The feast of the Presentation of the Lord, or Candlemas, was celebrated in Fort Wayne Saturday evening, Feb. 1, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades. The liturgy began with a blessing of candles by Bishop Rhoades at the back of the church, followed by a candlelit procession. The candles symbolize Christ’s coming as the Light of the World.
February is Catholic Press Month
Guiding, inspiring and inviting: Today’s Catholic

FORT WAYNE — Since January of 1926, when Archbishop John F. Noll started writing articles that he inserted in copies of Our Sunday Visitor, those living in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend have been able to find, in written word, a Catholic voice that provided guidance, inspiration and an invitation to draw close to God in communion with His body, the Church.

Yet, the mission of the newspaper to evangelize through telling the Catholic story remains the same. The local Catholic media outlet is the voice of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and the best local Catholic resource to stay up to date on news from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

A response to propaganda

In 1912, then-Father Noll stood up to face a dangerous form of socialism that opposes religion, morality and private ownership — the re-arranging of the nation — when he founded Our Sunday Visitor to inform the Catholic laity and their friends. As early as 1902-03 Father Noll had been writing and distributing Kind Words From Your Pastor, which, as he recalled, began a literary career of keeping his parishioners up to date and informed.

It was a small paper that lasted 24 editions. A few years later, in 1908, he published Parish Monthly. It contained reading described as being of general interest and serving some 200 parishes across the nation.

In 1910, Father Noll was transferred to St. Mary Parish in Huntington and acquired a printing press from a local newspaper. It was then that he made a first run of 35,000 copies of Our Sunday Visitor for a May 5, 1912, distribution at parishes.

Father Noll’s editorial in those weekly copies stated that “this Sunday Visitor will insist on going home with you from Mass, and will instruct and entertain you all for the price of one penny a paper.” He recognized the critical need to reach out, focusing in those early issues on a response to the anti-Catholic and socialist propaganda that swayed from the contemporary publication, The Menace.

The Menace had been founded in 1911 with a mission to attack the Church, which it bitterly assailed. The Menace accused members of the Church of planning attacks on American freedom and liberty. The publication did not prevail, however, and disappeared some 88 years ago.

Then-Msgr. Noll was notified by Pope Pius XI that “our St. Mary Parish and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend took ownership — then pervading the length and breadth of the country — was being printed as a diocesan newspaper and featured items of interest intended to encourage and inform the laity.

By 1967, the Fort Wayne-South Bend diocesan edition had changed editors. Under Bishop Noll, Francis Fink served as a temporary managing editor, and as editor following Archbishop Noll’s death. Msgr. Joseph Crowley then served as editor from 1958-67. In 1967, Msgr. Crowley left to become a pastor, and Msgr. James P. Conroy, who had been editing the youth column, took over.

A diocesan paper is born

After Vatican II, circulation of the newspaper experienced somewhat of a decrease. Msgr. Conroy, however, succeeded as editor in chief. The diocesan news source reflects the priorities of Bishop Rhoades, sharing his messages and aligning itself with his episcopal priorities. The mission of Today’s Catholic remains the sharing of important news through the lens of truth and the Catholic faith, as well as witnessing to the experiences of faith with which the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is graced.
Palestinians say Trump peace plan does not bode well for the future

BY JUDITH SUDIOVSKY

ABOUH, West Bank (CNS) — The pews at the Our Lady of Seven Sorrows Church were full Feb. 2, as children led a procession for the feast of the Presentation of the Lord and received candles from Father Firas Aridah.

Watching their children, parents of the parish said the announcement of U.S. President Donald Trump’s “deal of the century” peace plan did not bode well for their future.

“We’d like to have a better future for our children, but I am afraid of the future,” said Boutrous Fawadleh, an English teacher at the Latin Patriarchate school in Abouhd and the father of three boys, ages 14, 11 and 4. “What kind of life will it be for them?”

Mostly, parents told Catholic News Service, they were concerned about how the plan would further whittle away their freedom of movement on a day-to-day basis and increase Israeli control over their lives.

Already blocked by an Israeli checkpoint at the entrance to the village, they said they worried that with the tacit permission for land annexation by what they said was a one-sided proposal, more checkpoints and more settlements would be built around Aboud, making daily life even more of a struggle.

“Before we had hopes, now we have no hopes,” Fawadleh said. “Even before this plan, we were suffering, with these measures there will be more checkpoints, more Israeli military presence, more settlements.”

Among other aspects of the plan announced Jan. 28, Trump proposed the recognition of Israeli sovereignty over West Bank settlements, creating Israeli enclaves in communities in the heart of the West Bank while promising the possibility of an independent Palestinian state under certain conditions.

This, Fawadleh joked grimly, would create a Palestinian state map impossible for schoolchildren to draw.

The village of Aboud, surrounded by the three Israeli settlements and closed in by the Israeli separation barrier, would be included in one of these enclaves.

Located between Ramallah and Jerusalem, Aboud — population 2,000 — has had thousands of square meters of land already seized by Israel.

“Where is the dignity in this plan? There is no dignity, no human rights, (it) is just thinking of the Jewish people and the state of Israel and neglecting the rights of a whole other people on the other hand,” said Father Aridah, adding that he was concerned that more young Palestinians would want to leave as their lives became more difficult.

Annexation of land in the West Bank and Jordan Valley will increase tensions and demonstrations, which could become violent, Fawadleh said.

Israel says the checkpoints and military patrols in the area are necessary for security reasons to protect settlers, who have been targets of drive-by shootings and other attacks by Palestinians.

Boutrous Fawadleh, 50, an English teacher at the Latin Patriarchate school in Abouhd and the father of three boys, ages 14, 11 and 4. “What kind of life will it be for them?”

Louy Fawadleh, a Catholic Palestinian from Aboud, West Bank, stands with his son, Adam and George, after Mass Feb. 2.

The father of three boys, ages 12, 9 and 6, Louy Fawadleh said he was already beginning to worry about the basic issue of what he would do when his sons had to cross checkpoints to get to the Christian high school in Ramallah.

“Teenage boys are especially inspected at the checkpoints, so they are more in danger,” he said, shortly after the end of the Mass. “But as a Christian I love to pray, and I have the strong internal belief that one day, even if it is not soon, there will be peace here.”

Thairah Naseem, 37, a science teacher, said she was not interested in politics. She simply wants to be able to take her 15-year-old son to his soccer practices in Ramallah and to his matches in other cities without being fearful of the Israeli checkpoints — which can be put up without notice — and to be able to make it to her own graduate classes at nearby Bir Zeit University on time.

“My son’s practice is from 7 to 9 p.m. in Ramallah and that means we drive back to Aboud at night. Sometimes, I am afraid to drive that dark road at night,” she said. “I just need a good future for my children.”

Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, February 9: 9 a.m. — Mass, St. Robert Bellarmine Church, North Manchester
Monday, February 10: 5:30 p.m. — Meeting of Diocesan Review Board, Sacred Heart Rectory, Warsaw
Tuesday, February 11: 2 p.m. CST — Ordination of Msgr. Robert J. McCloy, Bishop of Gary, Holy Angels Cathedral, Gary
Wednesday, February 12: 9 a.m. — Meeting with High School Principals, Wyndham Garden Hotel, Warsaw
Wednesday, February 12: 12 p.m. — Meeting with Council of Teachers, Wyndham Garden Hotel, Warsaw
Thursday, February 13: 5:30 p.m. — Annual Scholarship Dinner for Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, Florida
Thursday-Friday, February 13-14: Meeting of Board of Trustees for Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, Florida

Daily prayer is key to Catholics remaining active in church

BY MICHAEL BROWN

TUCSON, Ariz. (CNS) — Robert Feduccia, founding director of the Youth Liturgical Leadership Program at St. Meinrad School of Theology in St. Meinrad, Indiana, made respect for diversity a key theme in his keynote, “Liturgy in a Missionary Key,” at the 58th Annual Southwest Liturgical Conference Study Week in Tucson.

Feduccia also focused on creating a new model of catechizing, saying the publication in 1992 of the long-awaited “Catechism of the Catholic Church” was used to stop the decline in the number of people, especially young people, who self-identify as Catholics.

He was one of several keynote speakers and workshop presenters at the mid-January conference, which had as its theme: “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.”/“Glorifiquen al Senor con su vida. Pueden ir en paz.”

It drew liturgy and other leaders from not only Arizona’s dioceses, but also dioceses in Texas, Utah, New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, Louisiana, California, Georgia, Missouri and New Hampshire.

In his Jan. 16 address, Feduccia noted that only 29% of Catholics born in 1980 attend weekly services, compared to 43% of Catholics born before that year.

