

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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*Digital email May 20;
next print issue May 31*

Public liturgies to resume with restrictions for safety



DIocese OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND
915 South Clinton Street
Post Office Box 390
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801

May 6, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This past Friday, Governor Holcomb issued his "Back on Track" Roadmap to Safely Reopen Indiana. This roadmap is designed to safely open Indiana's economy, but it also includes guideline for places of worship and allows the re-convening of religious services inside churches.

This past Monday, the five Bishops of Indiana agreed that we would all begin to resume public liturgies by May 30th, the Vigil of Pentecost, with the proper restrictions for safety. We also jointly decided that we would maintain the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass until at least August 15th.

After much consultation, I have decided to lift the suspension on public liturgies here in our diocese beginning on the weekend of May 23-24, the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. Though we were not able to celebrate in person together the Resurrection of the Lord on Easter Sunday, we will be able to celebrate together Our Lord's glorious Ascension. Mass attendance that weekend and following will need to be limited in order to observe the necessary social distancing within our churches. I am leaving it to our pastors to decide how to handle how many people can attend any given Mass. We have not specified a number since our churches differ in size and seating capacity. I know that some parishes will be increasing the number of Sunday Masses.

It is absolutely essential that we observe the required social distancing in our churches (and also outside the church, in the parking lot, etc.), a most effective means to prevent the spread of the virus. We are also mandating that all wear face masks within our churches. I ask everyone to observe these regulations of our diocese and our government so that we do not contribute to a rebound effect that would force us to take steps back and even force us to suspend public liturgies again.

I have informed our pastors that, in the event of stricter rules and regulations mandated by local government because of particular circumstances (e.g. a serious outbreak of the virus in a local area), those directives should be followed. Such directives may be stricter than the diocesan and state directives.

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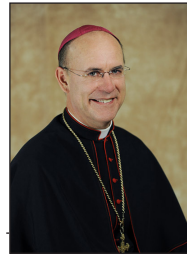
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On Pilgrimage to the Father's House

IN TRUTH
AND
CHARITY

BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

The following homily was delivered by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades during a livestreamed Mass from the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on the Fifth Sunday of Easter, May 10, 2020:

The Gospel today is part of Jesus' final discourse to His disciples at the Last Supper. The disciples were naturally troubled that Jesus was leaving them. Our Lord encouraged them to have faith. He told them not to be troubled, that He was going to prepare a place for them in His Father's house. And He promised them that He would come back and take them with Him to His Father's house.

What comfort these words bring to us. That's why many people choose this Gospel for the funeral Masses of their loved ones. We believe that Jesus has indeed gone to the Father's house and entered into heavenly glory and that He will come back at the hour of our death and take us to be with Him and the Father forever. Because of this faith, when someone we love dies, we don't fall into despair. St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: "do not grieve like the rest, who have no hope." As Christians, we have this hope in eternal life because we believe that Jesus is "the resurrection and the life."

It's good to think of our life and to live our life with this destination in mind. This is what our life is: a pilgrimage to the Father's house. Our purpose, our end is to go to the Father's house. And Jesus shows us the way. He is the way! In the Gospel today, Thomas asked Him about this. I always love when the apostles, who often don't really understand what Jesus is teaching them, speak up and ask a question. I'm glad they ask because then Jesus explains more, which helps us also, because we're like the apostles, we're human, and we seek to understand what Jesus teaches. If it wasn't for Thomas and other disciples asking Jesus questions, we wouldn't have these wonderful answers that Jesus gives. So thank you, Thomas, for asking Jesus to explain! Thomas said: "Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" And because Thomas asked that question, we have those wonderful words of Jesus in response: "I am the way and the truth and the life."

Jesus is the way. In last Sunday's Gospel, we heard Jesus say something similar. He said: "I am the gate for the sheep." Jesus is the gateway leading to God and eternal life. He's the way to the Father's house. He is the truth as well. He reveals the truth about His Father and the truth about us, about who we are and are meant to be. Jesus is also the life. He's the source of eternal life. Remember the words of Jesus we heard last Sunday: "I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly." Jesus gives us a share in the life of the Blessed Trinity. That's why He became man: to lift us up to share in the divine communion which he, as the Son, has enjoyed from all eternity.

When you pray, do you ever ask Jesus questions or ask Him for explanations? We should, because we don't always understand things. We can pray: "Jesus, help me to



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"In my Father's house there are many dwelling places," Jesus told His disciples. "If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?"

understand." Understanding is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. We can ask the Holy Spirit to give us that gift. We should be honest and frank when we pray, trusting that He will give us light and strength.

It's not only Thomas who asks a question in the Gospel today. Another apostle, Philip, also asks Jesus a question. Like Thomas, Philip was having a hard time really understanding what Jesus was saying. So he said to Jesus: "Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us." Our Lord very gently rebukes Philip for his incomprehension. He says: "Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip?" When you think about it, Philip had been with Jesus for about three years. He should have had some understanding about what Jesus was saying. This kind of gives us some hope when we're a little slow about understanding some aspect of our faith.

Jesus patiently answers and teaches Philip. He says: "Philip, whoever has seen me has seen the Father." Remember, elsewhere Jesus had said this to the disciples: "The Father and I are one." Jesus had often told them about His union with the Father. He had told them that the Father had sent Him into the world. So Jesus then asks Philip and all the disciples: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?" Jesus goes on to explain that the words He speaks are not His own. He is the spokesman for the Father. And then He explains also that His works (His miracles) are the deeds of His Father. Jesus says: "The Father who dwells in me is doing His works." Our Lord appeals to the disciples to believe this. He says: "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me or else, believe because of the works themselves."

The basic truth of all this is that whoever has seen Jesus has seen God. As Pope Benedict XVI so often said: "God gave Himself a human face, the Face of Jesus, and consequently, from now on, if we truly want to know the Face of God, all we have to do is to contemplate the Face of Jesus! In his Face we truly see who God is and what He looks like!" This gets to the very heart of our Christian faith. Jesus isn't merely a great prophet or world religious figure. He is God. God is not an unknown Person. He

revealed Himself to humanity. He became flesh and blood. Jesus is the Truth, the true Face of God. Jesus of Nazareth is also the ultimate answer to who we are and who we are meant to be.

We all seek meaning in our life. We seek joy and happiness. We find these things in Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, in God's only-begotten Son who became flesh and dwelt among us. God did not leave us groping in the dark. He has shown Himself to us as a man. As Jesus said to Philip: "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."

Our mission, the mission of the Church, is to show the world by our words and by our actions the true Face of God. We are the Body of Christ. We are called to reflect in our lives the Face of Jesus. In a world often empty of God, that has often forgotten God, we're called to show His Face, the Face of mercy, goodness, and love, the Face of Jesus Christ who reveals the Father.

Jesus said in today's Gospel: "whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father." How is this possible? It is possible because the glorified Jesus sends us the Holy Spirit. Throughout the Acts of the Apostles, which we hear so often in the readings of this Easter season, we see the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church.

Brothers and sisters, we're all on this pilgrimage to the Father's house where Jesus has prepared a place for us. Jesus is our Way on this pilgrimage. He is the Truth that lights our way. And He is the life that sustains us. I think of the example of Pope St. John Paul II, whose 100th birthday is approaching — May 18th. He lived His whole life as a pilgrimage to the Father. He believed in Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. And He showed the whole world the Face of Jesus, the Face of God. The last words He spoke on the day he died, on April 2, 2005, on his deathbed, were whispered to a nun who was caring for him at that time. He said to her in the weakest of voices: "Let me go to the Father's house." That was his life's goal and he reached it. May that be our life's goal! Let us help one another on our pilgrimage to the Father's house!

Bishops say Our Lady of America apparitions were not supernatural

BY GREG ERLANDSON

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, and five other bishops have concluded that alleged apparitions of Our Lady of America — said to have taken place more than six decades ago — were not of supernatural origin.

While private devotion inspired by reports of the apparitions could continue without harm to the faith, Bishop Rhoades said, it would not be appropriate for any sort of public devotion.

“I must come to the conclusion that the visions and revelations themselves cannot be said to be of supernatural origin in the sense of objective occurrences,” Bishop Rhoades said in a final document known as a singular decree, adding that he “cannot approve or support public devotion or cult.”

The investigation concerned numerous apparitions reported by Sister Mary Ephrem Neuzil, a Sister of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus of Dayton, Ohio, between 1956 and 1959. At the time, it was reported that Mary had appeared to Sister Neuzil and had identified herself as Our Lady of America.

Sister Neuzil died in 2000. Both before and after the reported apparitions, she said she had other communications or locutions from Mary that took place in several dioceses.

Concurring with the conclusion reached by Bishop Rhoades were five other bishops from the dioceses where Sister Neuzil had stayed during this period: Archbishops Dennis M. Schnurr of Cincinnati, and Allen H. Vigneron of Detroit along with Bishops Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix, Timothy L. Doherty of Lafayette, Indiana and Daniel E. Thomas of Toledo, Ohio.

In an interview with Catholic News Service, Bishop Rhoades said he had agreed to a request by the other five bishops to form a commission of six theologians and canonists to investigate the apparitions. He was chosen as the lead bishop of the commission because the alleged apparitions began in Rome City, Indiana, which is in his diocese.

He described the commission as “a very balanced group that was open to the possibility that the apparitions were authentic.”

But after what he said was a year of study of the vast documentation of the case, all members of the commission concluded that the apparitions were not supernatural in origin.

In an explanatory document called “Statement Regarding the Devotion to Our Lady of America” and signed by all six



Guest residences and meeting spaces at the now-closed Sylvan Springs in Rome City, Indiana.

File photos



A statue of Mary rests in Our Lady, Mother of Mercy Chapel in Sylvan Springs years ago.



CNS photo/Karen Callaway, Catholic New World

This image of Mary shown in this 2009 photo is located at St. Francis of Assisi/Our Lady of the Angels Parish in Chicago. A recent bishops' commission says supposed Marian apparitions of Our Lady of America said to have taken place more than six decades ago are not recognized by the Catholic Church and are not appropriate for public devotion.

bishops, they said that Sister Neuzil appeared to have been “honest, morally upright, psychologically balanced, devoted to religious life and without guile.” They also said there were spiritual fruits that came from the devotion, although none warranted certification as miraculous.

