake. It just happens."

"Every day there have been réplicas" — the Spanish word for aftershocks. "Those réplicas continue to affect the structure of buildings. In the building, it has a number of people. You come to this building, and it's traumatic. One becomes afraid — what's going to happen next?"

Archbishop Gonzalez disclosed something that perhaps few non-Puerto Ricans know: "The island shakes every day. We're in a seismic area that's very active — as active as

How to help

Catholic Charities USA has established a Puerto Rico disaster relief fund that can accessed directly at <https://bit.ly/30hHwQd>.

The Catholic Charities USA website homepage is www.catholiccharitiesusa.org.

California. but only shakes 2 points or 3 points (of magnitude), and you become accustomed to that and you don't feel it. I remember as a child there were maybe two or three significant quakes, but I'd never felt anything like this. It is quite a jolt. It affects everyone emotionally."

He recalled one morning receiving a call from a priest in Guanica, on the south side of the island. "I'm in the north, in San Juan, but they needed volunteers to organize the distribution of food from large trucks that had come from Caritas, from Catholic Charities. He asked if I would make calls to get volunteers. I spent an hour, an hour and a half, making calls. I had 100 volunteers going across the island to the town of Guanica to give help. It shows the spirit of solidarity, and the goodness among the people. It's very touching."

For people on the U.S. mainland, "first of all, we appreciate your spiritual solidarity and prayers, your awareness, your concern," Archbishop Gonzalez said. "Secondly, if you are able to make monetary donations to assist in the relief effort — I'm speaking mainly of food and shelter — that would be a big help."

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades
will celebrate the

'Sunday of the Word of God'

Mass on Sunday, Jan. 26, at 9 a.m.,
at St. Vincent de Paul Church, Fort Wayne.

— See story on page 3



Senate bill would update TANF payments, eligibility guidelines

A lifeline exists for the poorest residents of Indiana to lift themselves up in the toughest of times, but outdated guidelines keep most from taking full advantage of it.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program in Indiana has not been updated in more than 30 years. That includes its \$288 maximum monthly payout for families in deep poverty, which went a much longer way in 1988 than it does today.

Once again, state lawmakers and advocates for the poor — including the Catholic Church — aim to change that.

Senate Bill 111, authored by Sen. Jon Ford (R-Terre Haute), would bring TANF in line with current economic realities. Among other provisions, the bill would increase monthly payment amounts and modify them annually using Social Security cost-of-living adjustment rates. It also would update eligibility guidelines to enable more Hoosiers to take advantage of the program, which includes intensive job training assistance to help lift people out of poverty for good.

"It's time we updated this program to meet the needs of the modern family," Ford said. "TANF is a great tool not only to help people financially but to get the skills they need to improve their lives."

Ford backed a nearly identical bill in 2019, Senate Bill 440, which easily passed the Senate but did not get a hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee. Last year's Indiana General Assembly was tasked with passing the state's biennial budget, and Ford said that his bill "was held up on budget concerns in the House."

The lawmaker, who was heartened by the fact that his proposed legislation last year had full support of the Senate, said he is "very hopeful" about the outlook for Senate Bill 111 in this session.

So is the Indiana Catholic Conference, which always aligns itself with the most vulnerable in society.

"Crushing poverty can be an

assault to a person's dignity," said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. "In keeping with the Church's practice to promote the common good as well as demonstrate charity, the Indiana Catholic Conference wholeheartedly supports Senate Bill 111. We are promoting an avenue that can truly uplift the person."

The goals of TANF are twofold: to provide a cash benefit so families experiencing extreme financial hardship can meet their basic needs until their situation improves, and to offer support through programs and case management to help parents find and keep jobs. Under this temporary assistance program, an adult has a 24-month lifetime limit for receiving benefits. Children can receive benefits up to a total of 60 months. TANF funds flow from the federal government through block grants to the states.

But in Indiana, only a fraction of those living in poverty take advantage of the program because of antiquated guidelines that Senate Bill 111 is designed to change. According to Jessica Fraser, program manager for the Indiana Institute for Working Families, a mere 6% of poor families statewide are benefiting from the federal program. One of the reasons is that Indiana set its income requirements to qualify for TANF in the mid-1990s, when welfare reform was signed into law by then-President Bill Clinton. Those eligibility guidelines have not been adjusted for inflation since then.

Because of these outdated rules, Indiana has the fourth-lowest eligibility for TANF in the country, Fraser said. This equates to a staggering number of missed opportunities to help the most vulnerable in the state, the majority of whom are children. Under current state law, TANF serves families and children who are living under 16% of federal poverty guidelines. Senate Bill 111 would increase the level of eligibility to 50% of those guidelines.

"We have fewer than 5,500

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

families in the program right now," Fraser said. "The changes proposed by Senate Bill 111 would mean that many more Hoosiers in deep poverty would be eligible for assistance."

In addition, if the bill became law, the maximum monthly TANF payout for a family of three would jump to \$513 from the \$288 set 32 years ago.

As Fraser meets with legislators to advocate for modernizing TANF, she points out how much has changed since 1988, when the average rent was \$420 and a dozen eggs cost about 70 cents. She also uses a powerful visual to underscore her message: a photo of herself from that year, when she was in second grade.

"It's time for these changes," said Fraser, a lifelong Catholic and a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis, who expressed appreciation for the ICC's consistent support on the issue.

"We have been so grateful to have the Catholic Church as a partner in this mission," Fraser said. "It's important to bring the voice of faith to the discussion."

No hearing has been set yet for Senate Bill 111, but the ICC will closely monitor and report on developments.

To follow priority legislation of the ICC, visit www.indianacc.org. This website includes access to I-CAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church's position on key issues. Those who sign up for I-CAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Legatus members are 'ambassadors' who bring their faith to the marketplace

INDIANAPOLIS (CNS) — When the Indianapolis chapter of Legatus marked its 30th anniversary, Tom Monaghan, founder of Domino's Pizza and Ave Maria University in Florida, was on hand to help members celebrate. Monaghan, now 82, established Legatus for Catholic business executives and owners over 30 years ago. The organization describes its members as "ambassadors for Christ in the marketplace," and the Indianapolis chapter — founded Dec. 8, 1989 — is the fourth-oldest Legatus chapter. "I congratulate you on your 30th anniversary," he said. "I like the number 30. I built my career on 30-minute deliveries. Indianapolis is one of my favorite chapters, if not my favorite chapter," Monaghan said, and noted that with nearly 70 active member couples, it also is "one of, if not the, most successful" of Legatus' 98 existing or forming chapters. The Dec. 12 anniversary event was held during the chapter's annual Christmas celebration Mass and dinner. The goal of Legatus is "to bring your Catholic faith into your business by your actions and the way you behave and operate your business," said current chapter president Gary Hoefle, founder of Maxim Services LLC. He and his wife, Katie, are members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

CNN settles suit with Covington Catholic student from viral video

WASHINGTON (CNS) — CNN reached an undisclosed settlement Jan. 7 with Nick Sandmann, a Kentucky Catholic high school student who sued the cable news outlet for defamation over its coverage of an incident that occurred after last year's March for Life. Sandmann, a junior last year who was at the center of the viral video controversy, sought \$275 million in damages in his lawsuit filed against CNN last March. He has also sued The Washington Post and NBC Universal. A federal judge let part of the suit against The Post continue after the paper filed a motion to dismiss it. Trial dates have not yet been set for these two cases. The amount of the CNN settlement was not made public during a hearing at the federal courthouse in Covington, Kentucky. After the announcement, Sandmann tweeted: "Yes, We settled with CNN," which gained more than 82,000 likes by the next day and hundreds of comments, primarily of support. Sandmann sued media outlets for what he claimed was biased coverage of what transpired at the Lincoln Memorial Jan. 18, 2019. That day, Sandmann, wearing a "Make America Great Again" hat, smiled just inches away

Praying for Spain



CNS photo/Susana Vera, Reuters

A woman prays during Mass in favor of the traditional family unit in central Madrid, Spain, in this 2011 file photo. Spanish church leaders voiced concern for their country's future last week after the government pledged to legalize euthanasia, secularize education and strip the Church of "improper assets."

from Nathan Phillips, a Native American leader, as Phillips chanted and beat a drum. The day after that encounter, clips from a video of that encounter went viral almost immediately, which showed students surrounding Phillips while appearing to be mocking him. The clip caused immediate outrage. But by the next day, extended footage of how the situation unfolded revealed that another group had taunted the students and some responded back. The conclusion of a third-party investigation into the situation, released by the Covington Diocese Feb. 13, 2019, found no evidence that the students had issued "offensive or racist statements" that they had been accused of doing.