He said the catechism’s 1992 release did not keep “millennials” — Catholics born between 1980 and 2000 — from leaving the Church.

“Catholics born after 1980 are the least likely group of religious believers to pray daily,” he said.

Among Hispanic and other immigrant populations, as second and third generations come forward, they are far more likely to neglect daily prayer and weekly Mass attendance, and find religion to be less important in their lives.

“With the new catechism, the U.S. bishops mandated that new religious education materials include more of the core tenets of faith, given that young people seemed to be lacking the basics. They thought the textbooks must be the problem,” Feduccia said.

This led to why Feduccia referred to the early 2000s as the “School of Slow Answers.”

With another generation of young Catholics at risk of sliding into the “nones,” Feduccia proposed a “School of Spirituality and Encounter.”

“Catholicism is a key to remaining active is daily prayer,” Feduccia said.

PRAYER, page 4
Mother gives hope by sharing story of adopting out baby boy

BY CHRISTINA GRAY

SAN FRANCISCO (CNS) — Kathy Folan had many dreams as a young philosophy student at the University of San Francisco in the 1990s. Sharing a stage one day with the child she conceived in a sexual assault and telling their story to a crowd of thousands was surely not one of them.

“Now it seems, we’ve been called to share this story,” said Folan, 49, in a promotional video for San Francisco’s Walk for Life West Coast, which is held Jan. 25 and where she was one of three featured speakers.

“It’s not easy, for sure. But the Holy Spirit is with us and I feel like now is the time to share it,” she said in the video.

“To give other people hope and to see a good story, what can become of it if you let it.” When Folan walked to the podium at the annual pro-life event and described the events that led to her decision to choose adoption for her unborn child, Nathan Sullivan, 28, was at her side.

Sullivan, whose face is a near-replica of Folan’s own, shared their story from his perspective at a traditional vigil at St. Dominic Church the evening before the walk.

Initially, Folan said she lived with shock and shame after an acquaintance raped her. Like many girls and women who survive such an ordeal, she “didn’t tell a soul.”

A month later when she discovered she was pregnant, she said, the plans she had for her life “flashed before me,” but she understood that “God had entrusted him to me for whatever reason.”

Folan was fearful of “crushing” her devoutly Catholic parishioners with her decision, “you can open up people’s hearts.”

Folan knew the Vatican II reforms of liturgy and the Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity (“Ad Gentes”).

“If I saw he had everything that I couldn’t give him at that time, and I knew I had made the right decision,” she said.

Two weeks later, she met Luis Folan, her husband of almost 25 years, and added sons Justin and Brendan and daughter Ciara to their family.

After Nathan moved to San Francisco for a job in 2012, he and the Folan family grew even closer. Her younger sons became Eagle Scouts like their older half-brother. What’s more, said Folan, they now both attend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Nathan’s alma mater, and the three young men now see each other “on almost a daily basis.”

“When who could have ever known in that moment I took that pregnancy test and I saw my life flash in front of me that it would turn out so beautifully,” said Folan.

Gray is associate editor at Catholic San Francisco, newspaper of the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

“Now it seems, we’ve been called to share this story,” said Folan, 49, in a promotional video for San Francisco’s Walk for Life West Coast, which is held Jan. 25 and where she was one of three featured speakers.

“I saw he had everything that I couldn’t give him at that time, and I knew I had made the right decision.”

KATHY FOLAN

PRAayer, from page 3

“This is not a crisis of catechesis. It’s a crisis of Spirit.”

He went back to the documents of the Second Vatican Council, beginning with the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (“Sacrosanctum Concilium”) and built up that with quotes from the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (“Lumen Gentium”), the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (“Dei Verbum”), the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (“Gaudium et Spes”) and the Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity (“Ad Gentes”).

During the past two decades, there has been a resurgence of liturgical practices reflecting a return to traditional worship, including a desire for Gregorian chant. Feduca said liturgical reforms of Vatican II aren’t being undone just because of a longing on the part of some people for the old forms of worship.

A self-described “liturgical pragmatist,” Feduccia said there doesn’t need to be friction between those who long for chant, and those who embrace post-Vatican II forms of liturgy. “People want to go back and forth on this, but it’s fine to go back and forth,” he said.

Feduca told a story about his visit to the Holy Land, and a sense of disappointment he felt about not feeling any special connection to God while visiting the places where Jesus lived. It wasn’t until he stood at the Western Wall, the remnants of the Temple, that things changed.

“It’s said, ‘The Divine Presence never leaves the Western Wall,’” Feduccia said. “Deep in my heart, I heard ‘Yes, Robert. This place, this church. I have made a covenant with you and I will not leave.’”

That’s why there isn’t a real dichotomy between different elements within the Church, because God is present in all of it, he said.

It’s not a choice between “social justice Catholics” and “evangelization Catholics,” he said. “It’s social justice and evangelization. It is not a division. It’s one thing.”

When someone approaches him to ask if Gregorian chant is acceptable for his parish, Feduccia said, his response is simple: “I don’t know. I don’t know the needs of your parish. Are you in contact with the homes and the lives of your people? You tell me.”

Parishes shouldn’t be looking for someone else to solve their issues, because the answer is there in the community. “The fullness of salvation rests in every parish,” he said.

Liturgists have the ability and are in the position to do something about this. Through worship, “you can open up people’s hearts. That’s your job.”

Brown is managing editor of Catholic Outlook, newspaper of the Diocese of Tucson.

People pray Jan. 17 during the 58th annual Southwest Liturgical Conference Study Week in Tucson, Ariz. The gathering drew liturgical and other leaders from dioceses in Arizona, Texas, Utah, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Oklahoma, Indiana, Michigan, Louisiana, California, Georgia, Missouri and New Hampshire.
Bill reinforces dignified treatment of human fetal remains after abortion

Todays Catholic

BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

St. Jude Church in Fort Wayne. “It brings of light hope deceptive the abortion industry can be.”

The Indiana Catholic Conference stands in strong support of Senate Bill 299, as it did with the legislation four years ago.

“We believe that in keeping with respecting the dignity of the body, particularly the most vulnerable in the form of these aborted fetuses, ensuring a proper burial or cremation is essential,” said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana.

Church teaching on the matter is clear, added Father C. Ryan McCarthy, a bioethicist and moral theologian for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. “Every human person is equal in dignity in the sight of God, and for Catholics, not only are there traditions but actual requirements of canon law surrounding proper disposition of human remains, said Father McCarthy, who serves as pastor of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis. “We are required to bury human remains, to the best of our ability, intact and in a permanent place.”

Father McCarthy acknowledged that sometimes in the early stages of pregnancy — whether by miscarriage or abortion — fetal remains are lost or cannot be identified.

“No one is bound to the impossible,” he said. “But if you have fetal remains, they must be treated with due respect.”

Catholic cemeteries in Indiana stand ready to help in these situations, Father McCarthy added.

In the Klopfer case, both the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and the Diocese of Gary offered to provide for burial of the remains found on the doc-

TO-DAY’S CATHOLIC

February 9, 2020

sburg property and reiterated those offers to the Office of the Indiana Attorney General, which is handling the case.

Several representatives of the Attorney General’s office spoke in support of Senate Bill 299 during the Jan. 29 committee hearing.

“It is vital to have very strong laws on the books dealing with the disposition of fetal remains and to document that it has been done so appropriately,” said Parvovay Slover, director of government affairs and legislative policy.

The Attorney General’s office is continuing with its investigation and is working to ensure that the fetal remains will be returned to Indiana and treated with proper dignity and respect, the representatives said.

Senate Bill 299 passed 10-1 at the conclusion of the hearing, with Sen. Jean Breaux, D-Indianapolis, casting the only dissenting vote. The bill is expected to pass the full Senate and will be considered by the House in the coming weeks.

“This is a very straightforward bill that merely implements the rules (in the 2016 law) so that every health care provider, whether an abortion clinic or hospital, understands that they can no longer use their earlier protocols for fetal remains,” Brown said. “Despite what people on the other side of this issue say, there needs to be more definition around these matters.”
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican has donated thousands of protective masks to several Chinese provinces affected by the outbreak of the deadly coronavirus. In an email to Catholic News Service Feb. 3, the Vatican Press Office confirmed a report that appeared in the Chinese newspaper The Global Times, which said that since Jan. 27, the Vatican has sent 600,000-700,000 protective masks to China. According to the report, the donation was made possible with the help of Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the papal almoner. The masks were paid for by the Vatican and Chinese Christian communities in Italy, while airline companies, including China Southern Airlines, provided free shipment, the report said.

News Briefs

Vatican donates masks to China to combat coronavirus

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Charities USA and the Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC) expressed disappointment with the Supreme Court’s Jan. 27 order allowing the Trump administration to go forward with a proposal meant to limit immigrants’ use of government benefit programs.