The bishops said there was not any doctrinal error in the revelations, though the report added

that a claim regarding St. Joseph as a “co-redeemer” with Christ “must be seen as an error.”

Regarding the experiences of Sister Neuzil, the bishops said their study concluded that they should be described as “subjective inner religious experiences rather than objective external visions and revelations.”

While saying such experiences were “authentically graced moments,” the document added that they were “subjective ones in which her own imagination and intellect were constitutively engaged,” not “objective visions and revelations of the type seen at Guadalupe, Fatima, and Lourdes.”

The report also noted that Sister Neuzil’s spiritual director was a priest who later became archbishop of Cincinnati, Archbishop Paul F. Leibold. He had supported Sister Neuzil in various ways over many years. “However, in a letter written two years before his death,” the document noted that the archbishop said “he was unable to make a judgment on the supernatural nature of the visions or apparitions.”

While he said he attested to the sister’s holiness, he wrote: “I have never taken any action to promote her devotion publicly.”

The bishops concluded that since many of the prayers and religious articles such as medals have been given approval by “competent ecclesiastical authority,” the use of such materials could continue “as a matter of private devotion.”

In explaining the origins of the commission, Bishop Rhoades said that after receiving requests

from bishops for some sort of assessment regarding the purported apparitions, then-president of the U.S. bishops conference, Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, asked the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith if this was the appropriate competence of the conference.

The doctrinal congregation said it was more appropriately the responsibility of the local bishop where the apparitions and locutions were said to have occurred. This case was unusual in that several dioceses were involved, and all the bishops were asked to review and approve the final report.

Sister Neuzil, baptized Mildred, was born in 1916 and became a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus in 1933. In 1938, she said she started to experience mystical events, the report said.

Bishop Rhoades expressed appreciation for leaders of the devotion who provided the commission with literally thousands of pages of correspondence and other materials for review. “They are faith-filled, wonderful people,” he said.

To view the statement, visit this article at todayscatholic.org.



DIOCESE OF
FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

On Wednesday, May 13th, the Feast of our Lady of Fatima, the Poor Brothers of St. Francis will end living as a Franciscan community in our diocese. The beloved Brothers have made this decision based on their personal, vocational discernment as they consider where God is calling each of them.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend would like to thank the Poor Brothers of Saint Francis for their service and devotion to our diocese and community. We extend our prayers that God continue to guide and bless them in the days ahead.

Report abuse



DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

Report abuse

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

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

Denuncie los abusos

Es importante para nuestra Iglesia proteger a los niños y jóvenes adultos de los actos malvados como el abuso. La Diócesis de Fort Wayne-South Bend se compromete a mantener y seguir las reglas, políticas y procedimientos que fueron implementados para la protección de niños y personas jóvenes. Estos pueden leerse en la página web de la diócesis, www.diocesefwsb.org bajo la sección de "Protección de Jóvenes" ("Youth Protection"). Si usted tiene motivo de creer que un menor es víctima de abuso o negligencia, la ley de Indiana requiere que usted reporte esto a las autoridades civiles. Si usted o alguien que usted conoce fue abusado, ya sea niño o persona joven, por un adulto, le recomendamos que notifique a las autoridades civiles apropiadas. También, si el alegado abusador es o fue un sacerdote o diácono de la Iglesia Católica, se le insta comunicarse con Mary Glowaski, coordinadora de

asistencia de víctimas, al (260) 399-1458 o mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org; o con el Presbítero Mark Gurtner, vicario general de la Diócesis de Fort Wayne-South Bend, al P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801; al (260) 399-1419; o al mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org. La diócesis se compromete a ayudar a prevenir el abuso o negligencia de niños y personas jóvenes y ayudar a aquellos que han sufrido daño como el resultado de tal abuso.

Báo cáo lạm dụng Tinh dục.

Nếu bạn có suy luận cho rằng một đứa trẻ nào đó có lẽ là một nạn nhân đã bị lạm dụng hoặc bị bỏ bê, Pháp luật Indiana yêu cầu bạn báo cáo cho chính quyền dân sự. Nếu bạn hay người nào đó bị lạm dụng với tư cách một đứa trẻ hoặc thanh thiếu niên do người lớn, bạn được động viên đặc biệt thông báo cho chính quyền dân sự về việc lạm dụng này. Ngoài ra, nếu kẻ bạo hành bị cáo buộc là một linh mục hay phó tế của Giáo hội Công giáo, xin vui lòng liên hệ:

Mary Glowaski, Trưởng ban hỗ trợ nạn nhân.(260) 399-1458 email: mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org Hoặc Very Rev. Mark Gurtner, Cha Tổng Đại Diện. (260) 399-1419 Email: mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org Giáo Phận Fort Wayne_ South Benth Attn: Hỗ trợ nạn nhân PO Box 390, Fort Wayne, IN 46801 Giáo phận Fort Wayne-South Bend cam kết bảo vệ trẻ em và thanh thiếu niên từ các tệ nạn lạm dụng và hỗ trợ những người kêu nài đã bị thiệt hại do hậu quả bị lạm dụng. Lạm dụng một đứa trẻ là một tội lỗi. Chúng tôi cam kết lắng nghe, hỗ trợ, điều tra cùng thực hiện theo các chính sách và thủ tục như đã ban hành của Toà Giám Mục.

မတရားက ငှက် နှိပ်ဆက်ည ဦးပန်း ခင်း တိုင် ကားရန်

ကလေးသူငယ်မ ဘေးနှင့် လူငယ်မ ဘေးကို မတရားက ငှက် နှိပ်ဆက်ည ငွေပန်း ခင်း မှတ်တမ်းဆွဲပေးရန်မ ဘေးက ကာကယ်ပေးဖို့ သည် က ငှက်တို့ အသင်းတော်အတက်အရေး ကိုးသော

အရာ ဖစ်သည်။ အသင်းတော် ဂိုဏ်းအုပ်သားနာနယ်ပယ် ဖစ်တဲ့ ဖို့ဝိန်း-South Bend ဟာ ကလေးသူငယ် ငှက်လူငယ်မ ဘေးကိုကာကယ်စောင့်ရှောက်ဖို့ အတက် အကောင်အထည်ဖော်နိုင်အောင် ခ မ တ်ထားသည့် လမ်းညွှန် နည်းလမ်းမ ဘေး ငှက် ဖို့ဝိန်း လိုက်နာ က ငှက်သုံး ထိမ်းသိမ်းဆောက်တည်နေပ သည်။ ထိုအရာမ ဘေးကို အသင်းတော် ဂိုဏ်းအုပ်စာမ က် ဘေးဖစ်တဲ့ www.diocesefwsb.org က "လူငယ်မ ဘေးကာကယ်စောင့်ရှောက်ပေးရေး" ဆိုတဲ့ နေရာမ ဘေး ပန်လည်ဆန်းစစ် ကည့်ရ နိုင်ပ သည်။

သင့်အနေ ငှက် အရ လမ်းမရောက်သေးသော ကလေးသူငယ်မ ဘေး ငှက်ဆက်ည ဦးပန်း ခံနေရသည် သို့ မဟုတ် လစ်လ ရ ပစ်ထားခံထားရသည်လို ယုံ ကည့် သုံးသပ်ရလ ငှက် အင်ဒီယားနား ပည့်နယ်ရဲ့ ဥပဒေအရ ထိုကိစ္စ ကို တာဝန်ရှိ သူမ ဘေးထံသို့ အသိပေးအကောင်း ကားရပ မည်။ အကယ်၍ သင် သို့ မဟုတ် သင်သိတဲ့သူ တစ်ယောက်ယောက်မ ဘေး ကလေးဘဝတုန်းက သို့ မဟုတ် လူငယ်အရ ယထက လူကိစ္စတို့၏ နှိပ်ဆက်ည ဦးပန်း ခင်းကိုခံခဲ့ရသည် ရှိသော် သင့်လေ ဘေးသော တာဝန်ရှိ သူထံသို့ ထိုနှိပ်ဆက်ည ဦးပန်းမ နှင့်ပတ်သက် ပီး

အ ကာင်း ကားရန် သင့်အားတိုက်တ နှိုးလို့ ပ သည်။ ။ ဖည့်စ က် ပီးတော့လည်း ဧဟလိုသည်မ ဘေး အကယ်၍ ထိုသို့ နှိပ်စက်ည ဦးပန်းခွဲ သူသည် လက်ရှိ သို့ မဟုတ် ယခင်က ကတ်သလစ် ဘုရားကောင်း၏ ဘုန်းတော် ကိုး သို့ မဟုတ် ကောင်းသင်းထောက်ဝတ် ပ ဆရာ ဖစ်ခဲ့ပ က၊ ပ လုပ်ခံရသည့် သူမ ဘေးကို ကူညီထောက်ပံ့ ဆောင်ရွက်ပေးသူ ဖစ်တဲ့ Mary Glowaski ကို (၂၆၀) ၃၉၉-၁၄၅၈ သို့ မဟုတ် mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org ။ ဒ မ မဟုတ် အသင်းတော် ဂိုဏ်းအုပ်သားနာနယ်ပယ် ဖစ်တဲ့ ဖို့ဝိန်း-South Bend ရဲ့ အသင်းတော်ဘုန်း ကိုး ဖစ်တဲ့

Mark Gurtner ကို လိပ်စာအမတ် P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801 ။ ဖုန်းနံပါတ် (၂၆၀) ၃၉၉-၁၄၁၉ ။ သို့ မဟုတ် mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org သို့ ဆက်သယ် ပီး အကောင်း ကားရန် သင့်အားတိုက်တ နှိုးပ သည်။ အသင်းတော်ဂိုဏ်းအုပ်သားနာနယ်ပယ်သည် ကလေးသူငယ်မ ဘေး ငှက်လူငယ်မ ဘေးကို ငှက်ဆက်ည ဦးပန်း ခင်း သို့ မဟုတ် လစ်လ ရ ပစ်ထားခံရ ခင်းမ ဘေးတို့ ကို ကာကယ်ထားဆီး ခင်း ငှက်အတူ ထိုသို့ ငှက်ဆက်ခံရ ခင်း၏ အကံ ခဆက်အရ ထိုခိုက်နစ်နာမ မ ဘေး ခံစားရသည့် လူမ ဘေးကိုလည်း ကူညီပေးသ ဘေးမည်ဟု အာမခံပ သည်။



CNS photo/Sean Gallagher, The Criterion Jim Donlan, a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, assembles a mask in his garage April 9 during the coronavirus pandemic. The retired firefighter has made and given away some 2,800 masks that can be used to help stop the spread of the coronavirus.

