



TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 94 No. 4

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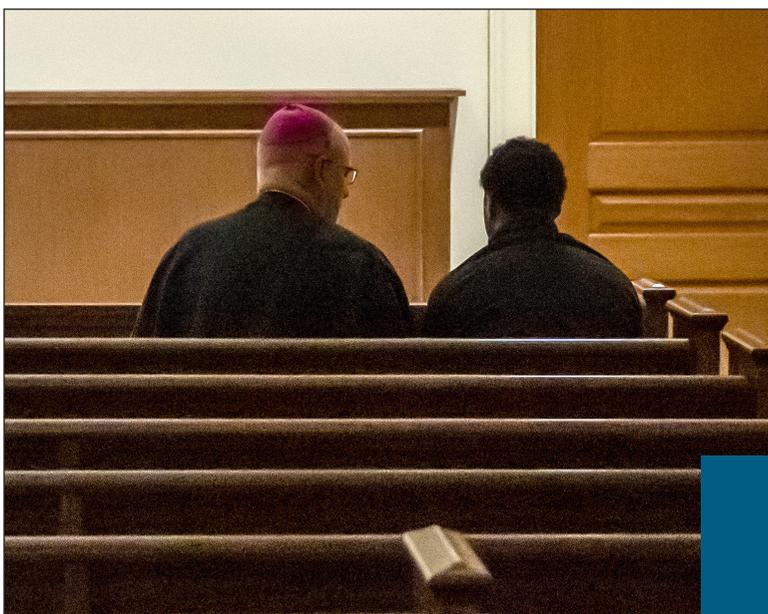
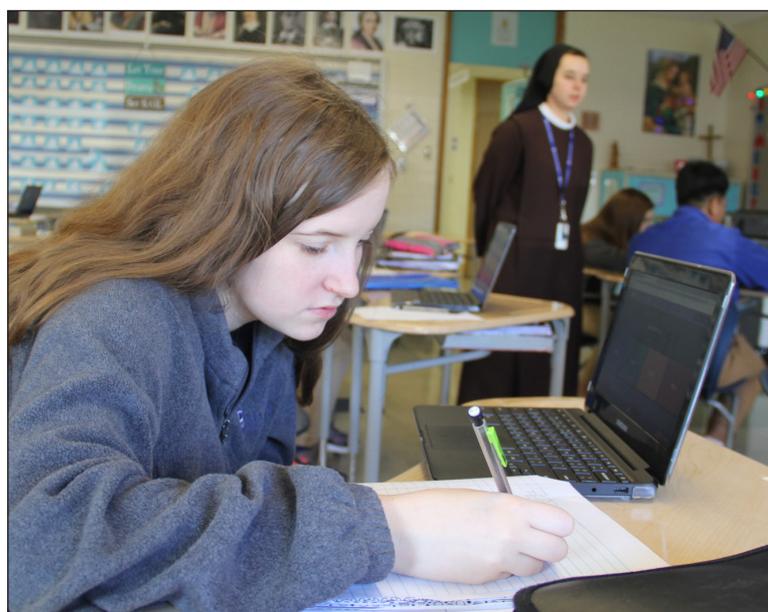
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Catholic Schools Week 2020

Celebrating excellence



I believe ...



Catholic schools across the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will celebrate Catholic Schools Week Jan. 26-Feb. 1 with special events, dress-down and dress-up days, and open houses. Inside this issue of Today's Catholic, read about the vision of the Catholic Schools Office and why Catholic schools are so deeply valued. Photos taken by Jennifer Barton, John Martin and Derby Photography.

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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Right to Life of Northeast Indiana March for Life



Photos by Jennifer Barton

Fourth-degree members of the Knights of Columbus color guard prepare to lead the 2020 Right to Life of Northeast Indiana March for Life on Saturday, Jan. 18. At right, the banner for the newly renamed organization is unfurled for the first time at the downtown Fort Wayne event and carried by organization volunteers. The expansion encompasses the counties of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben and Wells.

A group of young people representing Queen of Angels Church in Fort Wayne marches to "speak for those who can't," as one of them said.



More photos are available at www.todayscatholic.org

Despite the cold, rainy conditions, groups of families with young children joined the march in support of the millions of unborn children who are at risk of abortion each year.



Mom of twins says 'miracle' events led her to reject abortion, choose life

BY DAVE HRBACEK

MENDOTA HEIGHTS, Minn. — Alonna Mertz prayed in front of abortion clinics as a teenager in Michigan, driven by her well-formed, pro-life conviction.

Then, in 2017 as a young adult, she went to such a clinic in Minneapolis for a different and unexpected reason: She was pregnant.

Dating a man whose values

didn't align with hers, she found herself alone and feeling scared about the new life inside her body.

"At that point, there was enough distance between me and God that I wasn't listening to the Holy Spirit," said Mertz, 27. "I was terrified, and I made an appointment for an abortion."

Like so many other women who discover unplanned pregnancies, Mertz struggled with a torrent of tortured emotions

when a home pregnancy test confirmed what she had sensed was true.

"I wept," she said of seeing the positive result. "I felt so sorry for my baby. It (her life) wasn't a white picket fence. It wasn't a mother and father who loved each other. It was broken and it was hard. And, this is what my child was going to meet. And, I just couldn't bear that reality."

She was well aware of the "big disconnect" between what

she had grown up believing and what she now wanted to do. A Catholic, she had served for a year and a half with NET Ministries in West St. Paul, and even had volunteered with a pro-life pregnancy resource center in the Twin Cities after moving to Minnesota from Michigan in 2015. Still, she pressed on and went to the abortion clinic.

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Gratitude abounds —

Bishop Rhoades celebrates Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

BY JENNIFER MILLER

To begin the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades concelebrated and preached a homily during the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom of the Melkite Greek Catholic Usage with Father Khaled Anatolios and the Byzantine Catholic community of the University of Notre Dame Sunday, Jan. 19.

Remembering that Jesus Himself prayed to God the Father, that “they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you,” the Divine Liturgy was one of thanksgiving. Father Anatolios thanked Bishop Rhoades for joining them, calling his presence a “powerful sign reminding us of the unity of the Church, back to the time of the apostles and Christ Himself.”

The Byzantine Catholic Church is in communion with Rome and Pope Francis. All Roman Catholic, or Latin Rite, worshippers may receive holy Communion. The Melkite Greek rite is just one of 23 liturgical rites in the Catholic Church today, 15 of which follow the Byzantine Liturgical Tradition.

Both the Latin and Eastern rites have a unique set of cultural traditions, hierarchy and legal systems, developing from the different countries in which they originated.

For this reason, it is common in many Eastern Rite churches, such as in Middle Eastern countries that speak Arabic or Greek and worship in the Byzantine Divine Liturgy to have parish priests who are married with a family. Melkite Catholic men, married or not, may be ordained to the priesthood, but once ordained, may not marry. Bishops in both rites are unmarried.

Bishop Rhoades preached about living a life of gratitude during the liturgy. Following the Gospel story of Jesus curing the 10 lepers, only one of whom returned to offer thanks, Bishop Rhoades explained: “Gratitude is one of the most important virtues, intimately connected to the virtue of humility and also to holiness. The word, ‘humility’ comes from the Latin word for earth, ‘humus.’ A humble person is grounded in reality. He or she has a true and realistic knowledge of self as a creature, a sinner, dependent on God the Creator and His grace. To be humble is to understand that one is not totally self-sufficient, that one depends on God and on others. A humble person is, therefore, a grateful person ... capable to give thanks.”

Gratitude is really an expression of love, the bishop told the



Jennifer Miller

An icon of Jesus Christ stands in Malloy Chapel, University of Notre Dame, during the Divine Liturgy of the feast of St. John Chrysostom last year.

many families with small children who were present. That’s “so very important, for example in marriage and family life. The more gratitude there is, the more love there is. Pope Francis speaks a lot to families about the importance of saying ‘thank you’ and not being stingy about it.”

After sharing how one can follow the Fourth Commandment, being grateful to parents and spiritual family members who have helped guide them in ways

of faith, Bishop Rhoades concluded with the reminder that “what we are doing now in this chapel is all about gratitude. The word ‘Eucharist,’ from the Greek literally means ‘thanksgiving.’ It’s no coincidence that this is the greatest prayer of thanksgiving we can offer to God. We give thanks for the fruits of Our Lord’s passion and death, and we celebrate with thanksgiving the new life we receive through His Resurrection.”



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, January 26: 9 a.m. — Mass of the Sunday of the Word of God, St. Vincent de Paul Church, Fort Wayne
 Tuesday, January 28: 11:30 a.m. — Fort Wayne You Can Lend a Hand Luncheon, Grand Wayne Convention Center, Fort Wayne
 Tuesday, January 28: 6:30 p.m. — Theology on Tap, Welch’s Ale House, Fort Wayne
 Thursday, January 30: 11:30 a.m. — South Bend/Southwest Michigan You Can Lend a Hand Luncheon, Century Center, South Bend
 Friday, January 31: 8:15 a.m. — Mass and Pastoral Visit, Holy Cross School, South Bend
 Saturday, February 1: 5 p.m. — Mass of the Presentation of the Lord, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne

Anatolios family ‘entirely drawn into’ ministry

For Meredith Anatolios, M.Div., wife of Father Khaled Anatolios, it is a joy and privilege to serve the Byzantine Catholic community alongside her husband. Originally from outside Detroit, Michigan, she clearly remembers the first time she worshipped in the Byzantine Divine Liturgy. “From that very first time, I have been drawn to the sense of the transcendence that I find in the Divine Liturgy. Now, 16 years later, I feel very at home at both (Catholic and Byzantine) liturgies.”

The autumn after Father Anatolios’ ordination in 2015, the family moved to Indiana from a large Melkite cathedral. In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, the Anatolioses have supported one another in their service and ministry to the flourishing Byzantine Catholic community.

Father Anatolios is most grateful for his wife’s strength and support. Meredith focuses on a lot of the administrative, behind-the-scenes work, like the email list and sending reminders. She also sets up the chapel and prepares for a social hour that takes place after the liturgy.

“Perhaps the most unusual thing I do is bake the bread we use for our Eucharist,” Meredith explained. “Unlike the Roman rite, many Eastern Rite churches use a leavened bread for Eucharist. ... Because our community is so small, one batch of bread lasts us a lot longer, so I bake some every other month or so. I feel the magnitude of that work — to be baking the bread that will become the Body of Christ for our community. Over time, I have learned that I need to carve out dedicated time to do it, so that I can be wholly attentive to that work alone for a while. I like to pray for the various members of our

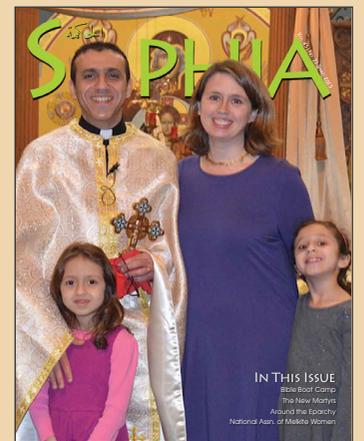


Image provided

community while I do it.”