The court’s “unprecedented ruling” in favor of the administration’s revisions to government policy “harms families, targets lawful immigrants, and could prevent families from receiving vital nutrition and housing assistance,” said a Catholic Charities USA statement. Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, urged the Trump administration to “reconsider this harsh and unnecessary policy and rescind it in its entirety.” She said the decision in favor of this policy “signals a watershed change of course from the best moments of our American heritage of welcoming immigrants and refugees.”

In its 5-4 ruling, the court gave the Trump administration the go-ahead with its “public charge” rule allowing the administration to deny green cards to legal immigrants based on their reliance on public assistance, such as food stamps, Medicaid and housing vouchers. The rule was challenged by immigration groups and states including California, Illinois, Maryland and Washington. Legal challenges continue in several federal courts, and a separate injunction still blocks the rule from being implemented in Illinois.

Targeting world poverty has shown results, advocates say

WASHINGTON (CNS) — U.S. focus on reducing misery around the world has paid off, advocates say, and the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering in Washington, in Africa, the number of uneducated men has plateaued at about 100 million, and the number is expected to stay the same through 2050. “Millions of uneducated men with nothing to do — that’s a grenade waiting to go off,” Hilbert said. “They join militia groups, and they become fodder.”

Doctrine is renewed with roots firmly planted in magisterium

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christian doctrine is not modified to keep up with passing times nor is it rigidly closed in on itself, Pope Francis told members and advisers of the doctrinal congregation.

“It is a dynamic reality, that staying faithful to its foundation, is renewed from generation to generation and is summed up in one face, one body and one name — the risen Jesus Christ,” he said. “Christian doctrine is not a system that is rigid and closed in on itself, but neither is it an ideology that transforms with the changing of seasons,” he said Jan. 30, during an audience with cardinals, bishops, priests and laypeople who were taking part in the plenary assembly of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The pope told them that “is thanks to the Risen Christ that the Christian faith throws its doors wide open to everyone and his or her needs. That is why we are not afraid of the faith “demands taking into account the person receiving it,” and that this person is known and loved, he said.

Pro-life movement called to ‘radical inclusivity, outreach to millennials

WASHINGTON (CNS) — For Aimee Murphy, executive director of Rehumanize International, becoming a Catholic and joining the pro-life movement inspired her vocation. Murphy was only 22 when she founded the human rights organization, which seeks to end “all aggressive violence against humans through education, discourse and action.” At that point in her life, she had been part of the pro-life movement for roughly six years. She told an audience at Georgetown University Jan. 28 that when she was 16, her former boyfriend sexually assaulted her and threatened to kill her if she didn’t get an abortion. “I just straight up threatened her. I said, ‘I could do it to an unborn child the same thing that he was doing to me, which was not valuing humanity.’ She made the comments during a break-out session at the 21st annual Cardinal O’Connor Conference on Life. Organized completely by students, the conference is the largest student-run pro-life conference in the nation.

Holy Land Catholic leaders: Trump peace plan needed Palestinian input

WASHINGTON (CNS) — If you met Dorothy Day, you were faced with a Jan. 27 discussion following an advance screening of a new documentary, “Revolution of the Heart: The Dorothy Day Story,” which profiles the co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement. And if you were changed, they noted, you had the ability to make change yourself. “Dorothy taught me to pay attention and feel the sufferings of others,” said Martha Hennessy, one of Day’s granddaughters, during the forum. In a statement Jan. 29. The group includes Catholic bishops and patriarchs of different rites as well as the Franciscan custos of the Holy Land and one nun. In the long-awaited plan, which Trump called the “deal of the century,” the president proposed the possibility of a future independent Palestinian state and the recognition of Israeli sovereignty over West Bank settlements, creating Israeli enclaves communities. The plan, which recognizes Jerusalem as Israel’s capital while allowing for a Palestinian capital in villages on the outskirts of East Jerusalem, where, according to the plan, the U.S. would build a future embassy to the Palestinian state. But, the church leaders said in an official statement, such proposals must be reached with the agreement of both the Israelis and the Palestinians. “These proposals have to be based on equal rights and dignity,” they added. The plan Peace-to-Prosperity, presented yesterday, does not contain these conditions.”

Panel assesses Dorothy Day’s impact on Church and their own lives

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Calling U.S. President Donald Trump’s Peace-to-Prosperity plan a “unilateral initiative,” church leaders in the Holy Land said it did not give “dignity and rights” to the Palestinians. “This plan will bring no solution but rather will create more tensions and probably more violence and bloodshed,” the Assembly of the Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land said in a statement Jan. 29. The group includes Catholic bishops and patriars of different rites as well as the Franciscan custos of the Holy Land and one nun. In the long-awaited plan, which Trump called the “deal of the century,” the president proposed the possibility of a future independent Palestinian state and the recognition of Israeli sovereignty over West Bank settlements, creating Israeli enclaves communities. The plan, which recognizes Jerusalem as Israel’s capital while allowing for a Palestinian capital in villages on the outskirts of East Jerusalem, where, according to the plan, the U.S. would build a future embassy to the Palestinian state. But, the church leaders said in an official statement, such proposals must be reached with the agreement of both the Israelis and the Palestinians. “These proposals have to be based on equal rights and dignity,” they added. The plan Peace-to-Prosperity, presented yesterday, does not contain these conditions.”
Help for struggling marriages

INDIANAPOLIS — For those who feel alone in their marriage, there is help. Retrouvaille (pronounced “retro-ville,” with a long “I”) means “rediscovery” and offers the chance to rediscover oneself, their spouse and a loving relationship in their marriage.

Tens of thousands of couples headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending the weekend and follow-up sessions. Retrouvaille is not a spiritual retreat, sensitivity group, seminar or social gathering.

To learn more about the program or to confidentially register for the March 13-15 weekend in Tipton and follow-up sessions in Indianapolis, visit www.HelpOurMarriage.com or www.retrouvaille.org, email RetrouIndy@gmail.com or call 317-489-6811.

Romero, Grodi, Father Schmitz to headline men’s conference

FORT WAYNE — Rekindle the Fire men’s conference will take place at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum Saturday, Feb. 22. The day’s lineup of speakers will include well-known Catholic speaker and vlogger Father Michael Schmitz.

Father Schmitz is the director of youth and young adult ministry for the Diocese of Duluth and chaplain of the Newman Center at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. Jesse Romero is a full-time, bilingual Catholic lay evangelist whose preaching apostolate is called On Fire Evangelization. Romero is also a retired Los Angeles deputy sheriff, husband, father and grandfather.

Also speaking at the conference is Eternal Word Television Network host Marcus Grodi, a convert who was received into the Church with his wife and their two older sons in 1992.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will conduct a Q&A session at the conference and celebrate Mass.

Rekindle the Fire is a group of Catholic men who seek to “Rekindle the Fire” of Christ’s love within and become better leaders, friends, husbands, fathers and sons through prayer, fellowship, faith and spiritual service to family, parish and community. Fourteen chapters of the year-round ministry exist at parishes across the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

To register for the conference or to contact a local chapter, visit rekindlethefire.net. Adult tickets are $45 and student tickets are $25.

Catholic Schools Week birthday bags

Students at Corpus Christi School, South Bend, participate in a Catholic Schools Week service project to make birthday bags containing everything needed for a birthday celebration. Each class brought a different item such as cake mix, frosting, plates and candles — shown by fourth graders — and the eighth graders assembled the bags.

Diocesan seminarians receive ministry of lector at Pontifical North American College

Teacher’s journey to a Catholic classroom guided by the Holy Spirit

BY JENNIFER BARTON

There was no specific incident that sparked Luz Hernandez’s desire to become a teacher. It was simply something she had always known she wanted to do.

Being a teacher is her calling in life, she said. Her vocation. And on the road to fulfilling that vocation, the Holy Spirit was guiding her before she realized it.

A video retelling of Hernandez’s journey to become a Catholic school teacher was featured at You Can Lend a Hand luncheons that took place at both ends of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend in January. The annual luncheons, sponsored by Quality Dining, honor the dedicated staff of all the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend Catholic schools. Following the video, Christ the Teacher Award (formerly Light of Learning) honorees from those schools received their awards.

Hernandez was born and raised in Chicago. Her mother, Maria, was very loving and caring and she stayed at home to raise Luz and her sister, Magdalena. Miguel, their father, was hard-working but always found time for her and her sister.

At age 5, the girls’ aunt, a preschool teacher, began taking Luz to work with her, which the youngster greatly enjoyed.