'No end in sight to the horror': Australian bishops respond to fires

CANBERRA, Australia (CNS) — Saying that "there is no end in sight to the horror which confronts us," Archbishop Mark Coleridge, president of the

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, said the bishops have implemented a national response to months of wildfires. The bishops have set up a national network, connecting people affected by the fires with "people who can help with tasks such as preparing meals, clearing properties, rebuilding communities, as well as pastoral and counseling support." They are collaborating with other religious agencies and their institutes and will take up a special collection the last weekend in January, when Australia Day is celebrated. Archbishop Coleridge said people who do not want to wait to donate to their parish collections can donate to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, known in Australia as Vinnies. The bishops' conference also set up a special page, www.catholic.org.au/bushfires, with a button for donation to the Vinnies, as well as resources such as prayers of intercession, prayers for those affected, and statements on the fire from other organizations. "We have all seen the apocalyptic images, even if we are not in the areas most affected," the archbishop said. "Lives have been lost, homes and towns have been

destroyed, smoke has shrouded large swathes of our country."

'Embrace peace rather than violence,' USCCB head says of Iran tensions

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The president of the U.S. bishops urged the United States and Iran to "embrace peace rather than violence" in the wake of escalating tensions between the two countries. "May the Lord help all parties in this time of growing belligerence to peer through one another's transgressions and appreciate the legitimate fears that lie behind them," said the Jan. 8 statement from Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles. He was joined in the statement by Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Illinois, chairman of the bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace. Noting that the bishops have addressed Middle East peace issues regularly, "we urge once again that all parties, in these critical days, embrace peace rather than violence. Peace has been all too elusive," Archbishop

Gomez and Bishop Malloy said. "We have called for necessary diplomacy, courageous dialogue and tireless efforts toward peace to resolve such global conflicts," they added. "We do so now, and we will do so always." Tensions heightened first with a siege of the U.S. Embassy in Iraq by protesters Dec. 31-Jan. 1, followed by a U.S. drone strike Jan. 3 that killed Iranian Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani. The Iranian government retaliated for Soleimani's killing with missile attacks on Iraqi bases Jan. 7.

Minnesota Catholic, Lutheran bishops' open letter backs refugee admission

MINNEAPOLIS (CNS) — The Catholic and Lutheran bishops of Minnesota, in an open letter, urged support and prayers for those seeking shelter and protection. The open letter was first published Dec. 23 in the Minneapolis Star Tribune — just before the Christmas Day deadline for state and local governments to tell the Trump administration whether they will authorize refugee resettlement in their area. The bishops stressed that everyone is created in the image and likeness of God and imbued with a sacred dignity that must be protected. "This is especially true when it comes to the poor and vulnerable," they wrote. "We are saddened that as Christians prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ — who himself experienced life as a refugee when his family fled to Egypt — our nation may be creating even more hardships for vulnerable refugee families," the bishops said. President Donald Trump's executive order, issued Sept. 26, "seems to unnecessarily politicize what has been a humanitarian program rooted in our nation's long history of resettling families fleeing from life-threatening dangers," the bishops wrote. "We are also troubled by the decision to set a limit of 18,000 refugees in 2020, the lowest in 40 years."

French bishops OK removing gender IDs on baptism certificates

OXFORD, England (CNS) — The French bishops' permanent council has approved a recommendation to remove gender references for parents on baptismal certificates. Bishop Joseph de Metz-Noblat of Langres, president of the French bishops' Council for Canonical Questions, said the changes were made to bring baptismal practices into line with new gender-equality laws. In a letter to bishops dated Dec. 13, 2018, and published at the end of 2019, Bishop Metz-Noblat said the "ever-more-complex situation of families in France" had made compiling Catholic documents "sometimes difficult," especially with baptisms.

Twenty-one admitted to candidacy for Order of the Diaconate

BY BRADLEY SPAULDING

During an evening Mass Jan. 11 celebrating the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, 21 aspirants from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend celebrated the Rite of Admission to Candidacy for the diaconate.

"After a year of formation as aspirants for the Order of the Diaconate, they have arrived at the moment when they express openly their desire to serve the Lord and His Church as deacons," Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades said in his homily. "They have been recommended to me as men suitable for further formation for the diaconate. So during this Mass I will accept them officially as candidates for Holy Orders."

The men's spouses, family, parish priests, spiritual directors, teachers and well-wishers attended, celebrating Mass at St. Martin de Porres Church, Syracuse. Deacons from across the diocese were also in attendance, including several representing the first all-Hispanic diaconate group, who were ordained in July 2018.

During the homily, Bishop Rhoades noted that the diaconate is a "living icon in the Church of Christ the Servant. That's what a deacon is called to be. It's what the very word 'deacon' means, 'servant.'"

It is this servant, Jesus, "whom deacons are ordained to serve and to imitate, of whom they are to be living icons in the Church, living images of the One who said that He came not to be served, but to serve," he said. "I think it is very meaningful that these men, our brothers, are admitted into Candidacy on this Feast of the Baptism of the Lord," he added.

The Mass and its accompanying rite marked the end of a year of study, formation and discernment for the newly received candidates. According to Deacon Stan LeMieux, director of diaconate formation for the diocese, the candidates participated in a new curriculum instituted by Bishop Rhoades and the Department of Theology at the University of Notre Dame. Classes were taught by Dr. Timothy Matovina, chairman of the Department of Theology at Notre Dame, and Dr. John C. Cavadini, director, McGrath Institute for Church Life. "So these guys had world-



Photos by Nate Proulx

Aspirants to the Sacred Order of the Diaconate stand with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and director of diaconate formation Deacon Stan LeMieux, center left, following a Mass with Rite of Admission to Candidacy Jan. 11. The men will continue their formation for three more years before being ordained as what the bishop called a "living icon in the Church of Christ the Servant."

class theologians teaching their classes," said Deacon LeMieux.

The size of the class of deacons — almost twice as many men as in previous years — is evidence of the growing visibility of the diaconate in the diocese, according to Deacon LeMieux.

"The diaconate is becoming more visible to people," he said. "Parishioners can see what permanent deacons do, and the Holy Spirit is calling guys to serve in this way." Indeed, several of the candidates noted that it was the presence of a deacon serving in their parish that planted the seed for them to pursue ordination.

James Summers, a candidate from St. Pius X, Granger, said that he was inspired to pursue the diaconate through volunteering as a lector in his parish and by serving on the Black Catholic Advisory Board with Deacon Mel Tardy.

Max Ortega had a similar story. "When I was living in Mexico many years ago, we had a man studying to become a permanent deacon in our parish. I thought it would be very good for our parish to have a permanent deacon. That planted the seed." Ortega added that the ministry of two deacons, Deacon

Victor Sandoval, at his current parish of St. Patrick, Fort Wayne, and Deacon Huberto Vasquez, that reignited his interest in becoming a deacon himself.

"Now I saw, once again, how good this is for our parish and I said, 'Okay. God is calling me to do the same.'"

Bishop Rhoades addressed the candidates directly, offering three directives as they continue their formation toward ordination. "First, focus on Jesus as the Servant of the Lord, the Suffering Servant prophesied by Isaiah, the One identified by the Father as His beloved Son in whom He is well pleased. Throughout your formation over the next three years, strive to be images of Christ the Servant. Never forget that, in Christ, you are beloved sons of the Father. This is the core of our identity."