Why are face masks important at this time?

BY JODI MARLIN

The celebration of public Masses in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will resume the weekend of May 23-24, as directed by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades.

One of the weightiest considerations in formulating a plan to resume Masses, according to diocesan Office of Worship director Brian MacMichael, was how to celebrate liturgies while at the same time taking all possible precautions for preserving the health of all participants and protecting them from exposure to the novel coronavirus. Among the precautions in place will be the requirement that some form of mask covering the nose and mouth be worn while worshipping.

MacMichael said the mandate of wearing masks in the context of COVID-19 is not intended as a means to force an individual to protect himself or herself, but rather a way to protect others. Cloth or surgical masks are ineffective at keeping the virus from entering (as opposed to the N95 respirators used by health care workers), but they do a much better job of containing droplets from one's own respiration.

"This is particularly important because researchers believe that an infected individual is most contagious while still asymptomatic," MacMichael noted. "I personally think that wearing a mask is a small inconvenience in exchange for returning to Mass and helping keep our more vulnerable brothers and sisters in Christ safer — including older members of our clergy, who don't have as easy a choice to sit Sunday out."

Dr. Thomas McGovern of Fort Wayne is a former clinical infectious disease researcher at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases and a Catholic Medical Association board member. Noting that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Indiana State Department of Health both recommend cloth face masks to be worn in public, Dr. McGovern pointed out that because attending Mass is a unique example of social interaction, requiring them of those who are in attendance is prudent.

"These (the CDC and DOH) recommendations apply to places like grocery and retail stores, where 6-foot distancing cannot always be maintained but where there is brief contact with others," he noted. "We will be in our churches for longer periods of time than the relatively brief contact in stores. There is also evidence that 6-foot distancing is not always sufficient to prevent spread. Also, a recent study of Taiwan's first 100 COVID-19 cases revealed that many people contracted COVID-19 from exposure to infected people who had no symptoms. Therefore, isolating symptomatic patients (who should not attend Mass) to prevent spreading infection will not be sufficient to protect others."

According to Dr. McGovern and other experts, even cloth-grade masks are effective in preventing the transmission of the virus to others via tiny droplets issued when a person, who could be infected but asymptomatic, coughs, sneezes, sings or speaks. "Wearing your mask pri-



66
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99
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DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE - SOUTH BEND
 915 South Clinton Street • Post Office Box
 390 Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801

May 31, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

Greetings to you during this blessed Easter season! I hope and pray that, in the midst of this dangerous coronavirus pandemic, the grace and peace of Our Risen Lord continues to sustain you and fill your hearts.

The season of Easter ends on the Solemnity of Pentecost. The Second Vatican Council spoke of "the Church's birth" on the day of Pentecost. The apostles received the power of the Holy Spirit to spread the Gospel of Jesus to the nations. The Holy Spirit, who guided and strengthened the apostles, continues to guide and strengthen the Church. We can say that "the grace of Pentecost is perpetuated in the Church." The Holy Spirit makes the Church grow and continually renews Her.

One of the ways the Holy Spirit works in the Church is by inspiring vocations to the priesthood. I give thanks that the Holy Spirit is blessing us here in our diocese with a good number of priestly vocations. I am grateful to you for your prayers for priestly vocations here in our diocese and throughout the world.

Every year, I ask you to be generous in the Pentecost collection, a special collection in our diocese to help fund the education of our seminarians. This is a large item in our annual diocesan budget. Given the financial challenges we face during this pandemic, the need for your support is even greater this year. If you are able, I humbly ask for your extra generosity in the Pentecost collection this year.

Our diocese and the Church worldwide need good and holy priests. Thank you for doing your part in supporting the formation of our seminarians so that, like the Apostles at Pentecost, they will one day go out with joy and enthusiasm as priests to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus with the strength of His Spirit.

May the Risen Lord bless you for your generosity! May the Holy Spirit strengthen you on Pentecost and every day to live and practice your faith with courage and joy!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Kevin C. Rhoades

Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades
 Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend

MASKS, from page 4

marily protects others from you — in case you are infected and don't have symptoms," he said. "Those who want to forego a mask because they are not concerned about contracting COVID-19 may not realize that foregoing a mask puts others at risk."

"Wearing a mask also reminds us not to touch our faces. Disease is often transmitted by touching our eyes, nose, or mouth with our fingers that have touched surfaces contaminated by the hands or respiratory droplets of infected individuals.

"Masks work more effectively when combined with hand hygiene," Dr. McGovern added. "I would encourage parishioners to bring hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes to Mass.

"We have the privilege of returning to Mass, and we want to maintain that privilege. Case

numbers have not yet decreased significantly, and if we are not careful to prevent another increase in cases through wise public health actions, we might find ourselves restricted from Mass attendance once again."

Importantly, wearing masks has the potential to make a difference in the big picture of the pandemic. Current research puts the efficacy for eliminating the pandemic as high, if the wearing of face masks is used in conjunction with social distancing and other precautions.

"Masks, hand hygiene, and distancing are buying time to preserve hospital resources, develop a vaccine, and develop effective medications," said Dr. McGovern. "We are all in this together. Wear your mask and sanitize your hands — for yourselves, but mostly for your neighbor. That's a very Catholic thing to do."

LETTER, from page 1

During the weekend of May 16-17, I am allowing First Holy Communion Masses to be celebrated in our parishes. These are not per se "public Masses" since attendance will be open only to first communicants and their families and invited guests. I felt it was important to do this for the sake of our children who have been so eagerly awaiting to receive Jesus in the Holy Eucharist for the first time. I have left it up to the pastors to decide if their parishes are ready and prepared for First Communion on that weekend.

I know it will be a challenge to organize the numbers of people who might attend any particular Mass. There will no doubt be some challenges, so I ask everyone to be patient. This is new territory for all of us. We want to accommodate as

many people as is safely possible. There is no "perfect" plan in the situation we face and we are all doing our best in resuming public liturgies while, at the same time, taking the necessary precautions to protect people from the virus and to serve the common good. This will require everyone's cooperation, patience, and understanding. I know I can count on you, the people of our diocese, who have been so cooperative these past two months. It has been beautiful for me to see our spiritual solidarity during this pandemic.

You may wish to check out the more specific liturgical directives and recommendations from our Diocesan Office of Worship. They can be found on www.diocesefwsb.org/covid-19.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, to whom our nation, our diocese, and our parishes were re-consecrated on

May 1st, intercede for us as we follow our roadmap to a safer earthly situation, and, even more importantly, as we strive to follow the roadmap to the safety and joy of heaven! And may Pope Saint John Paul II, whose 100th birthday is May 18th, intercede for us! May God bless you!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Kevin C. Rhoades

Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades
 Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend

The faithful are reminded that, with Indiana's allowance of in-person religious services and the resumption of public liturgies in our diocese on May 23-24, public health officials recommend that all individuals who are 65 and above or who have an underlying at-risk health condition stay home and watch services online.

Divided court reexamines insurance coverage of contraceptives

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The justices of the U.S. Supreme Court seemed divided May 6 over Trump administration rules that give employers more ability to opt out of providing contraceptive coverage in their health plans. The argument, part of a handful that will take place by teleconference during the coronavirus restrictions, took another look at an issue that has come before the court already and again, as in previous terms, it highlighted the Little Sisters of the Poor, the order of women religious who care for the elderly poor. “There are very strong interests on both sides here, which is what makes the case difficult, obviously,” Justice Brett Kavanaugh said in the May 6 arguments, which lasted 40 minutes longer than usual-allotted hour. He said the interests include religious liberty for the Little Sisters of the Poor and others and ensuring women’s access to health care and preventive services. “So the question becomes: Who decides how to balance those interests?” he asked. The Little Sisters of the Poor, who have been down this road before, were represented by Becket, a religious liberty law firm.

Social justice leaders urge cardinal to step back from praise of Trump

CLEVELAND (CNS) — Laudatory comments about President Donald Trump by New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan have been blasted in a letter to the prelate from more than 1,500 faith leaders. The letter, released May 1, said the cardinal’s late April remarks in a conference call with the president and subsequent appearance on Fox News “sends a message that Catholic leaders have aligned themselves with a president who tears apart immigrant families, denies climate change, stokes racial division and supports economic policies that hurt the poor. “There is nothing ‘pro-life’ about Trump’s agenda,” said the letter released by the advocacy group Faith in Public Life. In the conference call April 25 to discuss the needs of Catholic schools, which have been struggling because of the coronavirus pandemic, Trump described Cardinal Dolan as a “great gentleman” and “a great friend of mine.” Cardinal Dolan responded that he held “mutual” feelings toward the president and that he calls Trump more often than he calls his 90-year-old mother. Two memos obtained by Crux, an online Catholic news organization, prior to this phone call indicated that the Catholic leaders were advised before their participation in the call that it could subject them to approaches from the president’s reelection

NEWS BRIEFS

Pandemic inspires artist to create icon of Christ as healer



CNS photo/courtesy Joe Malham

This is an icon of “Christ the Healer” by Joe Malham. The Chicago-based iconographer was at loose ends after public Masses were suspended in mid-March and Illinois residents were asked to stay at home, so he decided to use the time to be creative. The result is a 3-foot-by-4-foot icon of Christ the Healer, an image he completed in just about three weeks. The icon is intended to comfort not just those who are ill with COVID-19 or who have loved ones who are ill or have died: It’s also for all those suffering financially or emotionally, those isolated from friends and family members and those who put their own health at risk to care for those who are sick.

campaign. But Chieko Noguchi, director of public affairs for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, told CNS in a statement that the purpose of USCCB’s participation in the April 25 call was to “advocate directly with the highest government officials on behalf of U.S. Catholic schools, which face an unprecedented crisis because of COVID-19.”