With obvious respect for her husband’s calling, Meredith shared, “I see the other big part of my role as just to support Father Khaled in whatever way necessary. I think it is the role of every married person to support his or her spouse in their vocation — it just so happens that my husband’s vocation is to be a priest.

“I have experienced profound moments of deep love for him while watching him celebrate the Divine Liturgy. There is a great blessing in watching your husband live out his vocation and know that others are being drawn closer to God through his work. My part of that is often very mundane: taking more responsibility for our children or work around the house so he can write a homily or visit a sick community member. Other times it is tending to his vestments or making sure we have the right color altar cloths. But we also spend a lot of time talking about our community and how we can meet their needs. Our married life, well, really, our family life, is entirely drawn into this ministry.”

— Jennifer Miller

TWINS, from page 2

Finding the atmosphere there “sterile and cold,” she got as far as the ultrasound room, where she would find out how far along she was in her pregnancy.

Though she knew abortion was wrong, she was consumed by one thought concerning the alternative of carrying her baby to term: “I can’t do this.”

Only a technical glitch that she cannot explain and a baby’s cry at that clinic kept her from getting an abortion. She left the clinic that day without carrying through with her plan, and instead gave birth to fraternal twin girls, Eve and Lilly, Feb. 2, 2018, by cesarean section.

Today, she can’t imagine life without them, she told *The Catholic Spirit*, the newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

It is a struggle, she admits, but there is joy every day, plus help from what she calls a “village” of friends and family members. They include a Catholic family in Mendota Heights with whom she now lives.

Mertz, who belongs to St. Bernard in St. Paul, recently recalled her journey from being abortion-minded to being child-focused.

When Mertz found out she was pregnant in June 2017, she told no one at first, not even her boyfriend. She went to the clinic alone for the procedure.

While sitting in the waiting room, she heard a baby’s cry — a noise that changed everything.

“It was just a split second, but it was such a distinct cry, from the back (of the clinic),” she said. “I looked and I could see other women had heard it, too,



Alonna Mertz plays with her twin daughters, Lilly and Eve, at the home of Joan and Robley Evans in Mendota Heights, Minn., Jan. 3. A year ago the family took in Mertz and the twins, who will turn 2 Feb. 2. Mertz became pregnant unexpectedly in 2017 and was considering abortion. She went as far as going to an abortion clinic, but what she describes as a “miracle” took place the day she went. She changed her mind and instead sought help at a pro-life center in Woodbury, Minn., where she had once volunteered.

CNS photo/Dave Hrbacek, *The Catholic Spirit*

because everyone else looked to the back room.”

The infant’s wail triggered a thought in her mind: “This is a baby, Alonna,” she said. “You know this is a baby.”

Eventually, she was called in for an ultrasound to confirm the pregnancy and determine how far along she was. But, the technician could find nothing — no

image, no heartbeat. Mertz was instructed to schedule an appointment to try the test again.

No way, Mertz decided. After a reaction of “just relief,” she went to the parking lot, cried for 20 minutes and looked up a pro-life center where she had volunteered — Woodbury Options for Women Pregnancy Resource Center.

She went there a week later

and got an ultrasound during the first visit. This time, there was “an immediate heartbeat, just so loud,” Mertz said. Believing there was “no biological reason” for this heartbeat to be absent from the ultrasound at the abortion clinic just one week earlier, she sensed divine intervention.

“It was a miracle,” she said. “These little girls were wanted and willed and protected, even from me. So, I knew this was special.”

She was yet to learn how special this pregnancy was. At that first appointment in Woodbury, she thought she was having just one baby. But, she was sent to another clinic for a follow-up exam because of abdominal

pain. There she was told she was having twins.

It was time to start telling people and seeking help, including a friend she had met a few years earlier, Theresa Evans.

Eventually, Mertz did tell her boyfriend, and they came back together for a year after the girls were born.

But it didn’t work out, and she turned to Evans and her family for help. Theresa’s parents, Robley and Joan Evans of St. Joseph in West St. Paul, quickly and eagerly offered to let her stay in their Mendota Heights home.

She has her own apartment in the basement, and an informal lease agreement that is up for renewal every six months. So far, the arrangement has worked well for both sides, partly due to the pro-life convictions of the Evans family.

“We have a sign in our yard that says, ‘Choose life,’” said Joan, 60. “You can consider yourself pro-life, but when something like this happens, it challenges you.”

With all of their six children grown and most of them out of the house, Joan and Robley had room for a tenant. Theresa also lives there, and she likes being close to Mertz and her daughters. Eve is her goddaughter.

Meanwhile, Mertz, who is studying to become an MRI technician, is sharing her story publicly, including how she strayed from her Catholic faith, became pregnant and abortion-minded, and eventually returned to the Church.

She hopes she will have the chance to encounter a woman in an unplanned pregnancy. She wants to say to her what she now knows after bringing twin girls into the world and raising them over the past two years: “You are not alone, and you can do this.”

Dave Hrbacek is a photographer/reporter at The Catholic Spirit, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

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Bills offer protections for pregnant women in the workplace

As a leading pro-life voice in the Catholic Church calls on 2020 to be a “Year of Service for Pregnant Women,” the Indiana Catholic Conference is closely monitoring legislation that would promote safer working environments for employees who are expecting a child.

Companion bills introduced in the Indiana House and Senate this month would prohibit an employer with 15 or more employees from discriminating against a pregnant worker. House Bill 1294 and Senate Bill 342 also would require employers to provide “reasonable accommodations” for their pregnant employees per a doctor’s recommendation — from offering them extra breaks in their workday to being exempt from heavy lifting.

“Passage of this legislation would allow women to be employed without the stress and fear of working in situations that could lead to miscarriage,” said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. “Additionally, minor modifications and freedom from discrimination could also prevent a pregnant woman from seeking an abortion because she fears losing her job.”

The timing of the proposed legislation coincides with a challenge recently issued by Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities. He called upon all U.S. bishops to join in a nationwide effort titled “Walking with Moms in Need: A Year of Service” beginning in March — the 25th anniversary of St. John Paul II’s groundbreaking encyclical “*Evangelium Vitae*,” or “The Gospel of Life.” The encyclical is arguably the best-known and most-quoted affirmation of the Catholic Church’s moral teaching on the sanctity of life.

“The 25th anniversary year of “*Evangelium Vitae*” gives us a wonderful opportunity to assess, expand and communicate resources to pregnant moms and families in need,” Naumann said.

Espada expressed hope that this will be the year for Indiana to join more than half the country in guaranteeing pregnant women reasonable adjustments in the workplace. Other provisions in the House and Senate bills include modified work schedules, temporary transfers to

less strenuous or hazardous environments, and access to appropriate seating.

“These bills would promote healthy and sustained pregnancies as well as be a way to answer Archbishop Naumann’s call and provide service to pregnant women,” Espada said.

Currently, 27 states have similar laws in place to protect pregnant employees. This includes all of Indiana’s neighboring states, with Kentucky passing reasonable accommodation legislation just last year.

“We can do better in Indiana as a pro-life state,” said Sen. Mike Bohacek, R-Michiana Shores, one of the co-authors of Senate Bill 342. “This bill is pro-life, and it’s also proportional. We want to be pro-business,

but we also want to protect working moms and their unborn children, and (with this bill) it’s fairly easy to do.”

Bohacek, a Catholic and a businessman himself, said he wants those in the business community to see that they can fulfill their obligations to their customers while ensuring the safety of pregnant employees and their unborn children.

“This bill gets it done,” said Bohacek, a member of Notre Dame Parish in Michigan City in the Gary diocese.

Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb referenced both the House and Senate bills in his Jan. 14 State of the State speech, adding that their passage would “help more moms and their babies get off to a healthier start.”

Holcomb has made decreasing Indiana’s high infant mortality rate a cornerstone of his agenda, challenging the state to become the best in the Midwest by 2024. While progress has been made in recent years, Indiana currently ranks seventh in the United States for infant mortality and third in the country for maternal mortality, according to Erin Macey, senior policy analyst for the Indiana Institute for Working Families. She emphasized that a leading cause of infant mortality is premature birth, which can be the result of unsafe working conditions.

“There is a relationship between preterm birth and physically demanding work — things that involve prolonged stand-



SEN. MIKE BOHACEK

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE



BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

ing and lifting, for instance, and mandatory overtime,” said Macey, who frequently testifies before legislative committees about issues affecting Hoosier families.

While attempts to pass similar laws fell short in past legislative sessions, Macey said she is encouraged by what she believes is a broad base of support.

“There is a strong coalition around this issue, with everyone from business groups to the March of Dimes wanting to make sure we have safeguards and modifications in place for pregnant women so they don’t deliver early or lose their pregnancies,” she said. “I definitely see momentum for these bills.”

The Senate bill will move first, with a hearing scheduled for Jan. 27 in the Senate Committee on Family and Children’s Services.

“We will be working really hard to ensure that Indiana soon becomes the 28th state to have a law like this in place,” Macey said.

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.

“We can do better in Indiana as a pro-life state.”

SEN. MIKE BOHACEK



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CANDLEMAS

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will celebrate the Mass for the **Feast of the Presentation of the Lord** Saturday, Feb. 1 5 PM Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Judge blocks Trump's order on state refugee settlement

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A federal judge in Maryland issued a preliminary injunction Jan. 15 blocking the Trump administration from enforcing an executive order that would allow state and local government officials to reject resettling refugees in their jurisdictions. The judge ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, three faith-based resettlement agencies — HIAS, a Jewish organization; Church World Service; and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service — who said their work would be directly impacted and harmed by the order. In his 31-page decision, U.S. District Judge Peter Messitte said the executive order could be seen as unlawful because it grants states and localities veto power that “flies in the face of clear congressional intent.” The judge also called for refugee resettlement to “go forward as it developed for the almost 40 years” prior to President Donald Trump’s executive order, announced last September. Ashley Feasley, director of policy for Migration and Refugee Services of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, echoed this sentiment, telling Catholic News Service that “refugee resettlement will continue as it has before” based on available resources and family connections. But she also acknowledged that the refugee resettlement process has taken a hit. “Everything is in flux,” she said just after the injunction was issued, and she pointed out it would likely be appealed by the Trump administration.