“Going to school was fun. I always felt comfortable in a school setting. felt safe,” Luz said. She felt that she could “be (in school) for the rest of my life and be happy.” During her elementary years she often would stay late to help teachers grade papers or arrange bulletin boards, then walk home or have her mother pick her up. “I just felt happier at school. I could be myself, especially around my teachers.”

Baby steps toward the Catholic faith

Their Catholic faith was something the Hernandez family rarely practiced. Luz recalled a large picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe hanging in the bedroom she shared with her sister, between their beds, and her grandmother prayed the rosary with the children when she would come to visit. “I was intrigued that she would do this every day,” Luz said.

It was there, sitting together in the bedroom with their grandmother, that Luz was introduced to the faith. In her grandmother’s native Spanish, she learned basic prayers such as the Our Father, Hail Mary and Sign of the Cross.

“Since the family was not particularly religious, it came as a bit of a surprise to the 11-year-old when Maria signed her daughters up for first Communion preparation at St. Clare of Montefalco Church in Chicago. The year was 2008. Around the same time, her mother was diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer.

The Hernandez family began attending Mass together every Sunday as required of the girls to receive the sacrament. Maria battled with her cancer, although the sisters were young and oblivious to the struggle.

Her time in catechesis was enjoyable for Luz, even though she was unable to make the transition to what she longed for — enrollment in a Catholic school. After several years, she received a catechist certification at St. Clare. Gradually, Sunday Mass became their family time, which helped the whole family cope with Maria’s diagnosis.

Rough terrain

When Maria passed away in 2012, the funeral home was packed. Their Catholic community proved a great comfort to Luz, and numerous friends she had not spoken to in years attended, along with teachers from her previous elementary school.

“It’s so happy that it makes me cry. I was so blessed. I am so blessed.”

The family had been planning a move back to South Bend to be near family when Maria passed away in February. Miguel moved the family to South Bend the same year, in July. Luz was about to enter her junior year of high school, and Magdalena would be a freshman. This was the opportunity Luz had yearned for — a chance to enroll in a Catholic school.

A friend knew Carl Loesch, then-principal of Marian High School in Mishawaka. Her father contacted him, and even though it was summer Loesch said he was more than happy to meet and show them around.

Hernandez fell in love with the small school, picturing herself walking the halls, praying before classes and in the school’s chapel. “I was always good at getting people excited about things, and now I had my sister excited, too (about Marian).”

“The cost, however, was more than she had expected. When Loesch showed the girls and their father the tuition total for two students, Hernandez didn’t hesitate. “I had received catechist classes, my sister had not. I wanted her to have the same experiences I did about learning the Catholic faith.”

Loesch needed to attend public high school so that her sister could attend four years of Catholic school at Marian. Loesch was so affected by her selflessness that it still resonates with him to this day.

“What could I say? What could anyone say?” Loesch said. He knew the girls would do well at Marian and wanted them to attend. In what they both saw as the hand of God, within the next 24 hours Loesch was told that an anonymous donation had been made in the amount needed to enable both of the Hernandez sisters to enroll.

He knew the money was meant for them. “God had a plan.”

The sisters did attend Marian, and the support of the school community was a balm to their still-grieving souls. “It was beautiful having peers and teachers that share their faith with you. Every person who wants to build that relationship with God should have the ability to do so,” Luz said.

At Marian, Luz was able to take a class in which she student taught at another Catholic school, St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend. Magdalena received kind care from counselors at Marian, which influenced her decision to pursue a career in social work later on.

JOURNEY, page 9

You Can Lend a Hand luncheons honor Catholic schoolteachers

At the South Bend luncheon Jan. 30, the Msgr. J. William Lester Award went to three couples: Matthew and Sharon Edmonds, Michael and Connie Joines and Thomas and Anita Veldman.

At the You Can Lend a Hand luncheons in Fort Wayne and South Bend in January, Msgr. J. William Lester Awards were given to individuals who have honored the monsignor’s legacy in Catholic schools and parishes of the diocese. In Fort Wayne, the 2020 award went to Catherine and James Cicchiello, pictured with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades on Jan. 28.
**CHRIST THE TEACHER AWARD RECIPIENTS**

**Fort Wayne area**
- Most Precious Blood School, Fort Wayne: Kelsey Spoltman
- Our Lady School, Fort Wayne: Mark Stevens
- Queen of Angels School, Fort Wayne: Tonya Young
- St. Charles Borromeo School, Fort Wayne: Susan Frazier
- St. John the Baptist School, Fort Wayne: Jo Ella Graney
- St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, Fort Wayne: Alyssa Knuth
- St. Joseph School, Fort Wayne: Stacy Gill
- St. Jude School, Fort Wayne: Bob Panza
- St. Therese School, Fort Wayne: Paula Henry
- St. Vincent de Paul School, Fort Wayne: Kimberly Hutt
- St. Aloysius School, Yoder: Nichole Thompson
- St. John the Baptist School, New Haven: Abby Pick
- St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel School, Fort Wayne: Victoria Litchfield
- St. Rose of Lima School, Monroeville: Not Participating
- St. Louis Academy, Besancon: Amber Wharton
- St. Mary of the Assumption School, Avilla: Chad Helmkamp
- St. Joseph School, Garrett: Brad Yarnall
- St. Joseph School, Decatur: Amy Ross
- Huntington Catholic School, Huntington: Jacqueline Thomas
- St. Bernard School, Wabash: Sara Karlst
- Sacred Heart School, Warsaw: Jenny Solloway
- Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne: Lori Foltz
- Bishop Luers High School, Fort Wayne: Ann Isch

**South Bend area**
- Christ the King School, South Bend: Kathy Greve
- Corpus Christi School, South Bend: Carinda Knefely
- Holy Cross School, South Bend: Julie Van Meter
- Holy Family School, South Bend: Caitlin Tucker
- Our Lady of Hungary School, South Bend: Paige Gonzales
- St. Adalbert School, South Bend: Jeannie O’Meara
- St. Anthony of Padua School, South Bend: Bridget Sullivan
- St. John the Baptist School, South Bend: Shannon Jones
- St. Joseph School, South Bend: Heather Hill
- St. Jude School, South Bend: Deborah Hudak
- St. Matthew Cathedral School, South Bend: Cathy Knabenshue
- Queen of Peace School, Mishawaka: Kim Obringer
- Mishawaka Catholic School, Mishawaka: Cynthia Eckhart-Weldy
- St. Thomas the Apostle School, Elkhart: Kristina Frick
- St. Vincent de Paul School, Elkhart: Not Participating
- St. John the Evangelist School, Goshen: Stephanie Kronk
- St. Pius X School, Granger: Samantha Neebel
- St. Michael School, Plymouth: Carmen Chaney
- Marian High School, Mishawaka: Abigail Kaser
- Saint Joseph High School, South Bend: Kim Coleman
- St. Stanislaus Kostka School, Michigan City: Nancy Gifford
- St. Mary’s School, Niles: Katee Landgraf

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**Coming home**

In many ways, Luz has been on a journey of coming home – home to the Catholic faith, home to her mother’s and grandmother’s memories, home to teaching in a Catholic school. Through it all, she feels that God has been present in her life — the Holy Spirit guiding her footsteps on the path.

Luz graduated from Saint Mary’s College with a degree in religious studies and Spanish. She applied for a teaching position at St. Joseph, but Loesch stepped in and recommended her for a teaching position at St. Matthew, where she had done student teaching years before. After a year in language arts, she was able to transfer to teaching Spanish when a position opened. She also was offered the role of director of English language learners and director of religious education at the school.

Loesch is thrilled to see her continue God’s work as a teacher in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. “One of my greatest joys is to see someone come in, thrive, and give back to the schools,” said Loesch. “We are so blessed to have teachers like Luz who give of themselves to share the joy of Christ with students every day. What a tremendous inspiration she is.”

In the video, Loesch left Hernandez and all teachers with an emotional reminder that the greatest step in their journey is the final one, when each will come face to face with God.

“The Lord will ask, ‘I sent you so many children; what did you do with them? Did you bring them closer to Me?’ I hope we can all say, ‘Yes, I did my best.’”

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In addition to recognizing outstanding Catholic schoolteachers of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend at the You Can Lend a Hand luncheons, an outstanding school administrator was also honored with the Mother Theodore Guerin Award. Above, at the Fort Wayne luncheon, St. Jude School principal Mike Obergfell receives the award from Bishop Rhoades.

Principal Jill Miller of Queen of Peace School, Mishawaka, receives the Mother Theodore Guerin Award at the South Bend You Can Lend a Hand luncheon.
Bishop to Holy Cross students: Show kindness

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades issued a challenge to Holy Cross grade school students in South Bend during a pastoral visit Jan. 31, which corresponded with the close of Catholic Schools Week and the feast day of the patron saint of young people, St. John Bosco.