Global action needed to alleviate hunger crisis, Caritas says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Economic stagnation, ongoing sanctions, food shortages and reduced funding all risk making life in a post-pandemic world more dangerous and deadly than the coronavirus itself, said the Vatican-based

international network of Catholic charities. “Unfortunately, the aftershock of the pandemic” is proving to be “even more complicated and more deadly than the impact of the virus itself, especially for the most vulnerable communities in the poorest countries,” Caritas Internationalis said in a statement May 6. It urged the international community and donor countries “to take courageous and immediate action” or else millions of vulnerable people will face worsening malnutrition or starvation. The U.N. World Food Program estimates that the number of people on the brink of starvation worldwide “will double as a result of COVID-19 and could reach 230 million people,” it said. “Africa is the worst affected continent, experiencing food shortages due to the lockdown, as well as a diversity of disasters such as floods, drought, locust invasion and poor harvest. Many countries in the Middle East, Latin America and in Asia are already on the verge of a severe food crisis leading to child malnutrition and starvation” among adults, Caritas Internationalis said.

Beatifications for May, June postponed due to pandemic

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican announced that due to the coronavirus pandemic, several beatifications scheduled for May and June will be postponed, including the beatification of a mentor and friend of St. John Paul II. In a statement released at the end of April, the Congregation for Saints’ Causes said the beatifications also would be delayed in order to respect social distancing measures in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19. “Due to the ongoing pandemic situation and the necessary prudential measures that must be taken regarding religious ceremonies involving the presence of numerous faithful, at the request of the bishops concerned, the beatifications that had been set for the coming months are postponed,” the statement said. New dates for the ceremonies have not been set. Among the beatifications that were postponed was that of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, who was primate of Poland from 1949 until his death from cancer in 1981. He was Poland’s youngest bishop when he was installed as archbishop of Warsaw and Gniezno during communist rule. In 1953, several months after he was made cardinal, he was placed under house arrest after he called on the Catholic Church in Poland to resist against the communist government.

Pope advances sainthood cause of Italian millennial

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis advanced the sainthood causes of one woman and four men, including an Italian millennial who dedicated his brief life to spreading faith and happiness to his peers. The pope signed the decrees May 5 during a meeting with Cardinal Angelo Becciu, prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes. The Vatican published the decrees May 6. The pope recognized the heroic virtue of Matteo Farina, a 19-year-old who, while seemingly living a normal life for a person his age, dedicated himself to helping others after being inspired by a dream of St. Pio of Pietrelcina at the age of 9. Despite being diagnosed with cancer at the age of 13, Farina continued to write and speak about the importance of being happy and holding on to faith. He died in 2009. Pope Francis also recognized the heroic virtues of Maria de la Concepcion Barrecheguren Garcia, a Spanish woman who died in 1927 at the age of 21 after battling tuberculosis. He also recognized the heroic virtues of her father, Redemptorist Father Francisco Barrecheguren Montagut who, after the death of his daughter and his wife, entered the order in 1944 and was ordained a priest in 1948. He died in Granada, Spain, in 1957.

Catholic priests, nuns were among those killed by Nazis

WARSAW, Poland (CNS) — The Nazis’ systematic persecution and genocide led to the deaths of 6 million Jews in Europe, but Catholic priests and nuns were also among their victims. Half of all Poland’s Catholic priests, monks and nuns suffered repression during the six years of World War II, with more than 2,800 killed at Nazi and Soviet hands. Researchers like Anna Jagodzinska of Poland’s National Remembrance Institute say clergy were particularly targeted as upholders of national culture and identity. Of the nearly 2,800 clergy of all denominations incarcerated at the Nazi concentration camp of Dachau, 1,773 were priests from Poland, of whom 868 were killed. Others were subjected to exhausting labor and pseudo-medical experiments. Despite the horrors, many priests witnessed to the faith by hearing confessions and staging secret Masses, also offering practical and spiritual support to fellow inmates. Catholic clergy of various nationalities died as martyrs at other Nazi-run camps, including the largest, Auschwitz-Birkenau, whose 1.2 million mostly Jewish victims included St. Maximilian Kolbe and St. Edith Stein, also known as St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

Saint Joseph High School named distinguished school for STEM and career learning

SOUTH BEND — Saint Joseph High School announced recently that it has been recognized as a Project Lead The Way Distinguished School for providing broad access to transformative learning opportunities for students through PLTW Biomedical Science and Engineering. It is one of just 143 high schools across the U.S. to receive this honor. PLTW is a nonprofit organization that serves millions of pre-K-12 students and teachers in over 12,200 schools across the U.S.

The PLTW Distinguished School recognition honors schools committed to increasing student access, engagement and achievement in their PLTW programs. To be eligible for the designation, Saint Joseph had to meet the following criteria:

- Offer and have students enrolled in at least three PLTW courses
- Have 25% of students or more participate in PLTW courses, or of those who participated in PLTW, have at least 33% who take two or more PLTW courses
- Have 95% of students take the end-of-course assessments
- Have strategies and procedures in place that support reasonably proportional representation with regard to race, ethnicity, poverty, gender and can support such claims with relevant data.

Through PLTW programs, students develop STEM knowledge as well as in-demand, transportable skills that they will use both in school and for the rest of their lives, on any career path they take.

“It is a great honor to recognize Saint Joseph High School for their commitment to providing students with an excellent educational experience,” said Dr. Vince Bertram, president and CEO of PLTW. “They should be very proud of their work to ensure students have the knowledge and skills to be career ready and successful on any career path they choose.”

Saint Joseph is part of a community of pre-K-12 schools, colleges and universities and corporate and philanthropic partners across the country united around a passion for providing students with inspiring, engaging and empowering learning opportunities. For more information about PLTW's recognition program visit pltw.org/our-programs/program-recognition.

Christ Child Society of South Bend diaper drives net thousands

SOUTH BEND — Because of the economic uncertainty of the moment, the Christ Child Society of South Bend is helping some of its partner agencies with a Drive-by Diaper Drop Off.

Graduates head for professional ministry



Provided by Stacey Noem

University of Notre Dame master of divinity lay formation students celebrated a social-distanced Mass of blessing and sending with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades May 4. The students have completed three years of human and spiritual formation and are graduating this year. During the liturgy at St. Joseph Church in South Bend, each was presented with an icon of “The Vineyard” — Jesus in the center with vines and branches coming out from Him. From left are Raquel Falk, Patrick Schmadeke, Chris O’Brien, Bishop Rhoades, Daniela DeCiantis, Grace Carroll and Maggie McMahon. Not pictured is Kevin Effron.

On May 6, 6,500 diapers were delivered by the Christ Child Society to the Center for the Homeless for the toddlers who are sheltered there. Donors simply drove up and tossed diaper boxes into bins, a safe and easy way to contribute to those in need.

A second diaper drop-off took place May 13 at the Christ Child Society Clothing Center in South Bend. This time, even more children in the community benefited through their association with St. Margaret’s House, El Campito and the Hope Rescue Mission. All three organizations refer clients to Christ Child so that, every fall, thousands of children from birth through age 12 can receive new coats, shoes and clothing at the clothing center.

In response to the sudden closing of schools this spring, in March the Christ Child Society donated learning materials and books to children at St. Adalbert School, which families picked up along with their free lunches. The materials had been purchased for “learning parties” with second grade and kindergarten students that were scheduled for April and May. The parties are part of the Success program Christ Child operates at the school in an

effort to enhance the educational experience of the students.

Despite fundraising efforts such as graduation gift wrapping at the University of Notre Dame bookstore and the annual Derby Day luncheon being canceled, as well as the possibility that the society’s fall dinner auction might not occur, the organization is working hard to continue serving the children of St. Joseph County.

The Christ Child Society is moving from its current location at Western and Scott streets in South Bend to the Town and Country Shopping Center in Mishawaka, which will offer more space for its volunteers to clothe more children and increase services to the community. The building is undergoing some basic renovation to accommodate the storage and distribution of thousands of coats, shoe boxes, blue jeans, bundled socks and more. At the same time, inventory and ordering continue in anticipation of increased need.

To contribute to helping children in the South Bend-Mishawaka community, visit www.christchildsb.org. One hundred percent of donations is used exclusively for children in St. Joseph County.



Provided by Beth Barrett

Christ Child Society of South Bend volunteers Debbie Low and Kae Sobczyk deliver 6,500 diapers to the South Bend Center for the Homeless in early May following a collection at the society’s clothing center.

Faith under quarantine —

How the diocese bore the cross of COVID

BY JODI MARLIN

The novel coronavirus. For two months, it has held back the world. Even to those who were passed over by the deadliest effects of the pandemic, the suspension of public Masses, other sacraments and devotions caused spiritual discomfort. Many felt cut off from their normal relationship with the Lord — removed from His presence and His graces.

On Palm Sunday, as the potential for a drastically altered Holy Week loomed, Pope Francis acknowledged the disorienting and sudden lack of spiritual normality that occurred in the Church throughout the world.

"Today, in the tragedy of a pandemic, in the face of the many false securities that have now crumbled, in the face of so many hopes betrayed, in the sense of abandonment that weighs upon our hearts, Jesus says to each one of us, 'Courage, open your heart to my love. You will feel the consolation of God who sustains you,'" he said in a nearly empty St. Peter's Basilica to an attentive and multitudinous virtual audience.

He went on that day to tell Catholics around the world: "Inspired by the Lord's example of love and service despite the cost, the faithful are also called to 'refuse to betray him for whom we were created and not abandon what really matters in our lives.'"

"We were put in this world to love him and our neighbors," the pope said. "Everything else passes away; only this remains."

"The tragedy we are experiencing summons us to take seriously the things that are serious and not to be caught up in those that matter less; to rediscover that life is of no use if not used to serve others," he said. "For life is measured by love."

Catholic News Service reported last month that many of the faithful feel the pandemic forced them to sacrifice more than they ever had throughout the liturgical season of Lent and beyond. But in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, during the time of sacrifice, faith grew in ways it would not have, had it not been challenged by lockdowns and stay-at-home orders.