"Second," he added, "at His Baptism, Jesus joined the ranks of sinners, showed His solidarity with sinners, even though He was without sin. ... The mission of the ordained bears fruit the more we are cleansed of sin and are clearer signs or images of the Lord, whom we serve. So I encourage you to pursue holiness, especially your regular

reception of the Sacrament of Penance."

Bishop's third point for the candidates dealt with the life of prayer. "Prayer is entering that living relationship we have with God in Baptism. We must allow ourselves to be drawn into the mystery of God's life, His Trinitarian love."

"This is what prayer is all about," he continued. "My brothers, it is in prayer during these next few years that you are called to discern the will of God regarding a vocation to the diaconate. And it is in prayer that you will obtain the endurance to complete your diaconal formation. So I encourage you to be devoted to a disciplined life of prayer."

Prayer is one area in which candidate Orlando Miranda, St. Joseph Parish, Fort Wayne, has seen his faith grow through the formation process. "Learning how to pray and getting yourself deeper into prayer when you do it has been very rewarding for me," he said.

Finding time for classes and studying has been a challenge, he admitted, as a husband, father of five and full-time sales manager in the food industry.

Planning is key, he said, and leaving some "wiggle room for the Holy Spirit" to change up a well-planned week.

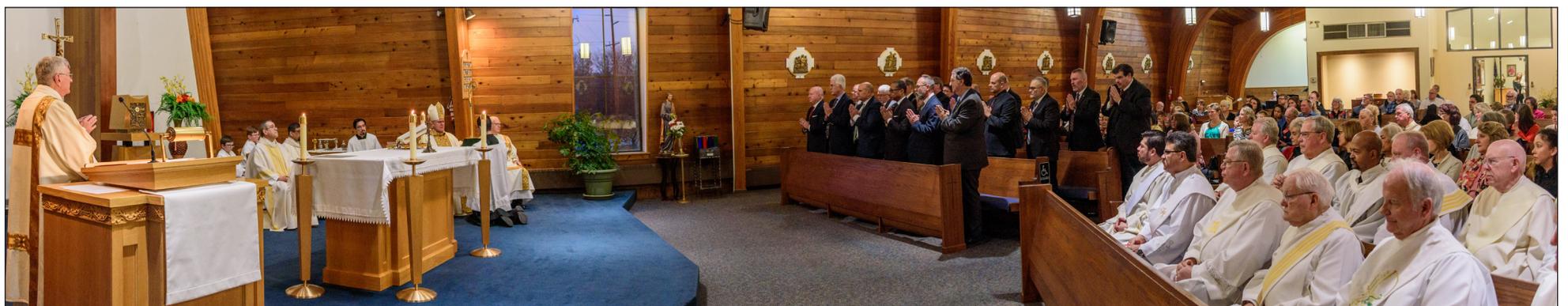
The support of the candidate's family, especially his spouse, is central to success over the five-year process from initial application to the diaconate program through to ordination. Wives are encouraged to attend classes with their husbands.

Sharing the commute and class-time with his wife, Elaine, is one of Dan Avila's favorite things about his formation journey. The Avilas are parishioners at St. Joseph Parish, Roanoke.

"As wives we get to go to the classes, but we don't have to do the homework," Elaine quipped, as she and Dan shared a laugh.

Ed Fox is a candidate from St. John the Baptist Parish, Fort Wayne, where he serves as director of religious education. His wife, Kathy, passed away six years ago, but he has found strength and encouragement from his brother candidates.

"The most rewarding thing is all these brothers and their wives. We are a family, a pack of brothers. They are helping my faith grow," he said.



The candidates, in black, stand before the bishop and deacons of the diocese during the Mass, which was celebrated at St. Martin de Porres Church, Syracuse.

Witness to the power of prayer

BY JENNIFER MILLER

“Mary! I’ve been praying for you for months! Nice to meet you,” said her new co-worker with a welcoming smile. Heading into her first faculty meeting as a student teacher at St. Adalbert School, South Bend, last August, Mary Freeby encountered fellow educators who had heard her name but never met her face to face.

That happens to Freeby all around South Bend. “People come up to me and ask how I’m feeling, that even now they’ve been praying for me and my family,” she explained with tears in her eyes.

Freeby and her family are a living witness to God’s grace. Athletic and active, she wasn’t expecting it: paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria, which affects 1 in 1.3 million people, usually until their 30s or 40s. Freeby had yet to celebrate her 21st birthday.

“I started noticing symptoms in March of 2017 and the transplant occurred in November 2017. I had to remain in the hospital in Cincinnati until March 2018. After I got home, it was still another five months before I felt like I had truly recovered,” Mary said.

Her mom, Diane, describes that time as “very surreal. I don’t remember panicking, but at the same time it was very hard to fathom the gravity of the situation, that our daughter had a potentially life-threatening disease. We did take it to prayer. Being surrounded by family and friends who prayed was a great source of strength. Even total strangers who heard about what Mary was going through told us they were praying. That was very powerful. I think being able to pray — not only for Mary and for our family, but also for her amazing medical team — gave us great peace.”

PNH occurs because of a genetic change or mutation in the PIG-A gene of a single stem cell in bone marrow. Considered a “bone marrow failure” disease, PNH causes the body’s bone marrow to not produce red blood cells with a normal life span.

If left untreated, she was at high risk for blood clots and her own life expectancy would only be 10-15 years.

Dr. Colleen Morrison at Memorial Children’s Hospital had only seen one other case of PNH in her lifetime. Through the grace of God, she was able to diagnose Mary and walk with her the steps to healing.

The only known cure for PNH is a bone marrow transplant. Bone marrow matches are tricky, however. Patients can be waiting on lists for months to find a compatible match. The Freeby family and local schools, from Saint Joseph High School to Holy



Family and friends of South Bend resident Mary Freeby gather in October 2017 to celebrate Mass and pray before she leaves for a life-saving bone marrow transplant.

Cross College and the University of Notre Dame, offered bone marrow registries to help. With the hash tag #Marysmatch, a compatible donor appeared.

Normally doctors look for 10 markers to be in sync with the donor and recipient. Mary and her donor had 12.

“At the time, I don’t think I realized how rare it was. ... I was just like, OK, let’s do it,” Mary reflected.

In the coming year, she has resolved to personally thank her anonymous donor. “I just don’t think I can say what I want to say, so I’ve reworded it so many times.”

“The transplant has helped her to be able to trust God’s timing, something that was hard before. “I wanted to just go, go, go. Working three jobs, I was going to get here and do this ... this is my plan ... and He was like, ‘No. This is not your plan, here is what is going to happen.’ He put my life on hold completely and I had to wait, and it worked out. Everything worked out.”

Diane remembers those months with Mary, just the two of them, in the small hospital room or at the Ronald McDonald House.

“Mary was such a warrior, so positive and upbeat, that it was hard not to be the same way. As a family I think we quickly realized there really was no other option than to be optimistic and hopeful. And Our Lady seemed to be always present. Mary had made several pilgrimages to Medjugorje, as had (her father) Chuck and I and some of her siblings. I personally felt great peace and constantly drew on those experiences of peace and

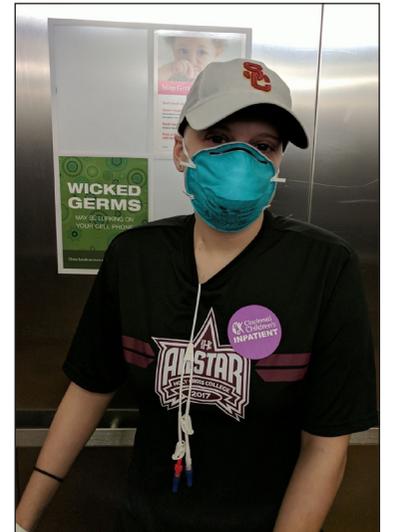
prayer.”

Diane’s relationship with the rosary changed during Mary’s treatment. “Mass was only offered at the hospital a couple times a week, and it was sometimes a challenge to attend. I did manage to explore Cincinnati on my own and visit the various parishes, and once Mary was well enough to leave her room, she would come with me. But mostly I relied on the rosary. It gave me great peace to just quietly pray it anytime, anywhere.”