In his homily at an all-school morning Mass, the bishop commended Holy Cross for beginning Catholic Schools Week by giving thanks to God for their Catholic education through eucharistic adoration. He then told the story of how St. John Bosco helped children by building schools to educate them.

“When we’re disciples of Jesus, be kind to one another, be an example to others of God’s love,” he told them.

The bishop preached about St. Paul’s words in the first reading of the day, Philippians 4:4-9, in which Paul said to the Philippians, “Let your kindness be known to all.” The responsorial psalm mentioned kindness as well, including the refrain “The Lord is kind and merciful.”

As an example of kindness, he shared how Deacon Vincent Nguyen, CSC, and master of ceremonies Father Nathan Maskal hurried to greet him upon his arrival at the school that morning and helped carry his vestments into the church.

He asked the students to spread kindness within their families, especially among their siblings. “Be kind to them, even when they’re not kind to you,” he asked. “That’s hard to do, but Jesus called us to be kind. We still should love them, even if we don’t get love in return.” He ended with this challenge: “I want you to remember, for the rest of today, that one word: kindness. Try to live it out today to each other, try to be especially kind to your parents and your brothers and sisters. Is that a deal?” The students readily agreed.

Principal Angela Budzinski said she was honored to welcome Bishop Rhoades to the school. “He has given us the blessing of being able to begin a second track here for an immersion program, and we’re excited to show him, after three years, the progress we’ve made in that program. And also to highlight how good it has also been for our all-English tracks. He supported the continuation of both of those programs, and it’s exciting to share that with him.”

At the end of Mass, Budzinski announced the students of the month for each grade, along with Christ the Teacher (formerly Light of Learning) Award winner Julie Van Meter, and asked Bishop Rhoades to say a blessing over them. Then the school presented him with a gift: a Holy Cross T-shirt and a box of fudge, which the bishop said he would share with others in order to show kindness.

Holy Cross School was established in 1929 and is staffed by priests of the Congregation of Holy Cross, including current pastor Father James Fenstermaker, CSC. It has the distinction of winning the 2019 Chicago Tribune Readers’ Choice Award for Best Private School, has seen 50% growth in the last two years and partners with the state of Indiana to provide low-income families with quality early education through the My Way Pre-K program.

Holy Cross is the only Catholic school in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend that has a dual-track, Spanish language immersion program. A group of parents and educators led by Dr. Katy Lichon, a professor at the University of Notre Dame, approached Bishop Rhoades four years ago to ask permission to begin the program at the school. Students in the Spanish immersion track begin learning in the language in preschool and become fluent in speaking and writing in both English and Spanish by around the fifth grade.

The first students to be enrolled in the program are now in first grade. As they progress each new grade, Holy Cross hires an additional teacher who is fluent in Spanish to teach them at that level.

Clare Roach, immersion coordinator, explained to the bishop that the program is designed so that in the Spanish immersion classrooms, teachers speak 90% Spanish to their students. There is a roughly 50-50 split in the classrooms of students who speak Spanish at home and students who speak English at home, so the students also learn from each other.

This split gives the native Spanish-speaking students a sense of pride in their communities, she said. “Kids who were embarrassed to speak Spanish at home, now it’s a source of pride.”

Both the Spanish immersion and regular English-language classrooms have the same curriculum, so both classes learn the same concepts.

The bishop said he was amazed at how well the immersion students in kindergarten were able to speak and read books in Spanish. He interacted with them during reading time, laughing at the stories they chose to read to him.

The first grade English-language class enthusiastically welcomed Bishop Rhoades into their classroom, answering his questions about what they were learning, namely, the Holy Family and the Holy Trinity. In another classroom, the bishop was overjoyed to discover a young man who bore the name John Bosco as his first and middle names. He told the third grader that today was his feast day and asked if he would be having a celebration in St. John Bosco’s honor. When the bishop asked what he had spoken about at Mass earlier that morning, the students were able to answer that he had asked them to be kind to others.

At one point, the bishop was introduced to two eighth grade boys who had transferred to Holy Cross from other schools. Both students related how good their experience at Holy Cross has been, that they have made progress academically and their teacher shared the boys’ parents’ opinion that they are happier now because the boys are respectful and studying in a safe environment.

The bishop ended the day by having lunch with staff members before a staff versus students volleyball game. During the game, many of the students wore T-shirts they had made to honor Catholic basketball star Kobe Bryant, who died in a helicopter crash days earlier.
Bishop to Holy Cross students: Show kindness to others

Photos by Jennifer Barton

Holy Cross pastor Father Jim Fenstermaker, CSC, welcomes Bishop Rhoades and thanks him for visiting the school. Father Fenstermaker praised the young students for their insights into the Catholic faith.

Two middle school students sing the responsorial psalm at the morning Mass.

During the offertory, students present the gifts to Bishop Rhoades.

Two eighth grade students talk to the bishop about how Holy Cross School has had an impact on their grades, friendships and faith life.

A kindergarten student shares a book she is reading in Spanish with the bishop, eliciting a chuckle when he discovers the humorous plotline.

Bishop Rhoades interacts with children in the first grade Spanish immersion class, observing the progress made in the three years since the program was instituted.

First graders greet Bishop Rhoades with great enthusiasm and boundless energy. He stopped by their classroom to ask questions about their religion class.

The bishop greets principal Angela Budzinski, left, and Dr. Katy Lichon, who implemented the school’s new Spanish immersion program.

Students sing the responsorial psalm at the
Retired head of Catholic Relief Services to speak at Servus Omnium

BY JANET PATTERSON

In a lifetime of accomplishments, keeping a promise to her parents has been the most grievous thing. Dr. Carolyn Yauyan Woo, retired president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services. She will be the guest speaker at the 2020 Servus Omnium lecture presented by the University of Saint Francis on Tuesday, Feb. 25 in the USF Robert Goldstine Performing Arts Center, 431 W. Berry Street.

Woo, who has made her mark in higher education and as president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services, grew up in Hong Kong. Her parents fled there from China to escape World War II and the Communist regime. The fifth of six children, she was the youngest of four daughters. Her father expected her two brothers to become a doctor and a lawyer. Despite being well educated, her father had no plans to educate her daughters. “I grew up in a time when girls were not valued,” Woo said. Her mother received her schooling from a nanny who scrupulously saved anything she wanted, Woo set her sights on West Lafayette.

There was no money for her to continue her education, so she fund-raised. Woo said that although her family was not wealthy, the children had a nanny who scrutinized and saved her meager pay and invested in gold when she could, and with the help of her older siblings and the nanny Woo was able to raise enough money for one year of tuition.

“My father was totally against my leaving,” she said. He wanted his youngest daughter to remain in Hong Kong to provide companionship and to help support the family. “They were Chinese. They did not have Social Security. They had children,” Woo said. But she promised him that she would always provide what she could to the family.

Arriving on campus, Woo realized she had limited time and resources to spend on her education. Anxious to learn as much as she could, she took 42 credit hours that first year. She became very homesick. “So, I went to daily Mass at the Newman Center.” St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Center at Purdue became her home. “They fed me,” she said, spiritually as well as physically and emotionally. “Any goodies that people brought in... cookies, cakes, pies, they shared with me. I studied there all day.” She also met her future husband there. “He was a graduate student and I was a freshman. God was looking out for me.”

And God continued to take care of her. At the end of her freshman year, Woo applied for a scholarship to continue her studies. “I needed a full scholarship to be able to stay.” The day she was to learn if she had received the scholarship, she got out of class at 11:20 a.m. If she went to 11:30 a.m. Mass, she realized, she wouldn’t be able to find out about her scholarship until after 1 p.m. because the office closed for lunch at noon.

“My chances of getting that scholarship were very tiny. I decided that since I was probably going to get bad news, I should just delay it until 1 p.m. and go to Mass. After Mass I stayed in the chapel and had a long talk with God. I just told him that I thought it was not fair that I worked so much harder for girls to get an education. Then God surprised me.”

Woo not only got the scholarship for a second year but continued to earn full scholarships that made it possible to pursue her doctoral studies at Purdue. “I was a student at Purdue for seven years — from freshman year through my PhD.”

But that wasn’t the end of her association with Purdue University. After marrying and spending two years in business, Woo returned to the school and eventually rose to be associate executive vice president for academic affairs.

When the University of Notre Dame tapped her to lead the Mendoza College of Business, she made the difficult decision to leave the safety of Purdue and start a new venture. “It was a very hard decision. I had my community at Purdue.”

But move she did, and during her 14 years at Notre Dame, Mendoza became the top business school in the country.