Families brought the Mass into their homes, prayed the rosary around the fireplace and initiated spiritual discussions. Shrines and prayer spaces sprang up in homes, parents became religious education teachers and rosaries were said on the couch, the home office and the living room floor. Masses were celebrated before empty churches but packed computer, tablet, TV and phone screens.

As they always do, the works of mercy managed to be lived by those called to be disciples in charity. With caution, schools, food pantries, St. Vincent de Paul societies and Catholic Charities worked nearly around the clock to provide for the physical needs of those who were out of work. The young and old reached out to each other to check on their welfare and spirits.

It has already been asserted that as the privileges of publicly practicing the Catholic faith begin to return, the things learned in the meantime perhaps should not be discarded for a return to normalcy.

"It has been beautiful for me to see our spiritual solidarity during this pandemic," Bishop Rhoades said in his letter to the faithful last week outlining the resumption of public Masses. Noting the patience, cooperation and sacrifice that has been required and that will continue to be required, he prayed for the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the diocese follows a roadmap to a "safer earthly situation, and, even more importantly, as we strive to follow the roadmap to the safety and joy of heaven."



Provided by Jennifer Engquist
Emma Engquist quarantines at home, waiting for the day she can return to Mass at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Fort Wayne.



Nate Proulx
Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrates a livestreamed Sunday Mass from Fort Wayne's Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.



Bob List
Bob and Ida List of Warsaw pray the rosary along with their family on Sunday via Zoom. The couple said they felt blessed to have the digital capability to stay connected and share the love of Mary and her Son during this time of challenges.

COVID-19



John Martin

The vicars forane concelebrate the Chrism Mass April 9 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.



Provided by St. Joseph Parish

St. Joseph Parish begins a livestreamed Tenebrae service in darkness and solitude.



Provided by Beth Barrett

Members of the Christ Child Society of South Bend deliver diapers collected during a drive to the South Bend Center for the Homeless to meet an increased demand.



Molly Wynen

Two boys climb the steps of St. Monica Church, Mishawka, to gaze inside from a distance. "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14)



Provided by Kim Bentley

The Bentley family of Fort Wayne shares hope and shows support for their neighbors by decorating the windows of their home.



STAY WITH US

Convenient grace

Profiles in the CCD/Religious Education setting

An extraordinary calling: Mother-daughter team prepare older children to receive first Communion

BY TAMI DELUCENAY

The theme of Catechetical Sunday for the school year that is coming to a close has focused on “Stay with Us,” or helping the young faithful to stay close to their Catholic faith. Convenient Grace has shared stories throughout the year of how volunteer catechists live out their call to be witnesses to the faith in religious education classes.

Jayne Ragasa-Mondoy serves as director of religious education for the Diocese of Honolulu. In a recent article in *Catechist Journal*, she expressed what this calling means.

“Being a catechist is not just a job or weekly voluntary commitment. We don’t ‘do’ catechesis and then go back to our usual lives. We are catechists, and our whole being is immersed in this mission. Even though we turn off the lights in our classrooms at the end of our sessions, our mission continues: to adopt a worldview illuminated by the light of Christ, a worldview that allows us to see through his eyes and carry the Truth to the whole world with love and compassion. As Pope Francis explains, it is a splendid mission:

‘A Christian’s mission in the world is splendid, it is a mission intended for everyone, it is a mission of service, excluding no one; it requires a great deal of generosity and above all setting one’s gaze and heart facing on High, to invoke the Lord’s help. There is a great need for Christians who joyfully witness to the Gospel in everyday life. The disciples, sent out by Jesus, “returned with joy.” (Pope Francis, *Angelus*, July 3, 2016)

Two catechists from St. John the Evangelist Parish, Goshen, have embraced this call in family life as well as catechetical life in their parish. Sarah Roeder grew up in Goshen and received her sacraments of initiation at St. John. She and her husband, Robert, have been married for 35 years and have five children.

“I have been a catechist for 23 years. I taught third grade for most of those years and now teach the first-year sacramental preparation class with my daughter Helen,” stated Sarah. Helen Roeder is a young



Provided by Helen Roeder

To carry the truth of salvation to the whole world, Sarah Roeder and her daughter, Helen, start with fourth through sixth grade children who would like to prepare to receive the Lord in the Eucharist for the first time. They are catechists at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Goshen.

adult living in Elkhart. “Although my address is Elkhart, I call Goshen my home,” she said. “I was baptized at St. John and made my first Communion and confirmation at St. Mary of the Annunciation in Bristol.”

“I grew up listening to the Gospel stories from my par-

ents. Our mom taught me and my siblings who Jesus is with great joy and animation of the Scripture stories. It was a no-brainer that I would eventually follow in my mom’s footsteps of being a catechist; I just started teaching earlier than I anticipated.” Helen has taught religious education for five years.

For the past two she has taught the Sacramental Preparation for Youth class with her mom. The class is preparation for first holy Communion, and students in the class are usually in fourth, fifth or sixth grade.

Virginia Munoz, director of religious education for the parish, explained the class. “The

SPY class was created for this group of children because they were just a little older than our first, second and third grade students. In this class, we use different catechetical material that is more age-appropriate for them,” she said.

Sarah has a passion to share the love of her faith with the children entrusted to her. “These children are like little sponges; they soak up every story with great enthusiasm and get so excited when they hear the historical stories of the Bible and the lives of the saints.

“We don’t just read from the book but bring the stories to life through animated storytelling and acting out the Scriptures. Most of the children know the basic stories of Creation, Adam and Eve, and Noah’s Ark, but when we tell the story about the twins, Jacob and Esau, and how the brothers would fight, they relate to this very human characteristic. It’s so exciting to see their hands go up in a Jeopardy-type game because they know the answers and just about jump out of their seats to share what they know.”

Helen enjoys teaching with her Mom. “I love how we work together on lesson plans and our teaching styles complement each other. We begin with just the basics. I find it very rewarding to be part of a child’s early faith formation and watch the light bulb go off when they understand what they are learning. My favorite lessons to teach are the miracles of Jesus and to witness the children’s reactions as they learn of Jesus’ love for them.”

Although the ending of this catechetical year came to an abrupt halt due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Roeders pray for their students and their families every day. “This mission is an extraordinary calling. If you think you could never teach a class and retain the children’s attention, I challenge you to give it a try,” said Sarah. “It is so rewarding when a child wants to continue to know more about their faith, and as you teach you also strengthen your own faith.” Helen shared, “Not many people get to teach the faith with their mom, it is a joy and very special. I encourage anyone wanting to be a catechist to just jump in headfirst.”

Volume on assisted reproduction falls short on moral considerations

BY PATRICK T. BROWN

It might seem like another lifetime ago, but bioethical questions about the beginning of life used to regularly be topics of national discussion and controversy. Even as recently as the early 2000s, decisions on embryonic stem-cell funding merited a nationwide presidential address and was even the focus of the first veto wielded by President George W. Bush.

Since then, bioethics have fallen largely off the national radar screen, as culture war battles have focused more on questions of marriage definition than reproductive technologies and economic crises and populist movements took center stage politically.

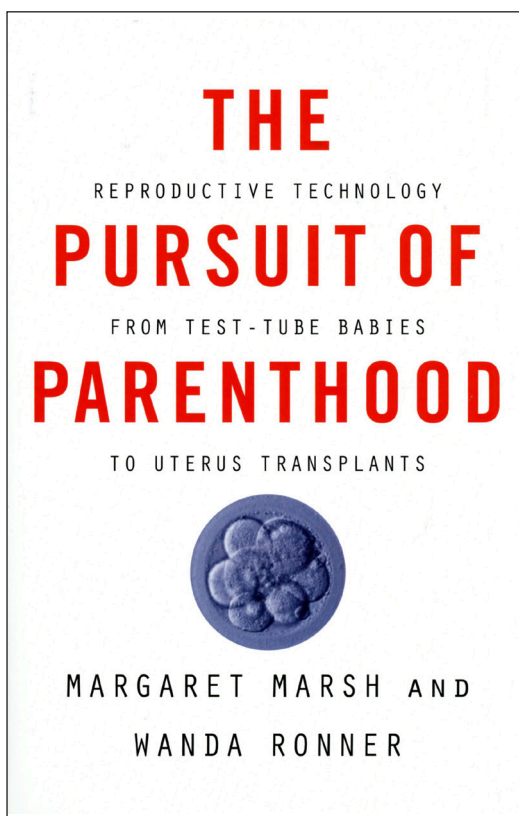
But as Margaret Marsh and Wanda Ronner illustrate in their new book, "The Pursuit of Parenthood: Reproductive Technology from Test-Tube Babies to Uterus Transplants," the need for these conversations may be less visible now but may be more needed than ever. Familiarizing oneself with the history of their development does not require adopting the mindset of assisted reproduction proponents, but drives home the need to socially and legally address the intimate and delicate questions about what it means to be a parent and to seek a child at any cost.

Marsh and Ronner are sisters, one a historian and the other a gynecologist, who have written twice previously on conception or lack thereof. Their first book, "The Empty Cradle: Infertility in America from Colonial Times to the Present," was a thorough and compelling blend of clinical detail and historical storytelling, recounting the lengths that would-be parents go through in the attempts to have a biological child of their own.

This book is more tightly focused than that one, detailing the relatively short but profoundly influential history of the development of assisted-reproductive technologies. Their telling of the legal and cultural battles over this technology has profound lessons for those who would promote the common good in the political arena.

Marsh and Ronner recount the opposition to in vitro fertilization and other assisted-reproductive technologies as preventing the establishment of a U.S. regulatory framework, like the Human Fertilization and Embryology Authority in the United Kingdom. Because opponents were afraid of seeming to sanction some research by regulating it, it was left in an ambiguous gray area.

As the technologies became more accessible and culturally acceptable, it was too late to halt



This is the book cover of "The Pursuit of Parenthood: Reproductive Technology from Test-Tube Babies to Uterus Transplants" by Margaret Marsh and Wanda Ronner (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2019). 274 pp., \$29.95. The book is reviewed by Patrick T. Brown.

its expanse, and the U.S. is now an outlier in the tremendous degree it allows commercial interests to dictate the pace and direction of assistance in reproduction (America stands alone among developed nations in allowing paid gestational surrogates, for example.)