Pope appoints first woman to Vatican foreign ministry post

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis named Francesca Di Giovanni, a longtime Vatican official, as an undersecretary in the Vatican’s foreign ministry office, making her the first woman to hold a managerial position at the Vatican Secretariat of State. The Vatican announced Jan. 15 that within the Vatican Secretariat of State’s Section for Relations with States, Di Giovanni will head the multilateral sector, which deals with intergovernmental organizations and multilateral treaties. With the new appointment, the Vatican foreign ministry, led by Archbishop Paul J. Gallagher, will have two undersecretaries. Di Giovanni will serve as undersecretary alongside Msgr. Miroslaw Wachowski, who will continue to work in the area of bilateral diplomacy. In an interview with Vatican News published shortly after the announcement, Di Giovanni said that there had been a need for an undersecretary for the multilateral sector, but “I sincerely never would have thought the Holy Father would have entrusted this role to me.

Official logo for Sunday of the Word of God unveiled



CNS logo/courtesy Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization

The official logo for the Sunday of the Word of God was unveiled at the Vatican Jan. 17. It depicts “The Road to Emmaus” and is based on an icon written by the late Benedictine Sister Marie-Paul Farran. The logo shows the resurrected Christ holding in his left hand a scroll, which is “the sacred Scripture that found its fulfillment in his person,” Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, said. The newly established day is being celebrated Jan. 26.

It is a new role and I will try to do my best to live up to the Holy Father’s trust, but I hope not to do it alone,” she said. “I would like to count on the harmony that has characterized our working group so far.”

USCCB president urges nation to overcome racism that still clouds hearts

WASHINGTON (CNS) — While the United States has “come a long way” in addressing racism and injustice, much more remains to be accomplished to achieve the dream of “the beloved community” envisioned by the late Rev.

Martin Luther King Jr., the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said. Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles urged the country to overcome still-entrenched racist beliefs and discriminatory practices in a statement released in Washington to mark the annual holiday honoring the civil rights leader, which this year fell on Jan. 20. “We have come a long way in our country, but we have not come nearly far enough,” Archbishop Gomez said in the statement issued Jan. 16 by the USCCB. “Too many hearts and minds are clouded by racist presumptions of privilege and too many injustices in our society are still rooted in racism and discrimination.” The archbishop lamented that “too many” young African American men are killed

across the nation or are “spending their best years behind bars.”

Pope speaks to U.S. bishops about pro-life issues, transgender ideology

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Protecting human life is the “preeminent” social and political issue, Pope Francis said, and he asked the head of the U.S. bishops’ Committee for Pro-Life Activities to convey his support to the pro-life community. Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the bishops’ committee, told Catholic News Service Jan. 16 that the

pope agreed with the U.S. bishops “identifying the protection of the unborn as a preeminent priority. His response to that was, ‘Of course, it is. It’s the most fundamental right,’” Archbishop Naumann recalled the pope saying. “He said, ‘This is not first a religious issue; it’s a human rights issue,’ which is so true.” Archbishop Naumann was one of 15 bishops from Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska making their “ad limina” visits to the Vatican in mid-January to report on the status of their dioceses. He and other bishops spoke to Catholic News Service Jan. 16 after meeting with the pope for more than two hours. Archbishop Naumann said he told the pope that since the Roe v. Wade court decision legalized abortion, an estimated 61 million abortions have taken place in the United States.

President Trump issues new guidance on prayer in public schools

WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Donald Trump announced his administration’s new guidance on prayer in public schools during a Jan. 16 event in the Oval Office on National Religious Freedom Day. Primarily, it will require states to report cases where public school students have been denied their right to pray. Ahead of the event, material about it was provided to reporters in a background briefing the morning of Jan. 16. In a separate proposed rule, the administration aims to protect the rights of religious student groups at public universities, giving them equal treatment with secular student groups. For schools to receive federal funding, they will need to certify once a year with state education departments that they do not have policies in place that would prevent students from constitutionally protected prayer, a senior administration official said. State departments of education also would have to report to the U.S. Department of Education each year with a list of local school boards that failed to make the required certification as well as complaints made to that department about a local school board or school that has been accused of denying students or teachers their right to engage in constitutionally protected prayer.

Theology on Tap South Bend winter series

MISHAWAKA — Young adults in their 20s and 30s, single or married, in the South Bend area are welcome to come and enjoy a Catholic speaker series and share in food, fellowship and faith.

Sponsored by the office of Young Adult and Campus Ministry of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, the theme for the winter Theology on Tap series is "Reclaiming Goodness, Truth and Beauty." The meeting dates and specific topics will be: Jan. 28, "Reclaiming Gender," with Dr. John Rice; Feb. 4, "Reclaiming Science," with Chris Baglow, Ph.D.; Feb. 11, "Reclaiming Culture," with Father Paulinus Odozor, CSSp; Feb. 18, "Reclaiming Art," with Stephen Barany, M.Div.; and Feb. 25, a Mardi Gras: Mass and party at St. Joseph Church, South Bend.

All speakers will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 553 E. Washington St., South Bend. For more information visit <http://www.diocesefsb.org/tot>.

Classes springing at Forever Learning

SOUTH BEND — Adult learners are getting ready to return to Forever Learning Institute for another 10-week semester of life-long learning.

A not-for-profit school attracting volunteer instructors from a variety of backgrounds, the breadth and depth of course offerings is what brings over 1,000 students to FLI each semester. And at \$45 a course, Forever Learning remains accessible to seniors on any budget. Class topics include health and fitness, creative arts, music, dance, history and political science, religion, languages, literature, leisure activities, business and computer technology.

Students may view the 100-plus course offerings online at www.foreverlearninginstitute.org or stop by Forever Learning at 54191 Ironwood Rd., South Bend, to pick up a course guide. Guides are also made available through St. Joseph County public libraries.

Classes take place at locations throughout Michiana. Forever Learning's main campus and office are in St. Therese, Little Flower Parish Center. Classes also are taught at the Jewish Federation of St. Joseph County, Southfield Village, and new this semester, Howard Park.

The 10-week spring semester will begin March 2. Onsite registration for all classes will be available Feb. 18, 19 and 20 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Students also may register for classes by mail, using the registration form online or in the course guide.

The mission of Forever Learning Institute Inc., is to improve the quality and dignity of senior adult life through continuing intellectual challenge, spiritual reflection and social interac-

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Northeast Indiana parishes march for life



Jerry Kessens

Immaculate Conception Parish in Kendallville is represented during the Right to Life of Northeast Indiana March for Life Saturday, Jan. 18, in downtown Fort Wayne.

tion. Classes are available to all seniors 50 years of age and older regardless of race, color, religion or ethnic origin.

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

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd course

ST. MEINRAD — Training in the Montessori-based method of Catholic formation for young children will be offered by St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Meinrad, Indiana.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Level I training includes three sessions. The first session will be held June 10-14 on the St. Meinrad campus. The deadline for registration is March 1.

The training is designed to create and facilitate a sacred, hands-on space for children called an atrium, where children and their catechists can hear, ponder and celebrate the essential mysteries of the Catholic faith as revealed in Scripture and the liturgy.

This course will enrich the participant through fostering a catechist's spirituality, grounded in theological and pedagogical

formation, along with a study of Maria Montessori's vision of the human person.

In addition to providing the theory and praxis of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, the course will prepare participants to develop and facilitate an atrium for 3- to 6-year-old children. After completing the course in January 2021, the participant will be certified as a Level I Catechist by the National Association of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

The second and third training sessions will be held July 16-19 and Jan. 7-10, 2021. For more information and to register, visit www.saintmeinrad.edu/continuing-formation/catechesis-of-the-good-shepherd/.

The program is offered by the school's Continuing Formation Program. For more details, contact Morgan Simon at msimon@saintmeinrad.edu or 812-357-6341.

Medical mission taking volunteers

FORT WAYNE — Divine Healer Medical Mission is in need of medical volunteers for its next trip to Nigeria in April. Divine Healer is located in Fort Wayne and was

started by Sister M. Austin Terese Esotu of the Daughters of Mary, Mother of Mercy, who felt God was calling her to serve the poor and needy throughout the world. Sister Austin, a nurse practitioner, is a native of Nigeria.

Divine Healer's purpose is to share God's love, compassion and healing power by improving health care for the poor and establishing food pantries for the hungry. The next mission trip takes place April 14-24 to a rural area in Nigeria. The group is in need of doctors, nurses and medical personnel who are willing to serve the poor.

Anyone interested in learning more about past medical missions or how to join the April trip can visit www.divinehealer.org, email divinehealermed@gmail.com or call Nancy at 260-402-4263. Donations are gratefully accepted at Divine Healer Medical Mission, P.O. Box 10021, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46850 and on the website.

St. Joseph, Elkhart county right to life organizations merge

SOUTH BEND — St. Joseph County Right to Life announced the week of Jan. 13 a merger with Elkhart County Right to Life. The merger was effective Jan. 1. The combined organization will conduct business as Right to Life Michiana.

St. Joseph County Right to Life was founded in 1972. For 45 years, SJCTRL has been taking a fervent stand for the respect and protection of all innocent human life from fertilization to natural death. The foresight and resolve of the founding members continued to strengthen, making the organization a powerful force for life in north-central Indiana.

Elkhart County Right to Life began in 1973 and has grown in many ways. The organization has led the call for respect for life through monthly and annual life chains, an annual rally and prayer walk, a presence at the Elkhart County 4-H Fair, pastors' luncheons and a fall reception.

Right to Life Michiana will continue with the mission of protecting human life from fertilization to natural death through education, prayer, advocacy, and outreach until practices like abortion, assisted suicide and euthanasia are unthinkable.

Right to Life Michiana Executive Director Jackie Appleman said, "Our organizations have joined forces to provide a comprehensive network of integrated programs that will educate, advocate and reach out to our St. Joseph and Elkhart county communities. Doubling

down on our efforts, we are closely monitoring upcoming threats and executing a fierce strategic plan to protect innocent human life at all ends of the spectrum. All the while, we continue to bring about a cultural change, impacting hearts and minds to live out pro-life convictions alongside us. Together, we are Right to Life Michiana."

Right to Life of Northeast Indiana unveiled as new regional affiliate

FORT WAYNE — At the 46th annual march for life in Fort Wayne Jan. 18, Allen County Right to Life announced a shift to become Right to Life of Northeast Indiana. The expansion includes seven counties: Adams, Allen, DeKalb, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben and Wells.

The change comes after recognizing that Allen County Right to Life could better serve the area by partnering with already-strong pro-life communities in surrounding counties. Many of the residents in those counties participate in Allen County pro-life events such as the March for Life, which happens each year.