Their family prayer changed, too. “We’ve always tried to say a rosary regularly, together in the evening,” Mary said. “As we’ve gotten older, it has gotten tougher with everybody in different directions. But once I got diagnosed, it increased. We had another reason to pray ... it added an extra desire to do it, because we knew the benefits that could come from it.”

“The Eucharist was the reason I was able to keep any faith at all,” she added. There was one point where I hit an all-time low and I even began to ask God “Why is this happening to me? Why me?” It’s embarrassing to admit, but unfortunately, it’s true. I was doubting God’s plan, I was mad at Him for making me go through all that I had to go through. I was giving up. For a while, it was just very dark and very hard.”

The South Bend community demonstrated in word and deed great acts of charity toward the Freeby family. Trivia nights, basketball competitions, generous gift card donations, professional leaves and meal trains were organized and donated, and a GoFundMe page raised over \$20,000 to protect Diane’s job



Freeby ventures out of her hospital room for physical therapy a couple weeks after receiving the transplant. Chemotherapy treatments for paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria erased her entire immune system, so she had to be careful.

vided me with several examples of saints who would be able to guide me through tough situations like that.”

For Mary, St. Therese of Lisieux is one of those saints. Although she chose St. Therese at confirmation, it wasn’t until she was healing in the hospital that she came to learn and appreciate more about her. St. Therese, too, was very sick at a young age. Her “little way” of loving Jesus spoke to Mary, especially on the days that were empty of big gestures she could accomplish to help others.

Mary studied education at Holy Cross College, but with the sudden onset of her illness wasn’t able to student teach her senior year. Her professors allowed her to walk with her friends in May 2018 and complete her student teaching the following semester. Her friends even chose her to give the valedictory speech, just two months after returning from the hospital.

In the fall, Mary was student teaching first grade at St. Adalbert when she met co-workers who had only heard her name from prayer chains. The following spring, she substitute taught for the diocese and worked the front desk at Saint Joseph High School. Today she is in her first year as a classroom teacher, in third grade at St. Jude School, Fort Wayne.

She looks back on her illness and can see God’s hand in it all. “It’s so cool,” she shared with a smile. Most of all, she is grateful for the power of people’s prayers.

“When you’re praying for someone, you think that they don’t really know. Or you’re praying for them, it’s going to God and He’s taking care of it. But I felt it directly,” she shared. “I felt those prayers from every single person. Having that strong community praying for me and surrounding me, it was amazing!”

Photos provided by Diane Freeby



Now cured and healthy, Freeby traveled to Melbourne, Florida, in December on a Make-A-Wish trip provided by the Samantha Hickey Foundation.

and income so she could care for her daughter in the hospital. She still wakes up every day grateful for people’s kindness and prayer.

All of the family’s current and past educational communities also rallied to support Mary in prayer as well.

“If I had not been raised Catholic and been given the gift of a Catholic education, I would not have had nearly enough faith to have gotten through that,” said Diane. “It’s very hard to understand any of the mysteries of the faith, but having that Catholic education allowed me to at least understand the importance of having faith and it pro-

'Cor Jesu' young adults celebrate ministry's first year

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

For a year, tens of young adults from the Fort Wayne area have met for a weekly evening of eucharistic adoration, reconciliation, benediction and Mass. On Wednesday, Jan. 8, Cor Jesu, as the ministry is called, celebrated the anniversary of its first gathering.

The group hopes to connect the Summit City's many pockets of young Catholics to each other.

They meet at St. John the Baptist Church. Throughout Cor Jesu's inaugural year, attendance increased steadily, something leader Isabella Durán-Price hopes will continue in 2020.

On the anniversary, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades offered the sacrament of reconciliation during eucharistic adoration. He then celebrated Mass before socializing with the growing ministry.

"It's so good to be with you this evening as we approach the final days of the Christmas season, and especially happy to be here for the first anniversary of the Cor Jesu adult group," he said to the young Catholics at the beginning of Mass. "I pray that the Lord will bless you in this new year and that more young adults will be drawn closer to Christ through praise."

Later, the bishop commended the group for making a week-day Mass feel like a "solemn Sunday Mass." He and St. John

the Baptist parochial vicar Father Patrick Hake joined in the food, music and colorful birthday party hats provided for the occasion. Those celebrating took advantage of the opportunity for fellowship and discussion, an indication that Cor Jesu's mission of building a citywide community of young Catholics may continue successfully into its second year.

Cor Jesu (pronounced Core Yay-soo) takes its name from the Latin for "Heart of Jesus." Its liturgy also uses Latin segments in conjunction with Novus Ordo, the

post-Vatican II form of the Mass, which seems to contribute to the solemn atmosphere that attracts many young people.

The group's mission statement says that the phrase "Cor Jesu" "points us towards the real heart of flesh of Jesus. There is a close connection between the Eucharist and the Heart of Jesus, for in the Eucharist our Lord is physically present."

The group also offers a guide at each gathering that includes advice on how to practice "Lectio Divina," or "divine reading," and explains the four-step "ARRR" method of relational prayer: acknowledge, relate, receive and respond. The guide also provides an extensive examination of

Read the bishop's homily on page 2.



Photos by Joshua Schipper

The young adult ministry group Cor Jesu meets every Wednesday at St. John the Baptist Church, Fort Wayne, for adoration, the sacrament of reconciliation, benediction and Mass.

conscience for the sacrament of reconciliation.

"In naming this event 'Cor Jesu', we want to be able to give you the opportunity to lay your own head on the heart of Jesus and hear his heart beating for you," the mission statement also says.

All meetings of Cor Jesu begin at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to participate, but a particular invitation is extended to young adults. For more information, find the group on Facebook under @CorJesuFortWayne and on Instagram at @corjesu.fw.



Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrates Cor Jesu's first anniversary Jan. 8 at St. John the Baptist.



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Profiles in the CCD/Religious Education setting

BY TAMI DELUCENAY

The journey continues for catechetical leaders throughout the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, as faith formation programs enter the new year with renewed hope inspired by the Christmas season.

Bridges of trust are building in the lives of the catechist and student. Catechist Jonathan Alvarez of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Elkhart, continues to build that trust and encourage hope in the 24 boys in his confirmation class.

Alvarez has been a catechist since graduating from Marian University in 2018. He is in his second year of teaching. "I am constantly learning new things to improve my teaching styles and bring kids closer to the love of Christ," he stated.

Born in Mexico, Alvarez came to the United States when he was 4 years old. "I lived in Elkhart up to the fourth grade and then moved to Goshen, where I continue to live. I have been a parishioner of St. Vincent de Paul since childhood, where I received both my first



Father Matthew Coonan presents catechesis to more than 140 confirmation students at St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Elkhart, as catechist Jonathan Alvarez, foreground, follows along with the lesson on his laptop.

Photos by Tami DeLucenay

Communion and confirmation."

It was during his high school years that Alvarez began to make what he called "some poor choices I was heading down the wrong path. I

started attending the youth group in Goshen, and that was the culminating factor of my faith life. The love of Christ that was shown to me by the youth ministers at St. John (the



Alvarez explains the Nicene Creed to his students in December.



Evangelist) set me on a new path."

He remained strong in his faith, and now passes on to others the love of Christ that was shown to him.

While in college, Alvarez considered a vocation to the priesthood and majored in Catholic studies and philosophy. Although his discernment has led to a different vocation, he continues to serve the Church any way he can.

"My favorite work in the Church is with the inner-city kids. I feel that my life experiences help me to relate to the young people in my class. Our confirmation class meets once a month for three hours. I have 24 boys that I meet with each month; we begin our class as a large group with catechesis from Father Matthew (Coonan), then break off to our classroom for our lessons. The first thing we do is prayer. I ask the boys who wants to be the beginning or the end, the boys volunteer and we say a prayer to start or end our class time. We spend some time in review from the previous lessons and then dive into the lesson of the day. I have them participate by acting out the stories, along with

just being present to them and checking out what's going on in their lives."