They rightly point out how advances in assisted reproduction subtly change the calculus around parenting and procreation — making it more of a consumer good. The 2010 declaration from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention typifies the conventional wisdom that infertility has become a "public health problem," with steps needed to expand access to treatments such as IVF, oocyte donation and preservation and gestational surrogacy. In this mindset, infertility is to be "solved" by procuring a child by other means, rather than by solving whatever medical issue may be causing the problem.

This attitude, of seeing a child as an guaranteed outcome rather than the welcome byproduct of a procreative and unitive act, flies in the face of a traditional Catholic view of sexual morality — and indeed, Marsh and Ronner describe opponents of assisted-reproductive technologies as co-opting "the language of woman's rights to promote an anti-feminist agenda."

Their book would have been strengthened with a more comprehensive overview of the arguments against access to assisted-reproductive technologies, such

as those proffered by donor-conceived children themselves (the website AnonymouslyUs.org collects stories from children and adults born through third-party reproduction, who often feel a sense of fatherlessness or motherlessness.) Readers interested in compelling arguments against the morality of these practices should look elsewhere, perhaps starting with Leon Kass' and James Wilson's "The Ethics of Human Cloning."

But even with this apparent blind spot, the authors still recognize the grave danger of exploitation in the current libertarian approach to the market of reproductive services and argue that a robust national conversation is needed again to build up

a regulatory regime that curbs the worst abuses. For example, they frankly admit the horror stories of clinic technicians using their own biological material to inseminate dozens of unsuspecting women, but want to believe that those few bad apples can be identified and removed from the industry. If bioethics do not receive more attention, they predict, "we will unlikely be unable to tame the Wild West of reproductive medicine for another generation at least, and perhaps not ever."

William F. Buckley famously defined conservatism as "standing athwart history, yelling 'Stop!'" The genie of technologically-assisted reproduction may be too far out of the bottle for any amount of yelling. But the Catholic view of the inseparability of the marital act's procreative and unitive dimensions requires us to take a critical stance toward technology that would treat the buying and selling of reproductive material as any sort of market.

"The Pursuit of Parenthood" will inform the reader about the development of these technologies and may help to raise awareness of their more visible dangers. It should also act as an encouragement to Catholic bioethicists to develop a similarly readable history that outlines the limitations and dangers of a mindset that treats parents as consumers and children as products.

Brown writes from Columbia, South Carolina.

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Medical care has changed forever

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted medical care in a drastic way. I was told by my administration soon after the virus hit the Northern Indiana area to begin to change most of my patient encounters to a video conference or a phone call. These are called telehealth or telemedicine visits. This was recommended to protect my patients, my staff and me as well.

To put it mildly, I was reluctant. Being the senior cardiologist in our group, I had never done a patient visit other than face to face in the office. I was trained by some of the best clinicians in the United States at Ohio State University, and to me it was nearly unthinkable to assess someone without doing a good physical examination. I can still remember how thoroughly I was taught not only to examine the entire body, but especially the heart.

I can flash back to when I was a senior medical student on a cardiology rotation at University Hospital at OSU. I was with my attending physician on rounds on the heart floor when he said to me: "Kaminskas, give me your stethoscope. Now go into that room and use only your sense of touch to examine the patient. Do not come out until you know the diagnosis." About 20 minutes later, I caught up to my attending physician and told him the patient had severe aortic valve stenosis. He asked me to explain to the other students on rounds with him how I came up with that diagnosis without being able to listen to the heart. There were two important clues. When I put my fingers on the carotid

artery there was a slow upstroke of the pulse and I could feel a slight vibration in the artery. Then, when I palpated the heart by putting my hands on the chest, I felt a thrill over the aortic valve area. This is not the same kind of thrill you get from riding a roller coaster! Rather, it is a subtle vibration that can be felt in individuals that have severe narrowing of the aortic valve. It is caused by the turbulence made by the blood flowing through the very narrow valve orifice. This is one example of why I want to examine my patients when I see them in office.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am currently assessing about 70% of my patients with video technology or by phone call. These are mostly stable patients getting routine checkups, who within the last six months have had a good examination by me. I really do not want to evaluate new patient consultations unless I can see and examine them, though. I am concerned that I could miss a significant finding on exam that would make a big difference in my treatment plan. An example of this would be missing a severe heart valve problem that could mean the patient's demise in just a few months if not accurately diagnosed and treated. Because of the pandemic, many of my colleagues are currently evaluating nearly 100% of their patients without seeing and examining them.

We are learning that many of the in-office encounters that have been done for years can be successfully accomplished with a video conference or phone call.



THE CATHOLIC DOCTOR IS IN

DR. DAVID KAMINSKAS

Discussing the results of recent testing is one good example. This strategy would save patients their travel time as well as the potentially long wait time in the waiting room. Although it is not as big of a concern in a cardiologist's waiting room, I have been told by many of my patients that when they see their primary care provider they always worry that they are sitting shoulder to shoulder with all kinds of sick patients with possible communicable diseases. Certainly, during this COVID-19 crisis, we must avoid this type of exposure.

So, what does the future hold? I would predict that many physicians will continue to evaluate and communicate with a significant percentage of their patients via video conference even after the pandemic is over. By the way, video will be the technology of choice because many insurance companies are currently refusing to reimburse for phone-only visits.

As for this doctor, I am looking forward to seeing my patients face to face once again. As I have said before, seeing the face of Christ in my patients is one of my most important goals. I believe it may be a little more difficult to deliver love and compassion through a video camera.

From hero to hated in less than a week

Although we are well into the Easter season, my mind harkens back to an event on Good Friday that has often puzzled me. What turned the crowd against Jesus? Recall that just six days earlier, on Palm Sunday, the crowds praised Him, acclaimed Him Son of David, and spoke of Him as a king and messiah. By the morning of Good Friday, though, they were calling for Him to be crucified. What turned them against Him?

My usual explanation was to suppose that the Temple leaders hired a crowd of ruffians and coached them on what to say. In other words, I conjectured that these were not the same people who welcomed Jesus on Palm Sunday but rather a carefully selected group assembled on the plaza in front of the governor's residence (the Praetorium). While it may be true that the Temple leaders coached them, it still raises the question, how were they able to find so many people willing to turn against a man so widely admired and appreciated by the ordinary faithful?

Father Antonin-Gilbert Sertillanges gave a thoughtful and insightful analysis of this event and of the crowd's motivation in his book "What Jesus Saw from the Cross." Let us consider Father Sertillanges' explanation of the mood of the crowd. (Note that he does not discount that many in the crowd may well have hailed Jesus as Messiah on Palm Sunday.)



COMMUNITY IN MISSION

MSGR. CHARLES POPE

"At the beginning of his sacred ministry ... Jesus had aroused intense enthusiasm ... [But now] what is the grievance? That the leaders of the Jews should have hated Jesus is perhaps intelligible, but the enmity of the crowd is most mysterious. It is only at the last moment that it becomes manifest, and then only under the stimulus of encouragement from the priests." (pp. 157-158)

So, Father Sertillanges has pondered the mysterious shift in mood of the crowd. And while he notes that there was some stimulus from the Temple leaders, he does not presume that those leaders had gathered the crowd.

"[On that Good Friday] morning the crowd assembled for reasons of its own. They have a right to have a prisoner released to them on this day and they are coming to claim that right. Perhaps they are thinking of Barabbas, perhaps of Jesus, who is just at this moment appearing before the tribunal. ... Pilate [however] irritates them twice

POPE, page 13

The Spirit of truth is in us



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Sixth Sunday of Easter John 14:15-21

The Acts of the Apostles once again this Easter season furnishes the first reading. In the readings of the weekends earlier in this season, the identity of the Apostles has clearly been given.

The Apostles, absent Judas, of course, had exercised the very power of Jesus in naming a new member of their group, Matthias, who succeeded the dead Judas. Peter healed the sick. On behalf of the Apostles, Peter spoke as Jesus had spoken.

It was not just simply that the Apostles had been with Jesus as specially selected students

and followers, but the Lord commissioned them to discharge divine power itself, and thus they continued the mission of Jesus the Redeemer.

In this reading, clarifying this identity continues. While Acts already has clearly established that Peter was the head of the Apostles, the character of Apostleship also belonged with the others.

For this reading, the central figures are Philip and John. They performed miracles, as Jesus had performed miracles. They were part of the community of Apostles, then centered in Jerusalem, gathered around and beside Peter.

This Apostles in Jerusalem sent Philip and John to Samaria. Just as Jesus had granted salvation to the Samaritan woman, among other foreigners, the Apostles looked to the salvation of all people. In this case, as had the Lord, Philip and John took salvation to Samaritans. Later, Apostles would go much farther afield, bearing with them the mercy and power of Christ.

They began the brilliant history of evangelization in the Church, still a fact, and a goal, for Catholics.

The second reading is from the First Epistle of Peter. This reading is a strong, joyful, and enthusiastic proclamation of Jesus as Lord, calling believers to listen to the Lord and to follow the Lord. The Lord should be in their hearts and minds.

St. John's Gospel furnishes the last reading. Not a Resurrection Narrative, it nonetheless serves the Church's purpose as it teaches us this weekend. After celebrating the Resurrection for these weeks since Easter, the Church is summoning us to look at our lives.

This reading is our blueprint for life. Our task as disciples is to love others as Jesus loved all. It is crystal clear. In God's love, given to us in the Lord, is our salvation.

Indeed, the very act of providing us with a blueprint for living is a vitally important gift given in love to us by God.

Reflection

The next major liturgical event for us will be the celebration of the feast of the Ascension of Jesus. Soon after this feast, we will celebrate the feast of Pentecost. Within sight now is the close of the Easter season.

Already, for weeks, the Church has informed us of the Resurrection of Jesus, gloriously occurring after the dreadful events of Good Friday. It has shared with us its joy, copying the joy of the first Christians. It has reported again and again of the Risen Lord's appearances and admonitions.

Gently, gradually, but emphatically, the Church has begun the process of leading us in our day to ask what the Resurrection truly means for each of us individually. Is it an anniversary, or for each of us a personal experience?