"We have met with many passionate pro-life groups and individuals throughout Northeast Indiana that are working hard to promote a culture that respects life in their communities," Abigail Lorenzen, operations and media director for Right to Life of Northeast Indiana, said in a statement. "Our shift to regional affiliate reflects a partnership between these seven counties to move forward together to educate, advocate, encourage and defend all human life. Our area already has strong pro-life values. As a region, we are stronger together."

The Jan. 18 march included a video that unveiled the expansion and explained how pro-life advocates in Northeast Indiana can translate their values into loving action. Right to Life of Northeast Indiana welcomes anyone who would like to partner in advocating for innocent human life, from conception to natural death.

RLNI will support the Northeast Indiana region through the programming and initiatives it has in place today. A few examples of these include: church or school pro-life presentations, special events, movie screenings, candidate surveys and responses, bus trips to the National March for Life, the Life Defenders pro-life apologetics training and workshops, and an annual legislative forum.

Schools, churches or other local organizations that would like to partner with Right to Life of Northeast Indiana can contact Lorenzen at abigail@ichooselife.org to learn how. To view the expansion video visit www.ichooselife.org/now.

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Rekindle the Fire — enlightening for father and sons



Provided by Brian Carmody

Brian Carmody speaks to the transformation in himself and his family that has come about due to the experience of attending Rekindle the Fire men's conferences.

BY WILLIAM SCHMITT

MORE INFO

The event location rotates every year between Fort Wayne and South Bend. Jesse Romero will join Father Mike Schmitz and Eternal Word Television Network's Marcus Grodi as this year's Rekindle the Fire speakers.

To register, visit rekindlethefire.net.

The upcoming "Rekindle the Fire" men's conference, a strong and growing tradition in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, invites the Holy Spirit to bring the blessings best suited to each of the more than 1,200 men expected to attend Feb. 22 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum.

One example of the graces for male spirituality that are received at the conference is the inter-generational bonding experienced by Brian Carmody and his family. Carmody, his wife Nicole and their three sons are members of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Fort Wayne. He shared his story about gifts that have already overflowed to Sam, 19; Luke, 16; and Jacob, 15.

How did Rekindle the Fire become a 'family affair' for you and your sons?

I never went just by myself. I started taking my oldest son, Sam, who's now 19, when he was about 15. He liked it. I had been involved in Christ Renews His Parish, and I liked that environment where everyone is open and honest and you're

there to just be guys, just who you are. Sam had gone to a Life Teen retreat, and he and I had talked for a half-hour after that retreat. I wanted him to have the same kind of experience with an older group.

(In 2016), I was planning to go with my brother and a co-worker. By design, we each invited our sons, so it was a peer group for them. It was just what I thought it would be. The boys were all-in. Sam and I still talk sometimes about that first one and about one of the speakers, Jesse Romero, who urged men to be like sheepdogs, looking out for people.

So attending with your oldest son became an annual practice?

We went to both Fort Wayne and South Bend. Last year, along with Sam, I took my other two sons when they were 15 and 14. And again my brother went with his son. I expected a little pushback about spending the whole day and traveling to South Bend. But they really enjoyed it; they said, "This was really good, Dad."

They had met one of the priests they know. It was

neat to see all the priests there. The confessions are awesome — something I always look forward to doing. But the conference format lets you do what you want. I was amazed by the sheer number of people there — the growing number.

How did it affect everybody?

One of the takeaways is being in a good environment where you have that full day, you're pretty much immersed. You soak up more. You break up into groups and have great conversations. It's just great to see all these guys sharing a vision of how we should live our lives, with the help of great speakers and the guys who help put the event on.

What the boys hadn't gotten before was some of the stories. They were really neat — especially the Father Don Calloway, the surfer priest. You get so many different perspectives. It makes you realize, "I'm on a different journey." But it's not bad. It's just you.

How have the conferences affected you personally?

Early on, I was invited to be in one of the ongoing local Rekindle the Fire groups. Our group is named the sheepdogs, after Jesse's talk. It was five or six people to start with: Now it's up to about 15. We meet every three or four weeks. It's that extra boost you need for getting engaged and to get that male camaraderie — in an environment where you can say whatever. Usually nothing earth-shattering, but it's a laid-back two hours. It's good for the soul, that's for sure.

The kids aren't ready for that yet, but I think when the time is right they'll feel comfortable. We're reading "Be a Man," by Father Larry Richards.

The five essential marks of a Catholic school

BY DR. JOSEPH BRETTNACHER

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend celebrates the 46th annual Catholic Schools Week this year from Sunday, Jan. 26, through Saturday, Feb. 1. The theme for Catholic Schools Week is Learn, Serve, Lead, and Succeed, as represented by the logo. The logo has an open book made up of multicolored pages that represent how all areas of our school must blend in faith as represented by the cross.

To blend is to mix two substances, so they combine and become one. Nowhere is this more important than the blending of roles that parents and teachers must do to ensure our schools are places of faith.

Archbishop J. Michael Miller, in his 2006 book "The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools," talks about the roles of parents and teachers in our schools, along with five essential marks that must be in place before a school is truly Catholic in the eyes of the Church. The five marks of an authentically Catholic school are being inspired by a supernatural vision, founded on Christian anthropology, animated by communion and community, imbedded with a Catholic worldview and sustained by Gospel witness.

The Church is clear about parents being the primary educators of their children. The code of canon law, canon 793, indicates that parents have the obligation and moral responsibility to educate their children, and that Catholic parents have the duty, based on local circumstances, to provide a Catholic education for their children. Also, the Church has the "divine mission" to help all achieve the fullness of Christian life.

Parents are their children's first educators. As their children grow, most parents share the responsibility to educate their

sons and daughters with teachers and schools.

When parents choose a Catholic education for their children for all the right reasons, they want authentically Catholic schools that are places of faith, knowledge and service. For a school to become authentically Catholic, those five essential marks I mentioned must be present, which leads us to the first essential mark.

Inspired by a supernatural vision

The Church believes that Catholic education, when inspired by a supernatural vision, develops the whole student helping him or her to fulfill their destiny to become saints. This is stated in canon 795. To achieve this, our Catholic schools must integrate Catholic values and morals into the curriculum to develop the whole person to excel spiritually, intellectually, academically, physically and socially. If done properly, our children will become good citizens of the world by loving God and neighbor and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ during his or her journey toward sainthood. Catholic schools inspired by a supernatural vision are places of faith.

Founded on Christian anthropology

Being founded on Christian anthropology means there must be an emphasis on the supernatural destiny of students to perfect, in them, all images of God to prepare them to enter heaven. Christian anthropology, in the eyes of the Catholic Church, refers to the study of the human person as it relates to God. It has to do with enter-



ing the kingdom of God. So, Catholic educators must have a sound understanding of the human person and correct doctrine. Catholic educators must be good examples in their Christian life. To ensure this, as stated in canon 805, the bishop of each diocese has the right to appoint or approve teachers of religion, and for reasons of faith or morals to remove him or her.

As Archbishop Miller said, our schools must be founded on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, to be considered genuinely Catholic. It shows that we believe that Jesus Christ is the primary teacher in our schools and that He inspires every dimension. When we base the foundation of our schools on Christian anthropology, they are places of faith.

Animated by communion and community

The third essential mark of an authentically Catholic school is to be animated by communion and community. Here we need to understand the difference between communion and community. According to Archbishop Miller, the communal dimension has to do with the Church at the center of our faith. What this means is that through the Church, we are unified in our beliefs and actions when it comes to our faith

— living out the Gospel message, taking time for worship, certainty in transubstantiation, having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, believing in the communion of saints and more.

The Catholic school, which includes all of our parish schools, as a community of faith, is involved with the social nature of the human person. Because we are social beings, a community of faith in a Catholic school requires interaction, teamwork, and cooperation among all members with students and the school's physical environment, Archbishop Miller said. While interaction, teamwork and cooperation among individuals are easy to understand, what requires clarification is what is meant by the school's physical environment. The context of the physical environment as part of our Catholic faith has to do with a school's Catholic identity. When one enters our schools, they should see visible signs, such as images, symbols, icons and other objects of worship that convey this is an authentically Catholic school. When Catholic schools are animated by communion and community, they are places of faith.

Curriculum imbued with a Catholic worldview

The fourth essential mark of a Catholic school is to instill a Catholic worldview throughout its curriculum. Archbishop Miller's brief explanation of this is that Catholic schooling must be inspired and guided by the Gospel. To provide students with an integral education two principles must be followed. The first is to foster in our students a love for wisdom and truth. The second has to do with ensuring that our students understand that faith,

culture and life are harmonious. To foster love for wisdom and truth, authentically Catholic schools must restore the belief that human beings can grasp the truth and know their duties to God and neighbor by casting aside cultural relativism (nothing absolute). The second principle is that students should learn to transform culture through the Gospel. Schools must seek the integration of culture with faith and faith in living. A primary way to do this is through religious education with the realization that it is the responsibility of everyone. When we imbue Catholic education with a Catholic worldview throughout the curriculum, schools are places of faith.

Sustained by Gospel witness

The final indicator that a school is authentically Catholic is the witness of its teachers and administrators. While this is the most natural essential mark to understand, it is the hardest to fulfill. Teachers and administrators must see their jobs as a vocation from God that requires them to participate in the evangelization of the Church. We can accomplish this by living up to the example set by Jesus Christ as a teacher and servant. The hard part comes from revealing the Gospel by actions and not just words. Catholic educators, Archbishop Miller said, must be committed to the teachings of the Church and living a sacramental life whether or not they are Catholics. Catholic schools with educators sustained by Gospel witness are places of faith.

Please join me in prayers of gratitude for our bishop, pastors, parents, administrators, teachers and staff, who ensure that these five marks are brought to life in our Catholic schools by their daily witness.



File photo

The five marks of an authentically Catholic school are: being inspired by a supernatural vision, founded on Christian anthropology, imbued with a Catholic worldview, sustained by Gospel witness and animated by communion and community. One component of communion and community is the school's physical environment, which should display images, symbols, icons and other objects of worship that convey its Catholic identity. This art is installed in the Chapel of St. Francis of Assisi at Bishop Luers High School, Fort Wayne.

I BELIEVE: THE VALUE OF CATHOLIC

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Many choices for primary and secondary education exist in modern society. Advocates for Catholic schools — parents, teachers, administrators and the students themselves — often sacrifice much for the opportunity to achieve an academic foundation that's not only challenging but faith-based, from grade school through high school. In this issue of Today's Catholic, they share why they value Catholic education.

Christian Lozada



8th grade; Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne

"In our Catholic education, the religion teacher, Mrs. Meyer, is very helpful; she gives us a lot of information about our religion, even to the ones who aren't Catholic. I also like that the teachers, like Mrs. Frey, help out kids in need, that don't understand the lesson we're on. I like practicing our faith every day."