Alvarez shares with his students that the biggest thing he has learned is to come to Mass and to stay close to Christ. "I spend time in personal prayer every morning. If I'm not growing every day, then I'm falling behind. I have a great devotion to Mother Mary to help me in my faith walk. I also look to the intercession of St. John Bosco; he, too, worked with kids on the edge."

"There is such an attack on the family, and I just want to reach out to parents to encourage them to teach their kids about the faith, he noted. "If it's not taught at home, it's hard for kids to grasp on to what we are teaching in our short time together."

Alvarez looks forward to celebrating the sacrament of confirmation with his students later this year. He also continues to live out his call to serve others by helping with youth retreats and his parish youth group, along with bringing Communion to the sick at Goshen Hospital and assisting with ministry to inmates at the Elkhart County jail.



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Bernadette Scholars: 'disability means different ability'

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Grocery shopping and Christmas-themed aerobics classes are not part of a typical high school curriculum. But at Marian High School, these are important lessons for particular students.

Marian has five additions this year, and principal Mark Kirzeder hopes to see a similar increase next school year. Not new classes, but special new students — students with mild intellectual disabilities. They are the first of the school's Bernadette Scholars, and they are making their mark at Marian.

The Bernadette Scholars Program is separate from individualized education/resource room programs, and the 2019-20 school year marks its pilot year at the Mishawaka high school. Affectionately called "Bernies," Bernadette Scholars are on non-diploma, certificate-of-completion tracks. They spend the bulk of the day together in shared classes. Next semester they will be further assimilated into the typical classrooms.

Integrating the five students into Marian has thus far proven to be a successful and blessed transition.

According to Annie Ganser, department chairman of learning strategies, the program is flexible, aimed at meeting the students' individual needs. "It focuses on life skills and achieving an optimal level of independence" that are vital for the students' future.

Education for this demographic is directed toward proficiency at everyday tasks for independent living rather than higher-level academics. Students are accepted into the program on a case-by-case basis, depending on their needs and the resources Marian has available. Expectations placed on the students are different from those of typical learners as well.

In addition to Ganser, four other staff members work directly with the Bernadette Scholars. Katie Dyer is the teacher for the Learning Strategies Center. Pam Sailor is the instructional assistant, Bret Bajdek coordinates the Learning Lab and Cynthia Spalding is a teaching aide exclusively for the Bernadette Scholars. A grant from the Tippmann Foundation allowed for the creation of Spalding's position.

The staff works together to find creative ways to reach the students and help develop their potential: For example, a recent unit on meal planning and preparation incorporated health, math and community living skills into a grocery trip. Taking students out of the classroom gives them the opportunity to put the skills they are learning in action, in this case by reading food labels and comparing prices in a real-world scenario. The stu-



Photos provided by Katie Dyer

A'layah Newsome, one of the new Bernadette Scholars at Marian High School, Mishawaka, decorates cupcakes in the school's home economics lab during the staging of mock "Cupcake Wars."

dents find recipes, go to the store with a staff member to purchase the ingredients and prepare the meal in the home economics lab later in the week.

Although the Bernies have their own classroom and workspace, they are becoming a valuable part of the Marian community. Dyer is quick to point out that with their friendly smiles and warm hugs, each of the students brings something special to the campus.

Their interests are as varied as the rest of the student population. The boys serve at Mass within their own parishes. Choir and art are popular pastimes among the Bernies too.

Bernadette Scholar Nick Becker is freshman class vice president, and the young man with Down syndrome is an obvious leader. Cheerful and friendly, he walks the halls as if he owns the building, which is nearly accurate because he practically grew up there.

Nick is the second-youngest of seven siblings, five of whom went to Marian. When asked how he feels about his school, he said he's "happy to be here," — although the school day is too long for his liking.

Nick attended St. Matthew Cathedral School, a feeder school for Marian, so he already had many friends among his Marian classmates. Remarkably, the elective he chose to take was theology, and he was placed in a mainstream sophomore theology class.

Morgan Minder, also a Bernie, is on the swim team, and her teammates and coaches have been incredibly welcoming to her, she said. Leo Vesprini put

together an intramural volleyball team that filled up in five minutes, and he considers himself an expert at making friends. He will approach other students and engage them in conversation or invite them to play card games.

Mary Helfrich loves anime and is involved in the club that her older sister started. She is also interested in photography, and her chosen elective for next semester is 2D art. Her classmate and fellow Bernie A'layah Newsome, a quiet student, stated that drumline was her favorite class.

Ganser believes that the presence of the Bernadette Scholars benefits the student population at large. It provides an opportunity for mainstream students to stop in and visit, thereby taking a leadership role. Many have done so, forming friendships with the Bernies. The program is "helping them understand that disability means different ability," she said. "The (typical students) are amazed by what the Bernies can do." She predicts continuing benefits for all students at Marian as the program increases. "When we started, Mr. Kirzeder wanted to make sure the kids would be safe, shown kindness, and that others were open and accepting." They have been.

Dyer related stories of students taking the Bernies under their wing and encouraging them in academics. One group of students was working in the home economics lab at the same time the Bernadette Scholars were present, and mainstream girls excitedly declared that they wanted to work with them. The open-hearted invitation led to



Leo Vesprini gets help on his schoolwork from classmate Yordy Rios, who took the initiative to guide him.

a battle of the bakers, and they hosted a version of "Cupcake Wars." There were no losers, as all of the students learned the value of friendship and inclusion.

To teach theology, Angie Hall, the pastoral minister, set up a cozy space in her office to work with the Bernadette Scholars. It's a small, relaxed setting that encourages the students to participate in prayer and discussion. Here they engage with Hall, sharing their thoughts about religious matters such as reconciliation and the liturgical season. In this way, all of the students are involved and none feel intimidated by a larger classroom setting.

Due to Indiana state laws,

once a student is placed on a non-diploma track, they can't be moved to a diploma track, Ganser noted. "We make sure that our families know that by opening some doors, others must close." Although in some instances a student could handle the intellectual aspect of typical classes, the struggle with the workload might outweigh the potential benefits. So the staff at Marian works closely with families to meet the goals that each family has for their child, while looking to the future.

Potential jobs are a large part of future goals for Bernadette Scholars. The students have a work period included in their day where they spend some time restocking and cleaning areas of the cafeteria. At some point in the upcoming year, they will begin learning administrative skills such as answering phones. A great deal of importance is placed not only on teaching work skills in the program, but also how to accept criticism with grace and to arrive on time for work.

Kirzeder sees the benefit of the Bernadette Scholars for the larger community and hopes to increase the number of students in the program to 12-20. Because of the Bernadette Scholars Program, students with intellectual disabilities are now able to learn life skills within the supportive, Catholic environment for which Marian High School strives.

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Why are we surprised the teaching of the Real Presence has become an abstraction?

On the Friday of the 33rd week of Ordinary Time, my wife and I attended Mass at SS. Peter and Paul here in Huntington, Indiana, because our second grader was doing the first reading. Father Tony Steinacker suspended his normal homily to talk to the Huntington Catholic primary school students about the Real Presence, and along the way he returned to a point he has frequently emphasized: If we truly believe that Christ has come to us under the forms of bread and wine, our actions will reflect it. We'll spend the minutes before Mass in silent prayer to Our Lord truly present in the tabernacle; and when the time comes for Communion, we'll keep our eyes and our thoughts fixed on the Lord whose body and blood we are about to receive. The Communion line isn't a social event; it's a solemn opportunity to unite ourselves with Christ.

Thirty-three hours later, on the eve of the solemnity of Christ the King, our family attended a Saturday vigil Mass in a different state, in a diocese that still suffers from the effects of a systematic liturgical and theological revolution (I don't use that phrase lightly) wrought by a previous bishop, dead some 15 years. The pews up in the front half of the church had been replaced with chairs; the kneelers had been removed from the ones that remain.

As the ushers released each row to receive Communion, they

shook the hands of every adult, and many of the children, as they stepped into line. And as the lines from each side of the aisle processed toward Christ, people turned to one another, shook hands, and exchanged greetings.