Along the way, Woo said her conviction that faith is critical to strong business increased.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SAINT FRANCIS PRESENTS

2020

SERVUS OMNIOU LEC TURE

BUSINESS AS A FORCE FOR GOOD

Dr. Carolyn Yauyan Woo
Former President and CEO of Catholic Relief Services, 2012-2016
Former Dean of the University of Notre Dame’s Mendoza College of Business 1997-2011

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Most Rev. Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese
Mardi Gras Breakfast Buffet .......................................................... 7:10 a.m.
Speaker/Q&A ............................................................................ 7:45-8:45 a.m.

For additional information contact:
Dr. Lance Richey, Vice President of Academic Affairs
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Visit sf.edu/servus-omnium
Using the gifts God gave you: Exploring charisms

BY JODI MARLIN

The children of Lori Massa were getting older. So in 2013, the homeschooling mom began to look for another arena in which she could constructively contribute; maybe either a career or volunteer work for her parish of St. Vincent de Paul, Elkhart.

“I wanted to work for God in some way,” she said. Pastor Father Glenn Kehlman asked if Massa would take a seat on the parish council. But the role didn’t feel like it quite fit, she recalled.

Around the same time, she began to read the book “Forming Intentional Disciples: The Path to Knowing and Following Jesus,” by Sherry Weddell. “Forming Intentional Disciples” seeks to equip lay evangelists to rebuild the Church and become Catholics who practice faithfully and know how and when to “tell the Great Story of Jesus” to others.

Moved by the book to discern the gifts she had been given for the purpose of evangelization, Massa attended a Called and Gifted workshop in Troy, Michigan. The workshops help individuals identify and experiment with what St. Thomas Aquinas called “gratuitous grace” —natural talents, gifts and charisms given by the Holy Spirit that are for the benefit of other people.

In the spring of 2014, the director of RCIA at St. Vincent de Paul stepped away from the position. She approached Massa to take the helm.

“I knew I should say no. I had holes in my qualifications for the job, when it came to faith formation and a college education. But one thing I knew: that I had charisms crucial to bringing new Catholics into the faith.”

One of the areas in which Massa scored highly is called “helps.” It means that she has been given the necessary gifts and motivation to be of assistance to those who are in positions of leadership. She also has the charisms of learning and encouragement.

“I could see how the Lord was encouraging me as well,” she said. She accepted the position.

Fifty miles away, a second parish named St. Vincent de Paul had also become interested in Weddell’s book and the value of helping people determine to what task or mission God might be calling them. Since 2016, St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Fort Wayne has offered 12 Called and Gifted Workshops.

“Father Dan (Scheidt) likes to say that this is not a volunteer recruitment program for the parish, and I think that’s what really struck us. It’s a new way at looking at our gifts, our charisms as individuals, and how do we share those with our family, with our friends, with our co-workers … how do I approach life?” said pastoral associate and Called and Gifted core team member Dorothy Schuerman.

“We’ve had people that have changed professions, who said, ‘This convinced me; that here are my gifts, and maybe I need to be looking in other areas.’ And (they) found places of employment that they really love. They just found their niche.”

Called and Gifted is a way to live one’s faith out in the world. Schuerman reiterated. “You’re doing things that you love to do and you’re doing it for the glory of God. That’s the tenet of this, of these charisms. They are meant to be given away. They’re not meant to be kept.”

Sean Allen, director of young adult and campus ministry for the diocese, began building up charism identification and development several years ago among the young adult community in South Bend. Another disciple (they) found places of employment starting within the young adult community and preparing to expand it into two South Bend parishes. The first co-sponsored Called and Gifted workshop will take place Feb. 7-8 at St. Therese, Little Flower for active Catholics who want to “go deeper and expand their life of discipleship,” said Sikorski. St. Vincent de Paul, Fort Wayne, offered a workshop on Feb. 1, and parishes in Elkhart, Huntington, Warsaw and North Manchester are also looking into offering the Called and Gifted program.

Elizabeth Wilkes had her career choice reinforced by discerning through the Called and Gifted Program that she has the charisms of knowledge and helps. Both of come into play in her work at Ave Maria Press, South Bend.
**A marriage made in faith**

**BY JENNIFER BARTON**

*February 9, 2020*

Faith is seldom the initial attraction between two people. But for Eric and Kayla Peat it was, and it remains a strong connection. Faith was the heart of what brought them together more than eight years ago.

“I was starving for it,” Kayla said, remembering her rebellious adolescent and college years, when parties and poor relationship decisions dominated her life. By way of an extraordinary series of events, Kayla believes, God drew her out of the darkness of her days at Ball State University and toward His Church through the steadfast faith of the man she would marry.

Kayla had not been in a church since she was 12. Eric was raised Catholic at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Elkhart. They met at Ball State through a mutual friend who happened to be Kayla’s boyfriend at the time.

Kayla and her boyfriend would spend time at his apartment along with his three roommates, one of whom was Eric. The three other men adopted her as “one of the guys,” she said. Prior to meeting them, she had never known such genuine, kind, considerate men existed.

Kayla already had been in the process of changing her lifestyle and even felt an urge to go back to church. She began asking her boyfriend questions about his Catholic faith, even though it did not play a significant role in his life or their relationship.

The two eventually ended their relationship. Because of the difficult breakup, Kayla struggled with feelings of brokenness. One day in her old ways of partying and drinking. But Eric felt the loss of a friend as well. A few months later, he and one of the others decided to call Kayla, just to see how she was doing. She remembered sobbing.

“It was the first time some-one had missed me, cared about me,” Kayla said, remembering her rebellious adolescent and college years, when parties and poor relationship decisions dominated her life. By way of an extraordinary series of events, Kayla believes, God drew her out of the darkness of her days at Ball State University and toward His Church through the steadfast faith of the man she would marry.

Kayla had not been in a church since she was 12. Eric was raised Catholic at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Elkhart. They met at Ball State through a mutual friend who happened to be Kayla’s boyfriend at the time.

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“It was the first time someone had missed me, cared about me.” Kayla and the three men began meeting for meals or to play board games.

Still, Kayla struggled with feelings of brokenness. One day when she was driving around Muncie, she began sobbing so hard she had to pull over. She stopped at St. Mary Parish and led to their wedding at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Muncie. The Peats are members of St. Therese Parish in Fort Wayne and have three young sons.

A mutual longing for an active faith brought Eric and Kayla Peat together and led to their wedding at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Muncie. The Peats are members of St. Therese Parish in Fort Wayne and have three young sons.

Kayla took a different turn when they ended up at lunch together, just the two of them. Afterward they found themselves walking all over campus, talking non-stop. Their relationship deepened.

Almost from the beginning, Eric and Kayla went to church together at St. Francis of Assisi in Muncie. The hunger for a relationship with the Lord was burning strongly in Kayla, and Eric was more than willing to take her to Mass and answer her questions about the faith. He even promised to find the answers he didn’t immediately have, and he always followed through.

“The thing that drew us together was that we each had what the other person wanted,” said Eric. “I had this strong, firm foundation that I had grown up with. She had this fire.” Kayla agreed. “I fed off his consistency. I was flighty. So to see someone so consistent, that was awesome to me.”

Eric possessed a Catholic mentality about dating, something of which Kayla was well aware.

“I never considered dating someone unless they were Catholic and I could see myself potentially marrying them down the road. All of a sudden, I found myself falling for this girl who had absolutely no background in the faith. But I saw how hungry you were for it, and I saw the person that you wanted to be,” he said to Kayla.

With that knowledge, Kayla sat Eric down early on and told him the full story of her past— all the years of trauma and bad decisions she had been afraid to tell others, even him.

“He just sat and listened and I looked up at him and he started crying. And he said, ‘I’m just so sorry you had to go through

**Prayer for Married Couples**

Almighty and eternal God, You blessed the union of married couples so that they might reflect the union of Christ with his Church: look with kindness on them. Renew their marriage covenant, increase your love in them, and strengthen their bond of peace so that, with their children, they may always rejoice in the gift of your blessing. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.
Kayla was received into the Church in April. A month later the two were married at St. Francis of Assisi, the same parish where their faith journey had begun. Very soon, the Peats were joyfully expecting their first child.

In the Peat home, the couple strives to establish a domestic church. Kayla homeschools their three young boys, while Eric teaches his sons religion. The family discusses the daily readings each morning. Both are involved in various ministries at St. Therese Parish in Fort Wayne, where they live.

Eric well remembers the words the priest said to him and Kayla when they were going through marriage preparation. “He told us that our goal, the ultimate goal as a married couple, was to get your spouse to heaven, and I’d never really thought about that before.” Kayla added, “I think that’s how we’ve thought about it ever since. We took that very seriously.”