Owen Hilger



9th grade; Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne

"I like having crosses and things around the school, it keeps me in the mindset of prayer all the time. I go to the Decade Club before lunch. All the teachers are all in the same boat, so you can communicate with them very easily and ask them questions about what Catholics believe about something, like evolution in biology."

Brian Baker



Principal; St. Joseph, Decatur

"Catholic education is the lifeline of the parish. The parish supports the school, but the school supports the parish because these are their future parishioners. What sets Catholic education apart is the children's ability to pray for each other, receive their sacraments and learn the teachings of the Catholic faith. It's ingrained in daily education; it makes a difference."

Alexis Converset



4th grade; St. Joseph, Decatur

"I like that you learn religion and memorize the 10 Commandments in fourth grade."

Liam Post



5th grade; St. John the Evangelist, Goshen

"I like that we do this thing called 'Reading Counts.' It gives me something to really work towards and has helped my grades. I also like the teachers. Since most of them are Catholic, we can really talk about our faith with them. And our friends; we can talk about our faith with them freely. And there's not a ton of Catholic schools all over the world. We're very lucky to have one in Goshen."

Carol Draeger Thomas



Principal; Our Lady of Hungary, South Bend

"What the beauty of Catholic education is, it's basically a marriage between faith and academics. They both go hand in hand and both enrich each other in a philosophical but deeper manner. What I love about being here is I can wear my Catholicism on my sleeve, so it permeates everything I do. So you're helping students grow in their faith, but in their academics as well."

"We teach them to always go to God. Go to God for your strength, for your gratitude, and if you go there, He will listen. We're so lucky because in the Catholic schools, we teach them the faith life and the value of our Gospels. That's what's going to carry them over in their entire life."

Paul Morgan



6th grade; St. Joseph, Decatur

"The most important thing about Catholic school is that we get to go to church every Tuesday and Friday."

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Brigid Frey



Language arts teacher; Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne

"I appreciate the small, family atmosphere. Whether it's the students or parents or the awesome staff you get to work with, everyone is close-knit. Queen of Angels has been my second family now for 23 years. Working here has really helped a lot because I've been through so much. It was a godsend; working around faith-filled people and family; people that are willing to go above, even the students."

Dezmond Armenakis



7th grade; Our Lady of Hungary, South Bend

"I like that the teachers make me feel comfortable. They work one-on-one with you, they help you. Here the teachers show that they care. They have a good vibe. I have a lot of friends and two cousins here. Everybody's family here."

Elias Hilger



11th grade; Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne

"I appreciate the ability to pray, obviously, and also to develop relationships with my teachers. I know I can rely on them, go to them with my questions and they're a good example. They teach more than just the subjects that they're in. I feel like Dwenger provides a lot of opportunities, like the chapel. Every time before lunch there's Decade Club, and I like to go to that and pray before we eat."

Jimena Guerro



5th grade; St. John the Evangelist, Goshen

"I like all of our teachers. And I read all the books here. I like the church, and instead of just going to Sunday Mass, I go to Wednesday and Friday Mass at school."

Nelda Vega

Mother of three at Our Lady of Hungary, South Bend

"Catholic education is very important to me. I just love the faith and the Catholic community and how strong our faith is in the Catholic religion. I have three kids; it's pretty much my whole family there, all my little cousins. I had my kids at Our Lady of Hungary and told all my cousins about it and they took their kids out of public schools and put them there. I love how they work with students one-on-one; they have more time with them. Also, they learn about God and the Virgin Mary, and they get to pray."



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Catholic Schools Office articulates long-term vision

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

Under Superintendent Dr. Joseph Brettnacher, the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend Catholic Schools Office is committed to its mission and the beliefs shared by all diocesan schools, providing sound religious instruction based on the teachings of the Catholic Church and ensuring academic success for all students.

What's new since 2019 — when Brettnacher was appointed superintendent — is a deliberate process to articulate a long-term vision and develop a strategic plan to carry it out. This process will eventually lead to Focus Accreditation, a new kind of accreditation at the diocesan level.

Input on establishing the vision has come from many different stakeholders, beginning with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and including those who staff diocesan Catholic schools. The Catholic Schools Office seeks to involve additional partners, including universities, national and local organizations, “to help our students to build Catholic values and morals, and excel spiritually, intellectually, physically and socially,” according to Brettnacher.

The vision the CSO has adopted centers around four categories: 1. Mission and Catholic identity 2. Governance and leadership 3. Academic excellence 4. Operational vitality.

CSO, page 15



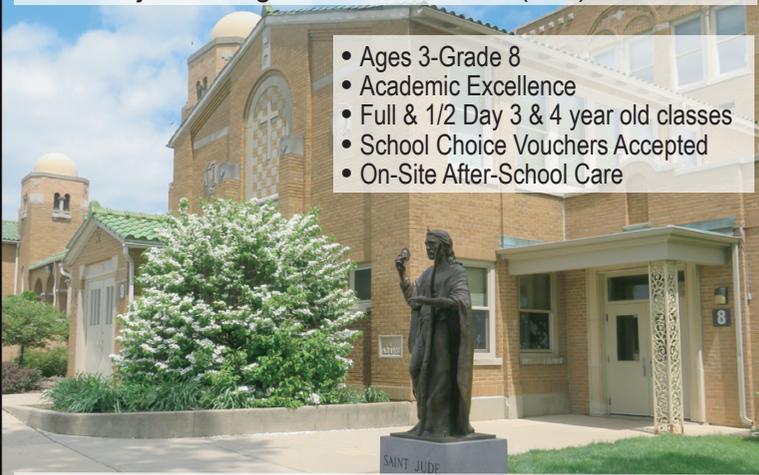
Jennifer Miller

For the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, achieving academic excellence involves curriculum development and extra-curricular experiences that are challenging, relevant, research-based and infused with the Catholic faith and traditions. Above, fourth graders depict saints that they researched for an all-schools Mass in South Bend in November.

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What is National Catholic Schools Week?

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Upcoming CSW schedules

- 2021**
Celebrate Catholic Schools Week - Jan. 31-Feb. 6, 2021
- 2022**
Celebrate Catholic Schools Week - Jan. 30-Feb. 5, 2022
- 2023**
Celebrate Catholic Schools Week - Jan. 29-Feb. 4, 2023

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CSO, from page 12

Everything begins with Catholic identity, helping students deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ and understand the role of faith in their daily life and in larger society. One of the tools that will clarify this is the "Principles of Catholic Identity in Education" program developed by the Cardinal Newman Society, which enables schools to achieve the status of Catholic Education Honor Roll School.

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Achieving academic excellence involves curriculum development and extra-curricular experiences that are challenging, relevant, research-based and infused with the Catholic faith and traditions. The tools available to improve academic excellence now include standard curriculum collaboration days, mechanisms to evaluate success and research-based interventions to handle challenges. An area of potential growth that the CSO has identified is the availability of prekindergarten programs.

Operational vitality secures the sustainability of a school's finances, personnel, facilities



File photo

"The purpose of our schools is three-fold: to help our students to become disciples of Christ, fulfill their destiny to become saints and help them to reach heaven," reads the vision statement of Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Each day, in those classrooms, students continue on that path.

and institutional advancement. Besides sound investments and facilities, ensuring operational vitality also can include employing marketing and branding strategies. The Catholic Schools Office plans to develop a toolkit each school can adapt to improve internal and external communication and increase enrollment.

What is essential about all

this? As Brettnacher put it, "The purpose of our schools is three-fold: to help our students to become disciples of Christ, fulfill their destiny to become saints and help them to reach heaven." Each day, in the classrooms of Catholic schools across the diocese, the students continue on that path.

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'The Two Popes': baloney, brilliantly acted

I first met Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in June 1988; over the next three decades, I've enjoyed many lengthy conversations and interviews with him, including a bracing discussion covering many topics last Oct. 19. I first met Pope Francis in Buenos Aires in May 1982, and have had three private audiences with him since his election as successor of Peter.

Before, during and after the conclaves of 2005 and 2013, I was deeply engaged in Rome, where my work included extensive discussions with cardinal-electors before each conclave was immured and after the white smoke went up. On both occasions, I correctly predicted to my NBC colleagues the man who would be elected and, in 2013, the day the election would occur.

Thus credentialed, I take up the movie critic's mantle and say without hesitation that, as history, the Netflix film, "The Two Popes," is baloney on steroids. It's brilliantly acted, sometimes amusing, and occasionally moving. But despite its claim to be "based on actual events," "The Two Popes" no more reflects history through which I lived and men I've personally known than does "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker."

The script offers several coruscating moments, perhaps more revealing of the two key personalities than screenwriter Anthony McCarten or director Fernando Meirelles realize. Thus, Anthony Hopkins nicely captures Joseph Ratzinger's dry sense of humor when the cinematic Benedict XVI remarks to Jonathan Pryce/

Cardinal Bergoglio, "It's a German joke; it's not supposed to be funny." And then there's Pryce/Bergoglio's smiling riposte to a grumpy Benedict XVI who accuses the archbishop of Buenos Aires of egotism: "Do you know how an Argentinian commits suicide? He climbs to the top of his ego and jumps off!" In the main, however, scriptwriter and director trade in stick figures, however fetching the portrayal of those cartoons by two actors of genius.

Alas, one-dimensional portrayals of popes have been the journalistic and pop-cultural standard ever since the pseudonymous "Xavier Rynne," writing in *The New Yorker*, created the liberal/conservative template for everything Catholic during the Second Vatican Council. It's even more to the credit of Anthony Hopkins and Jonathan Pryce that they bring a cartoon Benedict XVI and a cartoon Francis to vibrant life in "The Two Popes." What ought not go unremarked, however, are the film's grave misrepresentations of the dynamics at work in the conclaves of 2005 and 2013.

The script suggests that Joseph Ratzinger wanted to be pope in 2005 and maneuvered before and during the conclave to achieve his ambition. That is rubbish. As I thought I had demonstrated in "God's Choice," my book on the papal transition of 2005, Cardinal Ratzinger actively resisted the efforts of his many admirers to promote his candidacy during the interregnum, saying, "I am not a man of 'governo' [governance]." His



GEORGE WEIGEL

THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

friends responded that he should leave matters to the Holy Spirit, and Ratzinger — who had tried to retire three times under John Paul II and who wanted nothing more than to return to Bavaria and pick up the threads of his scholarly life — acceded to their wishes, and to what he believed was God's will. There was no ambition in all this. On the contrary, there was a touching display of self-knowledge, spiritual detachment and churchmanship.