I found myself distracted, thinking about what I was seeing rather than preparing myself to receive Christ. On one level, this ritual seemed an impressive show of community. But then I thought back to the minutes before Mass, when the church was abuzz with sound at the level of a high-school basketball game, though there was an impressive tabernacle that no one could miss at the far end of the sanctuary. Everything we had experienced from the moment we entered the church seemed to be of a piece: the missing kneelers; the lack of silence; the focus on one another on their way up to Communion rather than on Christ the King, with whom they were about to unite themselves in the greatest of all mysteries.

I truly believe that the congregation gathered for that Mass are good and earnest people. Most are cradle Catholics, overwhelmingly Polish, and as a cradle Catholic whose Catholicism comes to him from his Polish mother's side, I know from my own experience how much their religion means to them. The vast majority undoubtedly attend Mass at least once a week. But, as the Pew Research Center



ALL THINGS NEW

SCOTT P. RICHERT

found back in August, 37% of all Catholics in the United States who attend Mass at least once a week do not believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

In the wake of the Pew study, most proposals to address this problem have focused on education. But Father Tony is right: The problem is more than an intellectual one. At the root, it's about experience. We can drill the Church's teaching on transubstantiation and the Real Presence into children studying for their first Communion and confirmation, and priests can (and should) use every opportunity throughout the liturgical year to remind those of us in the pews that Christ is truly present under the forms of bread and wine.

But if we say those words and then act as if that reality means nothing, why are we surprised when that teaching becomes an abstraction and then gets tossed aside?

Scott Richert is publisher for Our Sunday Visitor. Reprinted with permission.

The story of our lives

I'm beginning the new year with a clean office. It seems a good place to start, a practical way to set me up for any other resolutions I make.

My office used to be meticulous. Early in our marriage, my husband surprised me with a U-shaped mahogany desk he'd found on Craigslist. It conferred dignity as it housed all my material: two computer screens in front of me, notes at my side, shelving behind me for journals and magazines.

In its fold, I felt capable, equipped. And the hours flew by: late-night drafts, early-morning revisions. But over time the desk became a catchall, piling up paperwork and books, hiding dust bunnies and power strips.

I decided to make like Marie Kondo, the Japanese personal organizer whose bestselling book spawned a Netflix series. Her advice is unflinching: Discard almost everything. And if someone else in your house won't let you, purge when that person is gone.

"By doing this," Kondo writes, "you can reset your life and embark on a new lifestyle."

I set to work in my office, one pile at a time. Pictures, newspapers, insurance forms. With each patch of desk that emerged, I felt better. Lighter, clearer-headed.

Then came the bulk of the buildup: dozens and dozens of legal pads. Hasty black cursive sprawled across the pages, unfettered by the lines. Names that conjure hazy faces — people I had interviewed at the mall, at the coffee shop, at the baseball



TWENTY SOMETHING

CHRISTINA CAPECCHI

game, in the movie theater. Auctions, ordinations, trials, protests.

The story of my journalism career is here in the stories of strangers. It's what I made of their accounts, what happened between the handwritten interview notes and the published newspaper articles.

Certain sources stand out. Some present golden nuggets of wisdom topped in red velvet bows. Art Fry, the Post-it inventor, articulated the value of failure, of making mistakes and trying new things. Kim Smolik, CEO of Leadership Roundtable, said good leaders practice self-care.

Mark Shea, the prolific Catholic author, offered advice on writing that applies to living: "The real trick is to cultivate interest in everything."

A year before his death, Archbishop Emeritus Harry Flynn described the place for faith amid uncertainty. "Life is a great mystery, and we can't figure it all out," he said. "Lean into the mystery."

Other sources linger in my mind because of what they do not disclose. Last month, the

CAPECCI, page 13

We have been called to know the Lord



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time John 1:29-34

The Book of Isaiah furnishes this weekend's first reading from the Scriptures. There is an overtone of relief and joy. There is the promise of a bright future. It was all because of the fact that first, after the humiliation and anguish of being conquered by Babylon and then after generations of exile in Babylon for many, God's people were entering a new day of return to their homeland. Hopefully they would return to lives of prosperity and security.

Lest anyone think this fortunate turn of events was

the mere outcome of changing politics or luck, the prophet eloquently insists that the plight of the people is improving because of God's direct and merciful intervention into human affairs. God brings their relief. God had promised to protect and sustain the people, despite the misfortunes that might befall them. They were God's people.

In turn, the Hebrews, God's people, earthly human instruments of the divine will, had been faithful during their years of trial.

For its second reading, the Church this weekend selects a passage from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. Today, the Apostle Paul ranks among the greatest religious figures of all time, and certainly he stands as a most extraordinary figure in the development of Christianity in the crucial time of the first century A.D.

Attaining this distinction was not without personal cost for Paul. He had to contend with converts to Christianity who were not always loyal to the Gospel. The very culture in which

they lived not only surrendered without a whimper to human instincts but also elevated these instincts literally to the level of the divine. They delighted in lust, gluttony, drunkenness and so on. Such was the case with the Christian converts in Corinth, then one of the major cities of the Mediterranean world.

Another burden for Paul was that his very credentials to preach the Gospel were questioned. He had to insist that Jesus had called him to be an apostle.

The last reading is from St. John's Gospel. The author of the fourth Gospel was attracted to John the Baptist, to say the least, possibly coming from a group influenced by him.

Among John the Baptist's qualities was his absolute intellectual and religious honesty. He was fearless. He thoroughly believed that God had called him to be a prophet. So, St. John's Gospel presents John the Baptist in most admiring terms.

Here, in this reading, John the Baptist sees Jesus in the

distance and acknowledges Jesus as the Redeemer. The element of sacrifice is present. John identifies Jesus as the "Lamb of God."

Finally, treasured Old Testament symbols testify to the identity of Jesus. The dove descends from the sky, from heaven, to rest upon Jesus. God is in Jesus.

Reflection

At Christmas, the Church excitedly told us that Jesus was born. Son of Mary, Jesus was a human, as are we. The shepherds adored Jesus, representing all humanity.

At the Epiphany, the Magi found Jesus after searching for God. To assist them, God led them and protected them. In Jesus, they found God.

At the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, celebrated last week, the Church introduced us to Jesus as the Savior of doomed humankind. In Jesus, humans would have access to eternal life.

Now, continuing the process, John the Baptist, so reliable and

so insightful, proclaims Jesus as the Lamb of God. In all these settings, the Church carefully puts before us the person of Jesus the Lord and tells us about Jesus.

It is an invitation to follow Jesus. Hearing the Scriptures of this season, we know Jesus. He is no stranger; however, truly knowing the Lord depends upon our willingness to respond to this invitation.

READINGS

Sunday: Is 49:3, 5-6 Ps 40, 2m, 4, 7-10 1 Cor 1:1-3 Jn 1:29-34

Monday: 1 Sm 15:16-23 Ps 50:8-9, 16-17, 21, 23 Mk 2:18-22

Tuesday: 1 Sm 16:1-13 Ps 89:20-22, 27-28 Mk 2:23-28

Wednesday: 1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51 Ps 144:1b-2, 9-10 Mk 3:1-6

Thursday: 1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7 Ps 56:2-3, 9-13 Mk 3:7-12

Friday: 1 Sm 24:3-21 Ps 57:2-4, 6, 11 Mk 3:13-19

Saturday: Acts 22:3-16 Ps 117:1-2 Mk 16:15-18

Peace is the first greeting

On Jan. 18, 1968, St. Paul VI inaugurated the World Day of Peace and designated the first day of every year for this focus. This day is also devoted to the veneration of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the Holy Name of Jesus.

Connecting the events, Pope Paul VI commented, "Those holy and loving religious remembrances must shed their light of goodness, wisdom and hope upon the prayer for, the meditation upon, and the fostering of the great and yearned-for gift of peace, of which the world has so much need."

I had a glimpse of the lingering effect of war as a teenager.

At a showing of "Tora! Tora! Tora!" a film about the bombing of Pearl Harbor, my mother sobbed uncontrollably. She was carried back to how her life was upended by World War II.