The Church will reassure us. Contact with Jesus was not lost with the Ascension, when Jesus returned to the Father. Contact remains, and it remains very clearly in the visible,

institutional Church, standing with the Apostles. This link with Peter and the other Apostles also is God's gift to us.

Through the Church we hear again the words of Christ. In the Church's sacraments, we still access Christ's eternal strength and life.

These readings call us to peace, hope and goodness. Absolutely, they teach us about life and how to live.

READINGS

Sunday: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17 Ps 66:1-7, 16-20 1 Pt 3:15-18/Jn 14:15-21

Monday: Acts 16:11-15 Ps 149:1b-6a, 9b Jn 15:26—16:4a

Tuesday: Acts 16:22-34 Ps 138:1-3, 7c-8 Jn 16:5-11

Wednesday: Acts 17:15, 22—18:1 Ps 148:1-2, 11-14 Jn 16:12-15

Thursday: Acts 18:1-8 Ps 98:1-4 Jn 16:16-20

Friday: Acts 18:9-18 Ps 47:2-7 Jn 16:20-23

Saturday: Acts 18:23-28 Ps 47:2-3, 8-10 Jn 16:23b-28

Gov. Cuomo and God's noncompetitive transcendence

Last month, Andrew Cuomo, the governor of New York, made a rather interesting theological observation. Commenting on the progress that his state has made in fighting the coronavirus and praising the concrete efforts of medical personnel and ordinary citizens, he said, "The number is down because we brought the number down. God did not do that. Faith did not do that." I won't waste a lot of time exploring the hubris of that remark, which should be obvious to anyone. I might recommend, out of pastoral concern, that the governor read the first part of Genesis Chapter 11.

What I will do instead is explain the basic intellectual confusion that undergirds Cuomo's assertion, one that, I fear, is shared even by many believers. The condition for the possibility of the governor's declaration is the assumption that God is one competitive cause among many, one actor jostling for position and time upon the stage with a coterie of other actors. On this reading, God does certain things — usually of a rather spectacular nature — and creaturely causes do other things, usually more mundane. Thus, we can clearly parcel out responsibility and credit — some to God and some to finite agents. But this account is deeply unbiblical and alien to the Catholic theological tradition.

To understand the scriptural sense of the play between divine and human causality, it is helpful to consult the cycle of stories dealing with King David in first and second Samuel. What strikes the attentive reader is that nothing obviously "supernatural" takes place in these accounts. Practically everything that happens to David could be adequately accounted for on psychological, historical, military

or political grounds. However, throughout the narrative, God's activity and involvement are assumed, for the author takes for granted the principle that the true God works not typically in an interruptive way but precisely through a congeries of secondary causes. Mind you, it is not the case that some explanations of David's story are political or psychological and some properly theological; rather, everything is, at once, natural and supernatural — precisely because God's causality is operating non-competitively, on a qualitatively different level than creaturely causality. If you want a one-liner summary of this distinctively biblical perspective, you could not do better than this, from the prophet Isaiah: "O Lord, it is you who have accomplished all that we have done." (Isa. 26:12)

Now, why should this be true? Here it would be helpful to turn to the Church's greatest theologian, St. Thomas Aquinas. For Thomas, God is not the supreme being ("ens summum" in his Latin), but rather "ipsum esse subsistens," which means "the sheer act of to be itself." In a word, God is not one more instance of the genus "being," one thing, however exalted, among others; instead, He is the self-explaining source of existence as such, that great font of being in and through which all finite things subsist and act. Therefore, God does not compete for space, so to speak, on the same ontological grid as creatures; a zero-sum game does not obtain in regard to God's activity and creaturely activity — the more we ascribe to one, the less we have to ascribe to the other.

Allow me to ground this rather abstract rhetoric with a very homely example. If one were to ask what is necessary to make



WORD ON FIRE

BISHOP ROBERT BARRON

a bicycle, the response would be something like this: "tires, brake pads, a chain, a metal frame, the skill of the builder, perhaps a schematic to guide the building process, etc." No one would ever be tempted to respond as follows: "tires, brake pads, a chain, God, a metal frame, the skill of the builder, etc." And yet, a smart religious person, upon finishing the project of constructing that bike, would quite legitimately say, "Thank God!" The prayer would be a humble acknowledgement, not that God in a fussily invasive way interfered with the building process, but that God is responsible for the entire nexus of causes and behaviors that made up the process. The upshot is that the two dimensions of causality — one finite and the other transcendent — operate simultaneously and noncompetitively: "You have accomplished all that we have done."

All of which brings me back to Gov. Cuomo. To claim that "God did not do that" because we did it is simply a category mistake. What brought the coronavirus numbers down? It is perfectly accurate to say, "the skill of doctors and nurses, the availability of hospital beds, the willingness of so many to shelter in place, etc." But it is also perfectly valid to say that God brought those numbers down, precisely by grounding the entire complex of creaturely causality just referenced. This relationship holds at the metaphysical level,

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for May 17, 2020

John 14: 15-21

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Sixth Sunday of Easter, Cycle A: We will not be orphans. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

IF YOU	WILL KEEP	FATHER
ANOTHER	ADVOCATE	SPIRIT
TRUTH	WORLD	BECAUSE
NEITHER SEES	KNOWS	BE IN YOU
LEAVE YOU	ORPHANS	LITTLE WHILE
NO LONGER	SEE ME	I LIVE
BE LOVED	REVEAL	MYSELF

ANOTHER ADVOCATE

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B E I N Y O U E M E E S
E E T A C O V D A R E P
L V L D E S U A C E B I
I I N O J O L K S H H R
H L O R V R R R L T K I
W I L L K E E P U O S T
E L O W K H D R H N W F
L Y N A T T T L N A O L
T F G I N A N A R G N E
T G E D I F Y O U O K S
I N R E V E A L U Y W Y
L E A V E Y O U M D G M
    
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but it is perhaps even clearer when it comes to the psychological motivation of those dedicated physicians and nurses. Why ultimately were they willing to do what they did? I would be willing to bet a large percentage of them would say that it was a desire to serve others and to be pleasing to God.

So we should thank all of the good people involved in bettering our current situation, and

we shouldn't hesitate, even for a moment, to thank God as well. There is absolutely no need to play the zero-sum game proposed by the governor of New York.

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

POPE, from page 12

by referring jocularly to [Jesus] as 'their king.' [And thus, Jesus now] arouses their division more than their pity: a messiah in chains before a Roman governor? This seems to be the kernel of the matter in the eyes of these Israelites, who were enthusiastic [on Palm Sunday], a few moments ago were in doubt, and now are suddenly hostile and furious." (p. 158)

Now, Father moves to the psychological shift that takes place:

"Mobs do not like to be disillusioned; and the man who disappoints them may pass in a moment from the rank of a national hero to nothing, and even to less than nothing. ... Think what a disillusionment it is for the Jews to see Jesus in this [scourged] condition before Pilate. ... This is the Pauline

'scandal of the cross.' (p. 159)

"From disappointment they pass to spite, from spite to anger, and under the ceaseless encouragement of their iniquitous leaders they are easily roused to exasperation. The word 'cross' has been spoken; it is taken up and repeated. ... The taste of blood now begins to intoxicate the mob; a thrill of cruelty runs through them all. To any further questions or objections, the madened crowd has only one reply, given with increasing violence: 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' (pp. 159-160)

"[And thus, Jesus departs the Pretorium] carrying all his blessings with him. As he processes along the way ... the cruelty of this day has gone to everybody's head. Every savage instinct latent in the heart of man was awake; souls froth over with rage in this anticipatory del-

egation of those in every generation who would hate and oppose Christ vented itself in the cry of Satanic joy." (p. 161)

Going even deeper into the cause of their disillusionment, Father Sertillanges ponders:

"And yet, [at a deeper spiritual level] the problem still remains: how did this transformation which we have described become possible?"

"The mystics tell us that a great moral lapse is always preceded by hidden causes. [Some have noted that] the Jewish masses at that time were prone to mystical curiosity and superstitious practices. The success that Jesus achieved among the masses was due to the [messianic] interests of the moment and the enthusiasm aroused by his miracles, the fascination of his discourse, and to the sardonic satisfaction of hearing their

leaders criticized and of seeing them defied [This explains their attraction to Jesus] more than a fully convinced adherence to Jesus and his teaching. (pp. 161-162)

"The people had become dazzled, not convinced, and their carnal expectations were disappointed. Jesus as a political Messiah ... Casting off the Roman yoke, the abolition of taxes and the return of the Jews of the dispersal, this is what would have won them over. But the aims and the doctrines of the Savior were not of this kind; and this is the reason why, as soon as they see their selfish hopes disappointed, the crowd turned against him. Their favor becomes hostility." (p. 162)

This is quite a rich examination of the puzzling shift in the mood of the crowd. To Father's reflection I can only add that

St. Paul calls the cross a stumbling block to Jews because Deuteronomy (21:23) says, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree." As they beheld Jesus horribly scourged, a prelude to crucifixion, they judge Him cursed by God and bitterly dismissed the idea that He could be the Messiah they hoped for.

There is much to ponder in Father A.G. Sertillanges' "What Jesus Saw from the Cross." It is rich in history and spirituality and I highly recommend it for your reading.

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

Catholic educators wonder how to restart the next school year

BY TOM TRACY

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (CNS) — Education leaders imagining how Catholic schools will safely reopen this fall agree on two things: different decisions will be made according to locations and reopening plans may change on short notice.

In addition, with so much unknown about if and how the country will fully reopen with a COVID-19 pandemic far from over, there is also the possibility that many schools will restart in the fall through remote learning only — a prospect that educators say they hope to avoid.

“If we don’t have that face to face (contact) and just go immediately into remote learning, it is more difficult and it is not what I want for our teachers or students — I want them to have some time together,” said Kathy Mears, interim director of the National Catholic Educational Association.

Educators are hearing the predictions of a possible secondary, maybe even stronger wave of COVID-19 arriving toward the end of this year. But if schools can get an early start on the school year by starting early on campus in some fashion, it would put them in a better position if lockdowns are required once again in the winter.