As for 2013, "The Two Popes" suggests that a "reformist" current, frustrated at the conclave of 2005, persuaded the cardinal-electors of 2013 that the Church needed a decisive shift from the magisterium of John Paul II and Benedict XVI in order to catch up with "the world." That, too, is rubbish. There was no such consensus among the cardinal-electors in 2013. There was, however, broad agreement that the New Evangelization was being seriously impeded by financial and other corruptions in the Vatican, which had to be vigorously addressed in a new pontificate. And the proponents of Cardinal Bergoglio's candidacy

WEIGEL, page 17

Understanding the debate about celibacy

In one of those embarrassing public dust-ups that occasionally afflict our Church, a soon-to-be published book on priestly celibacy was publicized as being co-authored by retired Pope Benedict XVI until he let it be known that he was not the co-author and wanted his name removed as such.

Coverage of the controversy provided enormous publicity for the book, which is entering a crowded field. Several have recently been published defending the traditional practice of celibacy in Latin-rite Catholicism.

The Church's long-standing discipline of celibacy, it is useful to remember, is the priestly commitment not to marry, following the practice of Jesus and mandated for at least a thousand years in the Western Church.

In recent years, it has been an oft-debated topic for a couple of reasons. The first is the growing shortage of priests in some countries and the assertion that the commitment of celibacy deters some from joining the priesthood.

The second is the sexual abuse scandal, with the suggestion that a married priesthood would not be as likely to harbor child abusers, although statistics of sexual abuse in families would not seem to support this assertion.

While the number of priests per Catholics in countries like the United States has been going down — now one for every 2,000 here — in other regions of the world it is much worse. In the vast Amazonian region, the esti-



GREG ERLANDSON

AMID THE FRAY

mates range from one for every 10,000 to one for every 20,000. The reception of the sacraments is correspondingly infrequent.

Last fall the special synod on the Amazon attempted to address this gap, among other problems facing the region. The synod fathers recommended consideration of the proposal that "suitable and respected men of the community with a legitimately constituted and stable family" and who are already permanent deacons, be ordained as priests "to sustain the life of the Christian community ... in the most remote areas of the Amazon region."

The recommendation is seen by some as potentially undermining the Church's commitment to celibacy and may have at least indirectly inspired the forthcoming book to which retired Pope Benedict contributed.

Whether Pope Francis will act on this recommendation or ask for further study is still unclear, but in an interview during a papal flight January 2019, the pope made clear his belief that "celibacy is a gift to the Church"

ERLANDSON, page 17

Sin is no match for God



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time Matthew 4:12-23

The Book of Isaiah supplies this weekend's first reading. It offers us a powerful lesson.

When this part of Isaiah was written, God's people were skating on thin ice. They still had their independence, at least after a fashion. Hebrew kings still reigned in the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. The religious, social and political structures all still gave lip service to the ancient religion and to the holy covenant between God and the Chosen People.

Everything, however, was

at risk because devotion to the covenant, and obedience to God's law, were at low ebb. Isaiah loudly warned that disaster was just around the corner, but, he said, the people could rescue themselves by returning to religious faithfulness and by obeying God, as the prophets had taught. They had this potential, this ability within themselves.

They did not sin because they were helpless in the face of temptation. Rather, they were weak because they ignored God. If they were determined, they could be strong and virtuous.

For its second reading, the Church has selected a section from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians.

Paul obviously loved the Corinthian Christians. He yearned to see them saintly and eternally with the Lord, but just as obviously they troubled him, because they seemed so attracted to the many vices of their great, worldly and wealthy city. They seemed to be vulnerable to the feelings of competitiveness and insecurity that vex all humans if not checked.

Never willing to accept passivity or indifference, he loudly called the Christians in Corinth to be true to Christ.

He taught a basic message. Earthly reward will pass, more quickly than many might realize. Earthly wisdom is unreliable. True wisdom is to understand the meaning of the cross, and this understanding requires grace, available only to those who earnestly follow the Lord.

St. Matthew's Gospel supplies the last reading. It is situated in Capernaum, the fishing village located at the northern tip of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus is there, having left Nazareth. His public ministry has begun.

As a center of commerce, albeit very modest commerce, Capernaum saw people come and go. Jesus used this coincidence as an opportunity to encounter many people. He called them to fidelity to God. He repeated for them the admonitions of the ancient Hebrew prophets.

In this place Jesus met Andrew, and then He met Peter, who He renamed Simon. These brothers became the first of

the Apostles in the sequence of calling. In time, Christianity was to grow from, and build upon, the Apostles.

It is interesting that the Gospels, such as the case in this reading, refer to these Apostles so specifically by giving their names. The Gospel leaves no doubt whatsoever about their identity since it was vital in the early Church that the teachings of the genuine Apostles be known and be kept intact.

Reflection

These readings remind us of how blind we humans can be and also of how powerful humans can be.

In the first reading, Isaiah criticized the people for their religious listlessness, but he also presumed that, if they wished, they could reverse their wayward paths and turn again to God.

Essentially, the same message was in the second reading, from Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. St. Paul boldly denounced the Corinthians' sins and quarrels and called them to

conversion. He insisted that they could withstand temptation.

We are sinners, but although sin restrains us, we can break away by turning to God and by allowing divine grace to empower us. The impulse to sin, while real, is no match for God or for the heart determined to be with God.

The teachings of the Apostles guide us to our own empowerment and union with the Lord.

READINGS

Sunday: Is 8:23—9:3 Ps 27:1,4, 13-14 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17 Mt 4:12-23

Monday: 2 Sm 5:1-7, 10 Ps 89:20-22, 25-26 Mk 3:22-30

Tuesday: 2 Sm 6:12b-15, 17-19 Ps 24:7-10 Mk 3:31-35

Wednesday: 2 Sm 7:4-17 Ps 89:4-5, 27-30 Mk 4:1-20

Thursday: 2 Sm 7:18-19, 24-29 Ps 132:1-5, 11-14 Mk 4:21-25

Friday: 2 Sm 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17 Ps 51:3-7, 10-11 Mk 4:26-34

Saturday: 2 Sm 12:1-7a, 10-17 Ps 51:12-17 Mk 4:35-41

A study of sloth in the life of Lot

In Bible study in my parish, we have been reading through Genesis. On Jan. 12 we read of Lot and the horrifying results of his decision to pitch his tent toward Sodom. We also see in his life a significant spiritual problem: sloth, one of the seven deadly sins. Sloth is a sorrow, sadness, or aversion to the good things God offers. Rather than being joyful and zealous to obtain these gifts, the slothful person sees them as too much trouble to obtain and is averse to the changes such gifts might introduce into his life. This is clearly the case with Lot, who resists the attempts of God to rescue him and his family from the sinful city of Sodom, which is about to be destroyed.

Lot's personal troubles were many, but for our purposes his problems began when he "pitched his tent toward Sodom." (Gen 13:12) Abraham and Lot had grown very rich — almost never a good thing in the spiritual life — and realized that their flocks were so large that one part of the land could not sustain them both. Thus they agreed to live in different sectors. Abraham left the choice of areas to Lot, who chose the better part for himself. The area where Sodom was is now a deep desert, but at that time the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt. (Gen 13:10)

But Sodom was a wicked city, filled with false worship, greed, insensitivity to the poor, and the approval and practice of homosexuality. By turning his face toward Sodom, Lot willingly exposes his family to the grave moral threats there. And it does indeed affect them. Ultimately, his wife cannot bear to leave, looks back and is lost. His daughters escape, but later engage in the grave sin of incest. Lot, too, will find it hard to flee Sodom, finding God's offer to save him to be too much trouble.

Many of us, too, think little about the risks that television, the internet, music and culture pose to us and our children. Too easily we risk our eternal salvation and that of our children by pitching our tent toward Sodom through easy commerce with a world that is poisonous to our ears and our soul. Even if some things are troublesome, many of us make little effort to draw back and limit, even in little ways, the influences that are contrary to our faith.

Lot also has only one resource in his favor: Abraham is praying for his ne'er-do-well nephew. He asks God's destroying angel

to spare Lot and his family. (Gn 19) God agrees to this and acts to save Lot in spite of himself. Really, it's the only thing that saves Lot.

It is true that Lot was just, in the sense that he did not approve of the sin around him. But neither did he act to really protect himself or his family from it. Something about Sodom appealed to him, and he weighed that more heavily than the risks. And so, too, for many today, who leave the TV on no matter the risk because it entertains or has some other perceived benefit that outweighs the obvious risks. Or those for whom it's just too much trouble to monitor the websites their children visit or the music they listen to.

It really is only Abraham's prayers that save Lot, who would live with sinners, from dying along with them. Thus, don't forget the power of prayer for some of the "ne'er-do-wells" you may know. God may act to save them before the Day of Judgment simply because you prayed for them.

But here comes the heart of the story: sloth. The angel warns, "Flee!" But Lot hesitates. Fleeing is hard work; it means leaving things behind that you like. Perhaps Lot thinks, "Maybe the warnings of destruction are overblown; maybe it won't really be so bad."

The story says that Lot, although he recognized the Lord's kindness in saving them, asks to change the plan and flee to a smaller and closer town than the one the Lord had planned for him to escape to. That is sloth with a capital "S"! So lazy and settled in with sin has Lot become, that he'd rather accept death than expend the effort to flee. Not only that, he can't even manage to rouse himself in order to save his family. It's all just too much trouble. Sloth is sorrow, sadness or aversion. In effect, he says, "Man, those hills look far away. And they're not nearly as nice as this valley. It's going to take a lot of effort to get there. Do I really have to go that far?"

And here is another aspect of sloth: compromising with evil despite knowing the danger. Even if it occurs to many that some things in their lives need to change, they try to minimize those changes. The Lord tells us that we cannot serve two masters, that we cannot serve both the world and Him. But many, realizing that this may introduce uncomfortable situations or have financial impacts, begin to negotiate with their conscience, saying, "I'm basically serving God ... well, at least mostly. Maybe it's enough if I do a few holy things



COMMUNITY IN MISSION

MSGR. CHARLES POPE

and serve God for the most part. And then I can still serve the world and enjoy its fruits, too. ... How about if I serve God 60% and the world 40%? Is that enough?"

Thank God for His mercy, and thank Abraham for his prayers. We are a real mess. As the text shows, God will take the little He can get from Lot, at least for now, in order to save him. But God shouldn't have to take this from us. Only grace and mercy can spare us from ourselves.

But note this: Grace and mercy need to have their effect. We cannot go on in sloth forever. We have to allow God to heal this deep drive of sin in us or we will be destroyed. Lot is saved for now, but great tragedy is still in store for him. His wife will turn back in longing for Sodom and be lost. His daughters cannot get Sodom out of them and will later turn to incest. (Gen 19:30ff) And from this incest will be born the ancestors of the enemies who will later afflict Israel: the Moabites and the Ammonites.