Her family left everything behind in mainland China to settle in Hong Kong. The respite was short-lived, as Hong Kong was soon occupied by the Japanese. Schooling and income came to an abrupt

halt for the family. The days were punctured by sounds of execution at a nearby schoolyard commandeered as a Japanese military compound.

Though they hardly knew each other, my father and mother married to forestall an offer of marriage she received from a Japanese colonel. My dad was drafted to work for the Japanese as a naval architect. They fled to mainland China to stay ahead of the occupation and had two babies during that chaotic period.

Reluctantly, they abided by an agreement among their fellow

refugees that any child whose cries endanger the safety of the group would be smothered. Fortunately, my brother and sister timed their cries to innocuous moments.

While my older relatives' experiences of war became part of my memory and formed my affiliation with the refugees served by Catholic Relief Services, my own experience of war was something rather different.

What I witnessed was the speed and scope with which Hong Kong engaged and sought out Japanese businesses shortly after the war. By the 1960s, enmity was minimal as the Japanese provided for the Hong Kong people opportunities for technology transfer and outsourced manufacturing. Both countries prospered.

In my CRS work, I have seen the desire, capacity and actions for peace after destructive conflicts. In Cambodia, people wanted to direct their energies for economic development rather than hunting down the last lead-

ers of the Khmer Rouge regime which, during a four-year reign, caused the death of 1.2 million to 2.8 million people.

Twenty-five years after its genocide, Rwanda continues its national strategy to replace the ethnic identities of Hutus and Tutsis with one common designation as Rwandans. On "60 Minutes," a story recounts the collaboration between an Israeli information technology firm and the developer of the "City on the Hill" to create an advanced digital infrastructure and jobs for Palestinian residents.

The above does not necessar-



OUR GLOBAL FAMILY

CAROLYN WOO

ily and immediately foster happy endings of the storybook variety. There remain deep issues of trust, wariness among partners who are former enemies, resistance or repressive means.

What is achieved is fragile and gyrates through progression and regression. The efforts are more like new beginnings: willingness to try something different, energies for mutual gains rather than mutual destruction, different lens to view the "other," and fraternity for our human yearning to be safe, to care for our children and to flourish.

Sending forth the Twelve Disciples to proclaim the good news, Jesus instructed, "As you enter a house, wish it peace." (Mt 10:12) By Jesus' command, peace is to be our first greeting and our first gift to those we engage in our personal, professional, political and international realms.

Carolyn Woo is the distinguished president's fellow for global development at Purdue University. She served as the CEO and president of Catholic Relief Services from 2012 to 2016.

CAPECCHI, from page 12

manager of a fast-food location answered all my questions for a story but left me wondering about his story. The 50-year-old has never married and has had 11 children with eight women. Yet I am sure he is good and kind.

I remember the unemployed mom who bundled up and went to the Minneapolis library to scan help-wanted ads when it was 15 below zero. "I see a little sunlight," she told me, "and I always come out."

I believe our stories are sacred. They are worth telling

and retelling. I believe it is our Christian calling and our human duty to listen to others' stories.

A journalist gathers information using the five W's: who, what, when, where and why. The latter unlocks many doors. Why did you marry her? Why did you vote for him? Why do you live here? Why are you Catholic? Why did you pursue this profession? Why did you become a parent?

And a powerful follow-up to any comment: "Why do you say that?"

These are the questions we should ask our parents, our neighbors, our colleagues, our

cashiers.

When asked with sincere interest, they reflect a core Catholic social teaching: Each of us has value and dignity, each of us has an interesting story.

May we scribble them wherever we can: on napkins, in notepads, across the lines and against our hearts.

Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for January 19, 2020

1 Corinthians 1: 1-3; John 1:29-34

Following is a word search based on the Second and Gospel reading for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A: About divine guidance. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

PAUL	APOSTLE	CHRIST JESUS
SOSTHENES	CORINTH	BE HOLY
THE NAME	GRACE	PEACE
LORD	BEHOLD	LAMB OF GOD
THE SIN	AHEAD	WATER
ISRAEL	SPIRIT	LIKE A DOVE
BAPTIZE	REMAIN	SON OF GOD

BEHOLD HIM

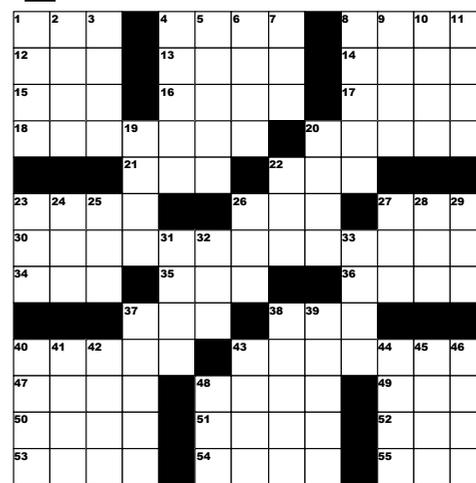
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L I K E A D O V E A A C
E O J O C O R I N T H N
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S N M L O E D S S T D L
I E A B E G T P E H E T
C H I K E J F I H E Z S
G T N D E H J O T N I O
R S D S J H O D B A T P
A O U N A N A L W M P A
C S O N O F G O D E A U
E C A E P Y L O H E B L
    
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The Cross Word

January 19 and 26, 2020

- 51 Region
- 52 Jesus is God's ___
- 53 Monk brew
- 54 Depend
- 55 Explosive



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Sunday readings: Is 49:3, 5-6; 1Cor 1:1-3; Jn 1: 29-31 and Is 8: 23-9:3; 1Cor 1: 10-13, 17 Mt 4: 12-23

ACROSS

- 1 East of Eden
- 4 Southeast by east
- 8 Martial art
- 12 Past
- 13 Sycamore prophet
- 14 On top
- 15 Not amateur
- 16 "The lame shall ___"
- 17 Grotto
- 18 Suffering ___
- 20 ___ Haploid, a DNA associated with Aaron
- 21 Strange
- 22 Taxi
- 23 Horse's stride
- 26 Pirate liquor
- 27 Berth
- 30 Dare devil
- 34 Male child
- 35 Humor
- 36 Wrote to Corinthians
- 37 Compass point
- 38 Director (abbr.)
- 40 Navigation system
- 43 Grail (2 wds.)
- 47 Come up against
- 48 Short
- 49 Gorilla is one
- 50 5,280 feet

DOWN

- 1 Dozes
- 2 Giant
- 3 Entryway
- 4 Lettuce & toppings
- 5 Improve
- 6 Zebedee's sons were in
- 7 Extra-sensory perception
- 8 Israel's original name
- 9 Mormon state
- 10 Spirit appeared as one
- 11 Not closed
- 19 Elect
- 20 Arrived
- 22 Mongrel dog
- 23 Chat
- 24 Hubbub
- 25 Climber plant
- 26 Wheel mark
- 27 Constrictor snake
- 28 Flightless bird
- 29 New Jersey's neighbor
- 31 Northwest by north
- 32 Can metal
- 33 Vigorous
- 37 John baptized with
- 38 Beneficiary
- 39 Book by Homer
- 40 "The ___ of God"
- 41 Off-Broadway award
- 42 Guideline for monks
- 43 Engage
- 44 List of actors
- 45 "Once ___ a time"
- 46 Held in
- 48 The Son of ___

Answer key can be found on page 15

An 'Encounter' with the power and presence of God



Provided by Stacey Huneck

Dozens of Catholic lay individuals, ministers, clergy and religious from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend attended a conference hosted by Encounter Ministries in Toledo, Ohio, Jan. 2-4. During the conference, participants heard from keynote speakers, attended breakout sessions, worshipped, spent time in eucharistic adoration and participated in a healing service.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

'Surviving Divorce' program
GRANGER — "Surviving Divorce" is a 12-week program featuring 30-minute DVD sessions each week. The program will take place on Mondays from 6:30-8:30 p.m. starting on Jan. 27 and concluding on April 20, at St. Pius X Parish, 52553 Fir Rd., in the Parish Life Center, Rm. 105. The cost is \$20 per person for the participant workbook and childcare provided if arranged in advance. Visit www.stpius.net/divorcesupport for more information and to register. Contact Peg Brinig at 574-360-2814 or mbrinig@nd.edu.