How Can Marriage Keep Love Alive?
At www.NationalMarriageWeekUSA.org
Locate a marriage course near you—we’ve posted them state by state. We have resources to help your marriage, or for you to help others. Tools you can use—Quizzes, Kits and Tips. Read the research. Support the cause.

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Hold the Botox

I get my picture taken a lot. I’m not particularly photogenic, but as president of The Catholic University of America, people expect me to be in the frame for a lot of occasions, and it would be rude for me to refuse. There are also events like graduation and alumni weekend when I really want to meet people and shake hands, and inevitably someone is holding a camera. After a decade of this, I’ve begun to notice a difference in how I look. In a word, older. This is one part of my job description that I’d change if I could.

My vanity was aroused by a recent piece in The Washington Post, about men in Silicon Valley who undergo all sorts of cosmetic procedures to look younger. Who are they? Well, it could offer the impression that they are people who could afford the procedures. It could also be a way to counteract under-eye bags, and make the face he wants. This is a kind of intermixture that distrusts us from what we should really want.

Don’t get me wrong. I wish I were younger. I want to know who he really is. I want the face he wants. This is one of those that I’d change if I could. In a word, older. This is how I look. In a word, older. This is how I look.

Cyrus, overtook Babylon. He ended when the Persian ruler, returned from Babylon. Nearby was Athens, the very center of the ancient world. Rich, with the resources and the empire, there were unknown in conversation that pertaining now.

The Book of Isaiah’s third section is the source of this weekend’s first reading. Scholars believe that this section is the source of the third reading today. St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians provides the second reading. Paul addressed this epistle to Christians living in Corinth, then one of the major cities of the Roman Empire, rich, decadent and sophisticated, Corinth was a center of culture and vice at the time.

Paul addressed the Corinthians, the very symbol of wisdom and logic. He allowed the Jews to return to their homeland after an absence of four generations. Probably few had ever seen their homeland.

Nevertheless, release from Babylon brought utter exhilaration to the exiles. But the opportunity was bittersweet. When the exiles reached their ancestral home, they found deprivation and want, conditions worse than those that they had experienced in Babylon.

In this section of the Book of Isaiah, the prophet reaffirmed God’s goodness, but the prophet also called upon the people themselves to provide for those in need. Then, they would experience the reward of returning home and the fullness of God’s promise to give them life and peace.

St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians provides the second reading. Paul addressed this epistle to Christians living in Corinth, then one of the major cities of the Roman Empire, rich, decadent and sophisticated, Corinth was a center of culture and vice at the time.

New Disciples, the very symbol of wisdom and logic.

Paul had preached in Athens, although not with great success. In his epistles, he forever answered skeptics who asked if the Christian Gospel made any sense. After all, the Gospel ran counter to every conventional pattern of thought. Finally, and most importantly for so many, the founder of Christianity, Jesus of Nazareth, had been legally executed as a common criminal and as a traitor to the empire. In response, Paul insisted that they relied upon a source more dependable than human reasoning; namely, the Holy Spirit. He spoke not with words of “human wisdom.”

St. Matthew’s Gospel furnishes the last reading, a collection of two brief statements by Jesus, given in clear imagery for the audience.

First, Jesus told the disciples that they were the “salt of the earth.” Next, the Lord admonished followers to be the “light of the world.” Salt and light hardly are unknown in conversation today, but in ancient times, they had a symbolism greater than that pertaining now.

At the time of Jesus, salt was precious. Roman soldiers were paid in salt. (“He is not worth his salt.”) “Salary” derives from this practice.

Salt could be unrefined. Dust or sand usually is salt. The less dust and sand, the better the salt.

Today, people are accustomed to bright light at night. Then, artificial light was weak. Since night was threatening, light had a very special value. It enabled freedom and security. Jesus urged disciples to uplift culture society by being “salt” and “light.”

Reflection

Gently, but deliberately, the Church is guiding us onward from its introduction of Jesus of Nazareth as son of the human Mary, Son of God and Redeemer of the sinful human race, as given at Christmas, Epiphany and the feast of the Lord’s Baptism. It is challenging us to respond to Jesus.

These readings are clear.

Discipleship is to be a servant. It is the actual and intentional imitation of Christ in our daily lives.

Matthew insists that believers have a strength upon which to draw as they illuminate the world, a strength issuing from the grace of their faith. As disciples, they do not stumble through darkness. They are pure salt, not contaminated by the debris of sin.

It is not automatic. Christians must allow the light to guide them. They must rid themselves of impurities. It is difficult. They must fortify their Christian resolve. Such is discipleship.

Followers of Jesus are a light unto the world

Let the good times roll

JENNIFER MILLER

Christian. This self-discipline takes repetition, day after day. It takes 40 days of fasting, plus the great joy awaiting us at Easter. But Lent cannot be presumed to be carried on one’s will and resolve alone. Lenten intentions to fast, give alms and pray will fall faster than a New Year’s resolution to lose excess weight if not for God’s grace. God alone sustains us through a good Lent, and His burden is easy. His yoke is light.

Transformation happens when God’s grace rests upon a willing soul. Might I suggest, then, that keeping a good Mardi Gras, “letting the good times roll” or “laissez les bons tems rouler,” is one valid way to prepare?

This Feb. 25 is Mardi Gras, or Fat Tuesday. It’s the last day of ordinary time, growing time, before Ash Wednesday arrives and Lent begins. The full season of Carnival starts on Epiphany, the Twelfth Night, when the Magi arrive, and runs through Mardi Gras day.

Coming from the Latin “carne vale” or “farewell to meat,” these

READINGS

Sunday: Is 58:9-10Ps 114:7 Or Cor 1:21-5 Mk 5:13-16
Monday: 1 Kgs 8:7-13Ps 132:6-10 Mk 6:53-56
Tuesday: 1 Kgs 8:22-23Ps 84:5-6, 10-11 Mk 7:1-13
Wednesday: 1 Kgs 10:1-10Ps 37:5-6, 30-31, 39-40 Mk 7:14-23
Thursday: 1 Kgs 11:14-13Ps 106:3-4, 35-37, 40 Mk 7:24-30
Friday: 1 Kgs 11:29-32Ps 81:10-15 Mk 7:31-37
Saturday: 1 Kgs 12:26-32Ps 133:3-4 Ps 106:6-7, 19-22 Mk 8:1-10

February 9, 2020

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN E. CAMPION

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Matthew 5:13-16

T he Book of Isaiah’s third section is the source of this weekend’s first reading. Scholars believe that this section was written perhaps in Jerusalem for the Hebrew remnant that had returned from Babylon.

This assumption puts the third section of Isaiah at a date after the epic Babylonian Captivity, 597-539 B.C., give or take, which ended when the Persian ruler, Cyrus, overtook Babylon. He allowed the Jews to return to their homeland after an absence of four generations. Probably few had ever seen their homeland.
Spending time with my spiritual father

I write these words from the Eternal City of Rome, whither I’ve come with my brother bishops from Region I — California, Nevada and Hawaii — for our ad limina visit. This is a regular and canonically required trip to pray at the limina apostolorum (the threshold of the Apostles), the tombs of Sts. Peter and Paul, and to meet with the successor of Peter.

Yesterday was the first official day of the pilgrimage, and it was extraordinary indeed. We gathered early in the Apostolic Palace, and after traveling a number of elaborately decorated corridors and receiving a few salutes from Swiss Guards (I’ll confess that I rather like the salutes!), we lined up to meet the pope.

Pope Francis was in remarkably good form, especially considering that he is a man of 83. He was friendly, warm and energetic, and he engaged with each bishop as we entered the room. Once settled into elegant but rather uncomfortable chairs (one of my brother bishops said that he thought they had last been used during the Spanish Inquisition!), we commenced an extremely lively conversation with the Bishop of Rome. Francis spoke exclusively in Italian, while about two-thirds of us spoke to him in Spanish and about a third in English.

It would be impossible to summarize what turned out to be a three-hour dialogue in the scope of this brief article, but I can mention a few major motifs.

First, Pope Francis was extremely interested in prayer. He spoke with real feeling about the importance of initiating our young people into the practice of Word on Fire Catholicism, especially in the popular culture — film, books, sports, etc. — which often appeal to the young people into the practice of Catholicism, especially in the popular culture — film, books, sports, etc. — which often appeal to the young.

Second, the pope articulated with particular clarity and passion was that of gender ideology. As he has often in the past, he bemoaned the “ideological colonization” that takes place when Western notions of gender fluidity and self-invention make their way aggressively into parts of the developing world, often through a kind of blackmail: Unless and until you adopt Western values in this regard, we will refuse you material and medical assistance.