And what of us today? What role have we played in pitching our tents toward Sodom? What happens to us and to our children and grandchildren when all we do is express shock at the condition of the world but expend little real effort to protect ourselves from it or actively change it? What happens when God's plan to rescue us through the gifts of chaste living, generosity and more simple living, is rejected as too much trouble or as requiring us to give up too many things that we like? Many think to themselves, "I know my favorite television show has bad scenes, but I like the story line and I want to find out what happens at the end of the season. I know I should be clearer and firmer with my children, but that leads to conflict and I hate conflict, and besides they'll complain if they can't have a smartphone. And ... and ... and ..."

The virtues opposed to sloth are zeal and joy. Zeal for God's truth and the beauty of holiness, and a joyful pursuit of the life God offers us, are gifts to be sought. Sloth is very pernicious and has cumulative effects. We haven't done well, collectively speaking. It's time to turn more zealously to God, to appreciate the truth of what He has always taught. It's time to gratefully, joyfully study His ways, and live them and share them with others.

Msgr. Charles Pope is the pastor of Holy Comforter - St. Cyprian Catholic Church, Washington, D.C.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for January 26, 2020

Matthew 4:12-23

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A: Jesus' preaching ministry begins. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

JESUS	JOHN	ARRESTED
GALILEE	CAPERNAUM	LAND
NAPHTHALI	ISAIAH	JORDAN
PEOPLE	HAVE SEEN	A GREAT LIGHT
DEATH	HEAVEN	HAND
SIMON	ANDREW	A NET
JAMES	BOAT	FOLLOWED

FULFILLED

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

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WEIGEL, from page 16

presented him in precisely those terms — as a tough-minded, no-nonsense reformer who would quickly and decisively clean house.

That presentation, reinforced by the Argentine prelate's Christocentric and evangelically oriented intervention in the General Congregation of cardinals prior to the conclave's immurement, was the key to Pope Francis's election. The notion that Francis was elected

to upend the magisterium of John Paul II and Benedict XVI is sheer invention, at least to those who knew what was actually afoot in 2013.

Is there motive here, in advancing this fake-news account of Conclave-2013? Some will undoubtedly find one. I'm content to clarify the historical record.

George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

ERLANDSON, from page 16

and he does not think it should be made optional. He added that "there could be some possibility" of ordaining married men in remote locations, but even that would require further study.

What sometimes is lost or misrepresented in the debate over celibacy is that there are already exceptions that the Church, in her wisdom, has allowed.

Eastern-rite Catholics, for example, are in union with Rome and have had a married priesthood for centuries, although this was a point of conflict in the United States, where they were restricted for many decades. As is true for the Eastern Orthodox and for deacons, a man must be married before he is ordained, and he cannot remarry once ordained. Bishops can never be married.

More recently, the Church

has also allowed married clergy from other denominations who enter the Catholic Church to be ordained as priests. This is allowed on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the Vatican. Last year, as the debate over the Amazon synod flared up, a married, former Pentecostal minister was approved for ordination to the priesthood for the Diocese of Steubenville, Ohio.

None of this means that the Latin Church's historic commitment to a celibate priesthood is changing. And judging from Pope Francis' words, he affirms that commitment. Quoting St. Paul VI during his interview, he said, "I would rather give my life than to change the law on celibacy."

Greg Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at gerlandson@catholicnews.com.

'1917': about the Great War

BY JOHN MULDERIG

NEW YORK (CNS) — "1917" (Universal) is a great movie about the Great War. By turns harrowing and lyrically beautiful — and deeply humane throughout — director and co-writer (with Krysty Wilson-Cairns) Sam Mendes' gripping historical drama displays both the horrors of trench combat and the endurance of fundamental decency and spiritual striving.

Our entree into the grim spectacle of the global conflict comes as two friends serving with the British Army on the Western Front, Lance Cpls. Schofield (George MacKay) and Blake (Dean-Charles Chapman), are dispatched on a dangerous mission across enemy territory.

Their task is to warn a nearby commander, Col. Mackenzie (Benedict Cumberbatch), that, by carrying out an imminent attack, he will be falling into a German trap. Their mission is made all the more urgent by the fact that one of the 1,600 men under Mackenzie's command facing slaughter if the assault goes forward is Blake's brother, Joseph (Richard Madden).

Mendes keeps the stakes high and the pace unflagging as the duo journeys across a once-fruitful but now ruined landscape. While the relentless challenges lying in their path may strike some canny moviegoers as a bit extreme, most will be too busy rooting for the success of their quest to notice.



CNS photo/Universal

George MacKay, center, stars in a scene from the movie "1917." The Catholic News Service classification is A-III — adults.

Unsparring in its portrayal of misery and desperation, "1917" also is luminous in its affirmation of civilized values. This is especially true during an encounter between Schofield and a refugee mother who has taken shelter in a basement as she tries to care for her infant child.

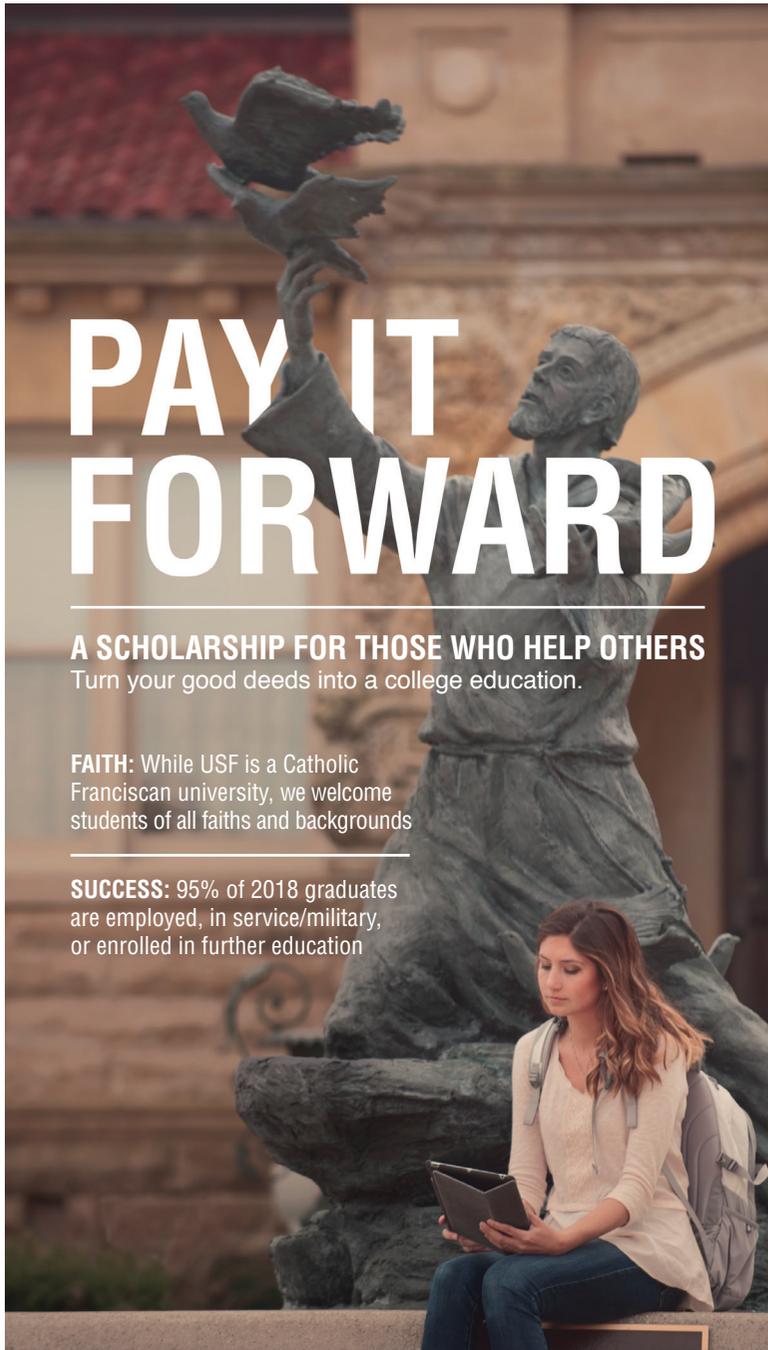
Mendes brings as light and artful a touch to this peaceful interlude as he does to the anti-war theme that pervades the picture. Like a good novelist, he takes to heart the admonition to show rather than tell.

The tension between cynicism and faith also is dealt with in a subtle way. Thus when a burnt-out officer, Lt. Leslie (Andrew Scott), finds that Schofield and

Blake are determined to carry out their orders, despite what he regards as hopeless odds, he "anoints" them with the contents of the flask he's been drinking from while reciting a prayer from the rite then known as Extreme Unction.

Yet, at a climactic moment, the singing of a transcendent hymn transfixes a company of soldiers as they're about to go into battle -- and the audience along with them. While the message conveyed by this scene is broad and implicit, it's also — like "1917" as a whole — profoundly moving.

John Mulderig is on the staff of Catholic News Service.



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Bootcamp offered for apologetics training
NOTRE DAME — The Kloska Family Life Defenders Boot Camp will be Saturday, Feb. 8, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Geddes Hall, Notre Dame. This Boot Camp provides a comprehensive pro-life apologetic training and is open to all from eighth grade through adulthood. To learn more or register, visit prolifemichiana.org/bootcamp.

'It's A Polish Wedding' fundraising event to benefit Chiara Home
SOUTH BEND — St. Hedwig Memorial Hall, 331 S. Scott St., will host a "Polish Wedding" fundraising event on Saturday, Feb. 8, from 5-10 p.m., benefiting Chiara Home. Enjoy a wedding reception dinner complete with all-you-can-eat Polish food, open bar, along with lots of dancing. The evening will feature a surprise bride and groom chosen from the crowd, honeymoon cash, wedding gifts drawn from the "hopper," music by the DJ Sound FX, and more. Tickets are \$50/person and you must be 21 to attend. RSVP by Jan. 25 to 574-287-5435 or email development@chiarahomerespite.org.

Christ Renews His Parish at St. Pius X
GRANGER — St. Pius X, 52553 Fir Rd., will host a Christ Renews His Parish weekend for men on Saturday, Feb. 8. It is an opportunity to take time away from the daily routine and focus on the spiritual journey to experience Christian community, celebrate the sacraments, and develop a deeper prayer life. Contact Harry Mabold at 574-850-5064 or hmabold@yahoo.com for information.

Celebrate! Roaring 20s dinner and auction
FORT WAYNE — St. Vincent de Paul School will host Celebrate! Saturday, Jan. 25, at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum Arena, Expo Center and Conference Center, 4000 Parnell Ave. Live music by the Alicia Pyle Quartet, games, prizes and auction items. Tickets are \$50 per person and includes dinner, drinks and dancing. Contact Regina Zedaker at 260 489-3537 or reginazedaker@saintv.org.