'Surviving Divorce' program
SOUTH BEND — Christ the King Parish, 52473 S.R. 933, will offer the "Surviving Divorce" program on Wednesday evenings from 7-9 p.m. starting on Jan. 29 and concluding on April 29. The program will take place in the Father Jones Room in the lower level of the church. The registration fee is \$20, which covers the cost of the participant's workbook. Visit www.christthekingonline.com/surviving-divorce for information

and to register for the program.

Children's carnival planned
FORT WAYNE — A children's carnival will be offered at St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel, 11521 Old Decatur Road S., on Friday, Jan. 31, from 6-8 p.m. There will be various games for the children to play including plinko, cake walk, face painting and more. There will be food to purchase and a raffle table.

Called and Gifted Workshop
SOUTH BEND — Are you a disciple of Jesus? Do you seek to deepen your life as a disciple? A workshop will be offered at St. Therese, Little Flower Parish, 54191 N Ironwood Rd., Friday, Feb. 7, from 7-9 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 8, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will utilize a series of videos, discussions and follow-up with a one-on-one interview. Participants will be given an opportunity to discern a charism more deeply during the weeks of Lent. Lunch will be provided on Saturday. Contact Abby Kyle at 574-272-7070 or abby@littleflowerchurch.org.

St. Joseph County RTL march and rally
SOUTH BEND — St. Joseph County Right to Life will have a march and rally for life on Friday, Jan. 24, at 11:30 a.m. at the hall at 553 E. Washington St., followed by a march to the courthouse. The Knights of Columbus Council No. 553 will host a spaghetti dinner to support these efforts from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Tickets for the dinner can be purchased at prolifemichiana.org/march.

The CrossWord

January 19 and 26, 2020



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Mary Drake, 83,
Immaculate
Conception

Bluffton
Evelyn D. Morrissey,
91, St. Joseph

Churubusco
James Brown, 72,
St. John Bosco

Fort Wayne
Lisa A. Jackson, 65,
Our Lady of Good
Hope

Rosemary Reszel, 87,
St. Vincent de Paul

Huntington
Wanda L. Crago, 87,
SS. Peter and Paul

David J. Reust, 78,
SS. Peter and Paul

Marjorie S. Sweatland,
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Light of Learning recipient honored during pastoral visit

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades made his annual pastoral visit to Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne, Friday, Jan. 10. With a handful of students serving at Mass, the bishop celebrated Mass with Father Jay Horning and Father David Huneck, chaplains at the high school, concelebrating.

During his homily, he told students about how the understanding of God's eternal love is unique to Christianity.

"This is the greatest and most unique truth of our Christian faith: namely that there is one God in three persons, the Trinity. It's the center of our Christian faith and our Christian life." He continued, "So God isn't some distant static being who manufactured the world unrelated to Him."

Later in the Mass, the school choir led students in a sung "Salve Regina." In his August visit to the high school, the bishop had challenged the student body to learn the ancient Catholic prayer in Latin. The students followed through on the challenge that morning.

"In my 36 years as a priest, I have never heard a high school community with the students singing the Salve Regina, so this is great," he said in response.

As Mass ended, Bishop Dwenger principal Jason Schiffli announced the awardee of the school's Light of Learning honor, given annually to an inspiring teacher.

"She is greatly respected; she is a motivational teacher and students describe her as 'inspiring.' This year's awardee epitomizes what I said earlier about value-added education: being a value-added teacher." Schiffli said of Lori Foltz, before bestowing the honor on her as several students stood in applause.

Foltz, the high school's sole French instructor, accepted the honor.

"French is a part of me, and I work hard to make good lessons to teach my students French," she said. "I hope that I've shown them that French is a fun and wonderful skill to use for life, and not just a class at Bishop Dwenger."

When Schiffli returned to the ambo he revealed to Bishop Rhoades that over the course of the previous week the students had been raising money for Catholic Relief Services, an organization the bishop acclaims and supports.

Before the bishop imparted the final blessing, Father Horning enrolled each member of the congregation, as well as the bishop, in the Catholic tradition of selecting a saint to pray for them during the year. Father Horning told the students that rather than them choosing a saint from a basket, however, it is actually the saint who is choosing them. Student volunteers stood holding baskets with the names near the exits after Mass so the saints could choose students to pray for in 2020.

After Mass, Bishop visited business teacher David Moyer's personal finance class. There, he explained to curious students about how he helps the diocese manage its finances.

"About half of our income comes from parishes through the (parish) tax," he explained. "And the other half is made through the Bishop's Appeal —

plus the income we get from our investments."

After he explained that the diocese is very careful in making sure the funds are spent as efficiently as possible, Moyer and his students escorted him to Kathy Klemme's Spanish III class. Klemme's students asked the bishop questions in Spanish, and he answered in Spanish. He carried on a lengthy conversation in Spanish with senior Ethan Kurtzweg, who traveled with him and other pilgrims to World Youth Day in Panama in January 2019.

Bishop Rhoades then visited a freshman Honors English class taught by Lindsay Besessen. Before class, Besessen asked if he would impart his blessing on her unborn child. The bishop obliged, blessing her awaited infant.

During class, Besessen simulated the economic conditions presented in the book "Great Expectations" by engaging students in the card game Beggar-My-Neighbor. The bishop joined the students in the learning activity.

Bishop Rhoades also ate lunch with the school's student council members. After finishing, he visited Marcy Adams' art class. There, students worked on still-life drawings of skulls.

Adams commented that she is confident that the new curriculum her department implemented is proving successful. She also commented that one goal of the new curriculum is to make art more accessible to students with disabilities.

During a discussion later in the day with Bishop Dwenger's pastoral ministry office, Bishop Rhoades suggested that the textbook "Faith, Science and Reason: Theology on the Cutting Edge" be implemented into the school's curriculum. A goal of his proposal, he said, is to engage scientifically inclined students in the reasoning and logic of the faith, explaining Catholic principles in a way they can understand.

Several other teachers shared ideas with the bishop during a later meeting. He also asked for insight on the topic of student mental health, which the teachers regarded as a crucial issue facing high schools in recent years. The topic coincided with discussion on the effect of social media on students' mental health, as well as the repercussions that the current political climate can have on growing students.

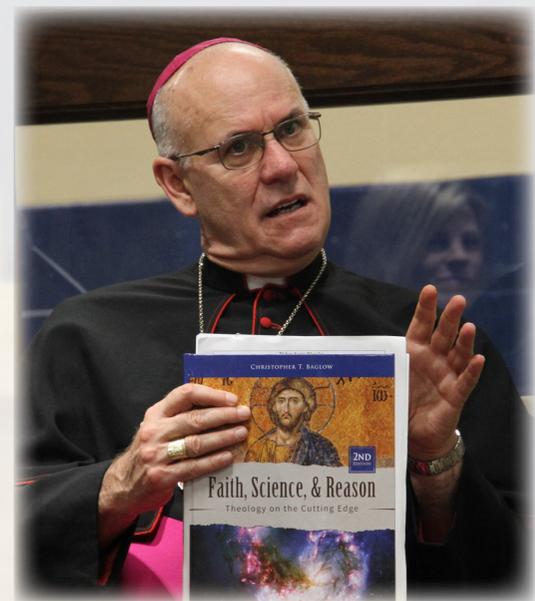


Photos by Joshua Schipper

Bishop Dwenger sophomore Josephine Cavacini listens to Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades talk about the omnibenevolence of God during a pastoral visit to the Fort Wayne high school Jan. 10.



Principal Jason Schiffli announces the name of the school's Light of Learning honoree, French teacher Lori Foltz, at the conclusion of Mass. Chaplain Father David Huneck is at left, and chaplain Father Jay Horning is at right.



The bishop discusses the textbook "Faith, Science and Reason: Theology on the Cutting Edge" with Bishop Dwenger pastoral ministers.



Personal finance teacher David Moyer and his students escort Bishop Rhoades to the Spanish III classroom.