The pope’s fundamental argument was biblical. The book of Genesis tells us that God made man and woman in his own image and likeness. Whatever seeks to eliminate difference in this arena of life, therefore, is contrary to God’s will.

But by far the dominant theme in our lengthy conversation, expressed both in the questions of the bishops and the substantive responses of the pope, was evangelization. When one bishop made reference to “Evangelii Gaudium,” Francis’s semi-encyclical on the topic, the pope very clearly commented that that text was largely a “plagiarization” from St. Paul VI’s 1975 encyclical “Evangelii Nuntiandi” and the document that emerged from the meeting of the Latin American Bishops’ Conference at Aparecida in 2007. All three statements are in fact, landmarks of the New Evangelization, and all three operate out of the assumption that the Church is missionary by its very nature.

When I had a chance to speak, I asked the pope to elaborate on the theme of the via pulchritudinis (the way of beauty), which is central to “Evangelii Gaudium.” He spoke of the recovery of beauty in the work of contemporary theologians and philosophers, and he urged us not to design the beautiful as it is found in the popular culture — film, books, sports, etc. — which often appeal to the young more than some expressions of beauty in the high culture.

A second theme that the pope articulated with particular clarity and passion was that of vicinanza — the intimacy with the Lord that comes through the Church. I will confess that these words of his have already burned their way into my mind and heart: “The first task of the bishop is to pray.”

And in regard to bishops, he continued, “we have a duty to make the young people into the practice of the faith publicly and draw people to Christ; but on the other hand, the Holy Father frequently inveighs against what he calls “proselytism.” I will confess that I often wondered at some of Francis’ rhetoric here and have longed for something like his definition of the term.

The Holy Father clarified that he, of course, advocates the spreading of the faith, but he is opposed to an aggressive, divisive, numbers-oriented approach to the task. Evangelization, he joked, is not like getting people to join your football club. As he often has in the past, he emphasized with us the centrality of personal witness to the joy of living a life of faith. Whatever teaching we do, he said, must take place within the context of that way of life. In this, of course, he was simply echoing Pope Paul VI, who said that people today listen to teachers precisely in the measure that those teachers are also witnesses.

I was particularly gratified to hear him on this point, for there have been some in the community who have suggested that engaging in apologetics or theological clarification is tantamount to “proselytizing.” Not according to Pope Francis. Before I posed my question, I told the pope that we were all grateful to him for giving us the opportunity to be with him as a true spiritual father. And that, indeed, is what the experience was like: our father speaking to us from the heart and giving great affection. It was an encounter that I will not soon forget.

I've come with my brother bishops and to our priests.

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Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.
A crowd of young adults gathered at Welch’s Ale House in Fort Wayne Jan. 28 to listen to Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades speak on the topic of religion and politics. The bishop’s presentation was the first in the Theology on Tap “Call and Response” lecture series organized by the Office of Young Adult and Campus Ministry.

Throughout the discussion, Bishop Rhoades emphasized the responsibility Catholics have to stay informed on a broad spectrum of political issues and participate in civic duties like voting.

“In our Catholic tradition,” he said, “the Church has a right and an obligation to bring moral truth to political life.”

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops provides a useful framework for evaluating political candidates in a teaching document called “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.” Bishop Rhoades contributed revisions to the document’s introductory note in 2011 and its most recent version in 2019 to address specific issues and challenges brought about during preceding presidential elections.

He explained that making good political and social choices in light of Catholic social teaching requires two things—a well-formed conscience and exercising the virtue of prudence. Citing the document, he shared that forming conscience means embracing goodness and truth, along with a willingness to seek the truth by studying sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Church. This should always be followed by an examination of key facts about various choices and prayer to discern the will of God.

By using a well-formed conscience, we are then able to exercise prudence, defined by the Catechism of the Catholic Church as the virtue that enables us “to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it,” he said. The bishop emphasized how exercising prudence often requires courage to act in defense of moral principles for building a society of justice and peace.

By Annie Obergefell

Young adults enjoy supper and listen to Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades talk about applying Catholic social teaching to political decisions at a Theology on Tap in Fort Wayne Jan. 28.

“Abortion is a high priority,” Bishop Rhoades explained, “but we cannot dismiss or ignore other serious threats to human life and dignity such as racism, the environmental crisis, poverty and the death penalty, and immigration.”

At this point, Bishop Rhoades warned against two extreme points of view, also highlighted in the FCPC document, that can distort the Church’s defense of human life and dignity. These are moral equivalence, or treating all issues with the same importance, and dismissing or ignoring other serious threats and placing greater emphasis on only a few.

Subsidiarity, meaning larger institutions in society should not interfere with smaller or local institutions unless human dignity is at risk, and solidarity, a determination to commit oneself to the common good of all, rounded out the remaining principles of Catholic social teaching highlighted by the bishop.

“Considering the full spectrum of social teaching, we don’t find many candidates who share our convictions on important issues,” he acknowledged.

“Even if you feel politically homeless, it’s important to stay involved and vote. Not all issues are created equal, but all important issues should be considered in voting decisions. One should also consider the candidates’ integrity and character.”

Two Theology on Tap winter series are taking place, one in Fort Wayne and one in South Bend. For more information on either one visit http://www.dioce-sefwsb.org/tot.

Bishop: Catholic social teaching should inform political decisions

Political and societal issues should then be evaluated based on the four principles of Catholic social doctrine: the common good, the dignity of the human person, subsidiarity and solidarity.

Referring to the Catechism’s definition of “common good,” Bishop Rhoades defined it as the “sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.” He continued by saying that when Catholics vote, they should ask themselves which candidate they believe will best serve the common good, both in America and globally. And they should to keep in mind their transcendent goal of attaining the ultimate ends of the person and the universal common good.

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

Contemplative prayer retreat
DONALDSON — A contemplative prayer retreat will be Wednesday, Feb. 12, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center. During this day long retreat, participants will be led through the ancient Christian form of contemplative prayer. While listening to God’s Word within them, Sister Coletta Wrasman, PHJC, will guide participants towards the awareness of God’s love and presence.

There will be short presentations to help guide conversation. Contact Christopher Thelen at 574-935-1706 or visit www.lindenwood.org.

Life in the Spirit retreats to begin
FORT WAYNE — A Life in the Spirit Retreat will take place every Wednesday from Feb. 26 to April 8, 6:30-8 p.m. in the Mother Guerin Chapel – Lower Level, 1102 S. Clinton St. Register by calling 260-385-5717. There is a suggested donation of $10 for materials. Handicapped accessible. Contact Life in the Spirit Retreats at 260-385-5717.

Casino night
AUBURN — St. Michael the Archangel Parish will have a Casino Night Friday, Feb. 21, at the Elks Lodge, 311 East 9th St., from 7-11 p.m. with hors d’oeuvres from Sutton’s Deli, dessert bar and more. Tickets are $30 at the door or $25 in advance. Ticket price includes $50 of “Casino Cash,” hors d’oeuvres, and dessert bar. Cash bar and additional Casino Cash available. Proceeds to benefit the St. Michael’s Tuition Fund. Contact Jillian Dunn at 260-414-0154.

Diocesan World Youth Day

YOU ALREADY READ

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Valid in-store only. Must present this original coupon (photocopies, reproductions or phone images are not valid).

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LIMIT: one coupon per visit. Some restrictions apply. Expires February 29, 2020

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It is in that Catholic tradition that we invite you to learn more about preplanning your funeral at Divine Mercy. If you have preplanned with another funeral home but would like Divine Mercy to handle your final arrangements in the Catholic tradition, we can help you transfer those arrangements quickly and easily.

Contact Divine Mercy at 260-426-2044 or info@divinemercyfuneralhome.com for more information.

260.426.2044 | 3500 Lake Avenue | www.divinemercyfuneralhome.com
Church must recognize the gifts of older Catholics, pope says

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Old age “is not a disease, it’s a privilege,” and Catholic dioceses and parishes miss a huge and growing resource if they ignore their senior members, Pope Francis said.

“We must change our pastoral routines to respond to the presence of so many older people in our families and communities,” the pope told Catholic seniors and pastoral workers from around the world.

Pope Francis addressed the group Jan. 31 near the end of a three-day conference on the pastoral care of the elderly sponsored by the Vatican Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life.

The Catholic Church at every level, he said, must respond to the longer life expectancies and changing demographics evident around the world.

When speaking with and about older Catholics, the Church cannot act as if their lives only felt all the pieces were in place? How long has it been since you felt all the pieces were in place?

Be made whole again…

Save the Date!
March 10, 6-8 p.m.
Confession at every parish

The Light Is On For You! One night · Every Parish · Every Confessional

diocesefwsb.org/light