Just Desserts date night for couples
SOUTH BEND — Just Desserts, a "date night" series for couples in their 20s and 30s, will take place Saturday, Feb. 1, from 7:30-9 p.m. in Payne Hall in the lower level of St. Thérèse, Little Flower Church, 54191 N. Ironwood Rd. The evening features food, faith and fun and entails desserts for

every diet, a speaker who will help you deepen your relationship as a couple and with Christ, followed by a table discussion and a chance to win a gift card to a local restaurant. Cost is \$5 per couple at the door. Babies are welcome. Sponsored by Marriage & Family Ministry, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Contact Lisa Everett 574-234-0687 or leverett@diocesefwsb.org.

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.

Check out all the happenings
www.TodaysCatholic.org/event

Seeking the Face of Christ
Eucharistic Miracles of Italy
 September 27 - October 8, 2020

Join Father Louis Fowoyo and Mary Hilger on a Pilgrimage. Includes visiting Our Lady of Loreto during the Jubilee year Plus Rome, Assisi, Padre Pio's Tomb, Siena, and other Italian shrines.

For more information, visit: www.pilgrim-path.com or contact Mary Hilger: 260-438-8356 | hilger8@aol.com or Mike Nolan: 574-335-9952 | molan6@me.com



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For a full description and to apply, please visit
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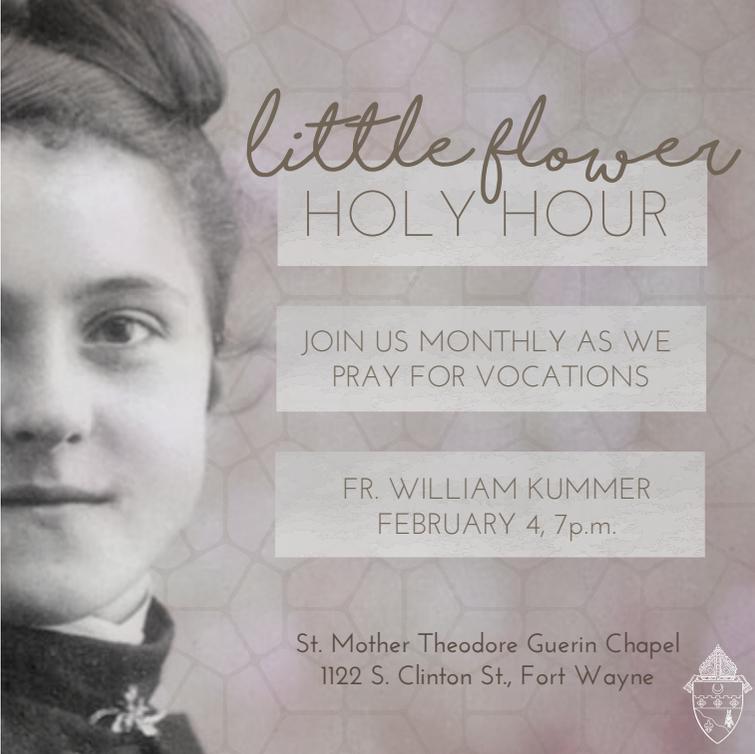
REST IN PEACE

<p>Auburn Norma Teixeira, 86, Immaculate Conception</p> <p>Fort Wayne Rose A. Brown, 94, St. Vincent de Paul</p> <p>Margaret Freiburger, 93, St. Vincent de Paul</p> <p>Eugene Lewandowski, 89, Our Lady of Good Hope</p> <p>Richard Loraine, 88, St. Charles Borromeo</p>	<p>Frank Luarde, 87, St. Charles Borromeo</p> <p>Cynthia Lyons, 65, St. Charles Borromeo</p> <p>Rodrigo Padilla Dalazar, 68, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception</p> <p>Nathalia Patterson, 104, St. Charles Borromeo</p> <p>Allen Shepard, 80, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception</p>	<p>Huntington Ruth A. Wasmuth, 91, SS. Peter and Paul</p> <p>South Bend Barbara Aigotti, 82, Christ the King</p> <p>Leona G. Brandt, 92, Holy Family</p> <p>Catherine D. Sekutowicz, 91, St. John the Baptist</p> <p>Raymond D. Wlodarek, 82, Holy Family</p>
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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.

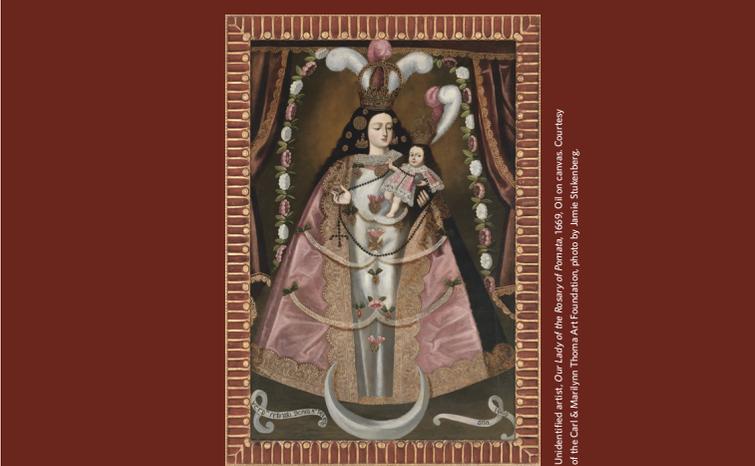


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HOLY HOUR

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 PRAY FOR VOCATIONS

FR. WILLIAM KUMMER
 FEBRUARY 4, 7p.m.

St. Mother Theodore Guerin Chapel
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'Don't be afraid to be faithful to the truth of Christ'

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Students at Bishop Luers High School, Fort Wayne, were challenged to seek truth and a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ during a pastoral visit by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades on Jan. 15. The seeds of that challenge were sown throughout classroom visits and rooted in the celebration of the Mass, at which the bishop noted, "We need to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit, to the graces of our Baptism and Confirmation, so that we have the courage and strength to live our faith."

During his visit, the bishop was able to interact with all grade levels. He also recorded an interview in the school's new video productions class for a half-hour documentary about teenage depression and stress. The documentary will air on PBS this spring.

Deb Baum's morality class had a surprise for Bishop Rhoades: a card in honor of his 10th anniversary as bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. The card had been signed by the entire junior class and featured a student's drawing of the bishop wearing a Bishop Luers school T-shirt. In addition to the card, the students committed themselves to praying a novena for him beginning on the day of his visit.

Chad Smith brought up another issue of truth in a senior religious dialogue class that was focusing on the challenges students face in living out their faith "when society tells them one thing and the Church tells them another." Bishop Rhoades responded by telling the students to form their consciences in the truth of Scripture, the teachings of the Church and through prayer.

"Don't let the culture form your conscience. Seek the truth," he said. When a student asked how he keeps his faith strong in today's society, Bishop Rhoades answered, "My relationship with God. I know that I am God's beloved son, and that gives me peace."

The concept of truth came to the forefront again in Heather Briggs' AP biology class, where senior Alex Workman presented his findings from an enrichment project for a unit on genetics. Workman has a genetic condition called celiac disease, which prevents the body from processing wheat products. He became interested in new genetic editing technology known as CRISPR. Research indicates that such science could provide a defense against diseases like celiac, cancer and HIV/AIDS.



Photos by John Martin

Three Bishop Luers High School students and a teacher were confirmed at Mass during a pastoral visit by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Jan. 15. From left in the Fort Wayne school's chapel are sponsor Beth Carlin with English teacher Emily Didrick; sponsor Jessica Hartmus with Helen Ramsey; Bishop Rhoades; Juan Ramirez with sponsor Jeannie Monterroso; and sponsors Jesús and Maria Gutierrez with Juan Rodriguez, center, who also received his first Communion.

Workman spoke about not only the potential benefits, but also the ethical problems with such technology. Bishop Rhoades informed the class about Catholic scientific organizations that discuss ethics in various areas of science, including the Society of Catholic Scientists. He pointed out that the Catholic Church has long been a supporter of science

and that faith and science are compatible, though science is not always good if not tempered by the proper application of ethics.

Mass was celebrated toward the end

of the school day. During the Mass, Bishop Rhoades conferred the sacrament of confirmation on four people: three students and one teacher. The students who were confirmed were Juan Ramirez, Helen Ramsey and Juan Rodriguez, who also made his first Communion that day.

Emily Didrick, who has been teaching English at Luers since 2017 said, "I wanted to be a witness to those students that have not yet made their confirmation. I wanted our students to see that no matter their age or place in life, the Church is welcoming to all."

In his homily, the bishop spoke of the courage given to the Apostles by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to go forth and speak the truth of Christ. He said that same spirit is with Christians today.

"Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would teach us everything. He is the Spirit of Truth. The world needs this truth, needs Christ, who is the Truth. Only Christ can humanize humanity."

He assured the students and staff that although it can be difficult to live the Catholic faith today, at times, God will remain with them.

"Christ still needs to be made known and loved. That will only happen if believers like you and me are willing to serve the Gospel and to bear that Gospel to our contemporaries. Not just bishops, priests, and sisters, have this mission. You have this mission as baptized and confirmed Catholics and Christians.

"Don't be afraid to be faithful to the truth of Christ, to respond to hatred with love, and to proclaim the hope of the risen Christ to others," he encouraged. "The Holy Spirit will help you."

At the end of Mass, Bishop Rhoades announced that he had a surprise for the students. Until recently, he said, he had not been able to find any artifacts having belonged to Bishop John Henry Luers. But on this visit he brought the slippers, or buskins, used by the first bishop of the diocese. Of even greater interest was the second item Bishop Rhoades brought from a collection on loan from the Congregation of Holy Cross to Diocesan Museum: a decorated mitre. Originally thought to have been used by Bishop Joseph Dwenger, Bishop Rhoades related that when he opened it, he found instead the signature of Bishop Luers inside.

The student body enthusiastically greeted the news that they would be allowed to temporarily display the only known artifacts of their namesake.

"I think that the gifts the bishop brought were outstanding and what a special surprise," said principal James Huth. "The mitre is absolutely beautiful, and it's amazing for as old as it is. It's in great shape. The slippers were ... it's crazy. They fit Bishop Luers (school), because of the comforting place that this is."

The bishop shows Bishop Luers High School students a mitre that belonged to the school's namesake, the first bishop of the diocese.



Principal James Huth, left, and Bishop Rhoades listen to a presentation by student Alex Workman in Heather Briggs' AP biology Class.