A sign for the rural Octorara Area School District in Pennsylvania, which closed down in March amid the coronavirus pandemic, reads “Keep Learning” in this April 4 photo. Catholic educators wonder how to restart the next school year.

CNS photo/Michele Orner, Reuters

“Then if we have to go back into remote teaching I think it is a stronger kind of teaching when everyone knows each other because my fear is that the virus comes back and harms more people,” Mears said, referring to an old definition of Catholic education as an intimate communication between souls best

developed face to face. “If we need to (stay on lockdown) then we will, but everybody in the country wants to reopen and I am hopeful that we will be able to do that,” she told Catholic News Service.

To plan for either eventually, some Catholic schools plan to craft teaching lessons in blocks

of four weeks at a time both in face-to-face and remote learning formats so that they can rapidly shift between the two if need be.

“Schools are looking at all those questions right now and trying to figure it out — and that will be the focus of our phone calls with superintendents and having them share ideas online

and learn from each other,” Mears said.

One possibility under consideration is that schools could reopen as early as July and try to get at least three months of face-to-face time underway before October — a concept that is being floated on the West Coast and a few other places, according to Mears.

That, however, may present practical problems for Catholic schools that aren’t outfitted with adequate air conditioning and are located in regions with hot, humid summer climates.

Another idea gaining some traction is to break the school day into two shifts, from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and then 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., in order to have fewer students on campus at any one time and to better comply with social distancing protocols.

Others have suggested schools take learning outdoors as much as possible, gathering students in open air spaces.

“Some of our best teachers already provide a lot of outdoor activities even now during remote learning and are still providing them: I go on Twitter and watch teachers having their children go on walks, taking pictures of what they see and writ-

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ing stories about it," Mears said, acknowledging moving outdoors on a school-wide level may nevertheless be impractical.

Mary Pat Donoghue, executive director of the Secretariat of Catholic Education for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, notes that in a country as big as the United States, different regions will come up with different solutions for the fall.

"Like everyone, I have no specifics, but it will look different in Montana than in New York," Donoghue said. "My sense is that the leadership of our schools are informed and working closely with their local government officials and that is the most important thing."

"They all desire to get back into school as quickly and safely as possible, only when we feel it is safe," she said, adding that there are regions in the U.S. with significant COVID disease and others with very little.

Schools will have to make decisions that best suit their environment, said Donoghue, who predicts that some reopening decisions will be taken comparatively late this year, with plans subject to change right up to the last minute and long after the normal spring and summer enrollment season.

It doesn't help that scientific data and understanding about COVID-19 is still in its infancy stage, Donoghue added, saying: "There is nothing normal about this situation."

Kitty Quinn, assistant superintendent of elementary schools for the Diocese of Columbus, Ohio, said that the Columbus Catholic schools are looking at some kind of slower reentry to give faculty and staff time to assess the student social-emotional issues amid the pandemic. Schools there are scheduled to reopen Aug. 20.

"That gives us the ability to assess where we are at and figure out where the gap is and what we have to do to design the

education practices to both catch up and keep moving," Quinn said, adding that Ohio's hot Midwestern summers and the school's limited air conditioning preclude an early opening in July.

In Brookline, Massachusetts, Theresa Kirk, principal of Saint Mary of the Assumption elementary school, said her focus now is on finishing the current school year June 12, but that the school planned to reconvene current and new students online for another several weeks of remote learning starting July 6. The aim is to mitigate the "summer slide" when students tend to lose knowledge over the vacation months.

"We really feel that additional time will help give them an edge, then we are off again for August and start school the day after Labor Day," said Kirk, adding that she also has her doubts about the next school year given the likelihood of a lingering pandemic.

"It is still concerning to think that we would open around Labor Day. I cannot imagine that necessarily happening in the way we normally do unless we have significant change," she said, adding that the prospect of social distancing the younger children will be a challenge.

"I have a retention team working with me and thinking about what the fall could look like. It could be a blend of some remote learning and small class size coming together in a way that not everyone is there all at once — sort of a staggered opening," Kirk said.

Saint Mary of the Assumption faculty are also talking about having the students eat lunch in their classrooms but not in the cafeteria; using more entrances to the building; and foregoing physical education and gymnasium activities to enhance student distancing.

Meanwhile, the school hired an outside marketing firm to create a virtual tour video pro-

duction and is busy taking fall enrollment and registration digitally.

"Our enrollment continues to prosper and I would say we are very blessed that our numbers are holding strong; our tuition is holding strong — all things you worry about when you are not seeing people every day," Kirk said, adding that safety is a top priority.

Looking ahead, she put it this way: "We are cautiously optimistic."

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Local company produces film on Lakota Indian spiritualist

BY JENNIFER BARTON

In an age when television shows frequently contain objectionable content, it can be refreshing for Catholics to find a program that features a person's quest for godliness amid extreme hardship. Such a program has been created by a local company.

New Group Media, based out of South Bend, produces films for various clients. For the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, it has created the Annual Bishop's Appeal video for many years.

The company has now been blessed to have its documentary, "Walking the Good Red Road: Nicholas Black Elk's Journey to Sainthood," picked up by ABC affiliates and set to air nationwide on May 17. The hourlong film highlights the life and the road to canonization of Nicholas Black Elk, Lakota Sioux spiritual leader and Catholic catechist.

Christopher Salvador, director and producer of "Walking the Good Red Road," is enthusiastic about the message and artistry of the completed project. He stressed the importance of authenticity in the documentary, including using actors from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, who spoke the Lakota language, and drummers from the Red Cloud Indian School.

The project began when Sister Judith Zielinski, OSF, screenwriter and producer, was approached by a Catholic theologian of Native American history concerning creating a short film about Black Elk. Their conversation sparked the idea for a larger video. Since New Group had already produced content for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, she and Salvador went to the USCCB communications office to look into grants that might finance the documentary. As it turned out, the office's Catholic Communications Campaign was looking for projects to fund.

"I wrote to the bishop of Rapid City to ask if he would serve as executive producer and he agreed; he was very supportive," said Sister Judith. After the grant was approved, she and Salvador began researching Black Elk's life and scouting potential filming locations in South Dakota.

Black Elk lived during the destruction of the Lakota Sioux way of life and the forced resettlement of his people onto reservations in the Dakota Territory in the late 19th century. As a youth, he participated briefly in the Battle of Little Bighorn and was part of the rescue party at Wounded Knee. For a time, he toured with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and even performed for Queen Victoria.

His spiritual life and path to canonization are portrayed in the documentary. A vision that

he had as a young boy spurred his life's search for God. In that vision, he felt himself being called to become a spiritual leader for the Lakota Sioux. He continued to seek understanding and had another vision as an adult where a man spoke to him — a man he said was "the Son of God."

In studying Black Elk's life, Sister Judith learned that in the 1880s, Lakota Sioux Chief Red Cloud had persuaded the United States government to send Jesuits, the only religious group that he trusted, to the Pine Ridge Reservation to serve as missionaries for the Lakota Sioux. These "Black Robes" built a church and a school to teach the Native Americans, including Black Elk, the Catholic faith. In 1904, Black Elk, then in his 40s, was baptized Catholic and took the name Nicholas. The school and church are still a part of the reservation today, as are the Jesuits who continue to meet the spiritual needs of the Lakota people. The school has been renamed Red Cloud Indian School to honor the Lakota heritage.

Black Elk was able to merge the truths of Christianity with Lakota spirituality. After his baptism, he trained as a catechist. Several photographs of Black Elk show him reciting the rosary and teaching it to children. He taught in the native language, and it is said that he led 400 people into the Catholic Church. He often traveled the reservation by wagon or horseback to evangelize his people.

Salvador spoke of the difficult conditions the crews had to overcome during filming on location on the Pine Ridge Reservation. "When we filmed one of the scenes, it had snowed and rained



Photos provided by Christopher Salvador

Nicholas Black Elk's baptism was recreated for the film with the assistance of Jesuit priests on the Pine Ridge Reservation. They provided the stole the actor is wearing as well and helped recreate the turn-of-the-century church where the baptism took place.

for four days, and the areas we wanted to film were all under mud," he remembered. Since trucks and even a backhoe could not get to the site to recreate Black Elk's burial scene, they ended up digging the grave by hand in the mud.

The filmmakers had to recreate other scenes in Black Elk's life as well, including his baptism. Although the original church burned down in 1996,



NICHOLAS BLACK ELK

Salvador said that the font used in the film is the original baptismal font, which was rescued during the fire.

Salvador credits the Jesuits who currently serve on the reservation for their assistance in making the film as accurate as possible.

"We wanted everything to be authentic, so we

provided a list of props we needed." The Jesuits, in turn, loaned him a turn-of-the-century stole

from their archives for the baptism scene, along with "a 1950s aspergillum (liturgical instrument for sprinkling holy water) and cross for the funeral scene."

While most of the filming took place in South Dakota, there are ties to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. The narrator, Jim Greulich, is from the area, and many of the film's costumes were provided by the Casaday Costume Company of South Bend. Larry Bilinski, post-production director, stated that when some areas of the documentary needed to be revisited in the editing process, these shots were staged locally in South Bend.

"To re-create the past took a lot of research — documents, letters, photos — visually, that is the backbone," Bilinski said.

Sister Judith shared that in the beginning, she didn't feel an emotional connection to Black Elk. But after hours of research at Marquette University's Native American Catholic archives, she began to see him as an "incredible saint for today."

His forgiveness and holiness made him a model for modern Lakota Catholics. "One very important thing for me to include in the documentary was Lakota Catholicism today," she said.

Black Elk's view that all people belonged to the family of God makes him an important figure not only to Native Americans but to all Catholics. Sister Judith sees him as a man who can bridge the gap between opposing opinions in a divided world. Indeed, Black Elk himself is quoted as saying, "There is only one important law, to love one another ... We are all related."

To view "Walking the Good Red Road," check local listings or contact the local ABC station for a broadcast date and time. Copies of the film will also be made available in early summer through the Diocese of Rapid City.



Filming the burial scene for Nicholas Black Elk required hand-digging the grave on location in South Dakota. Historical accuracy was of utmost importance in the making of the documentary, with native Lakota playing the roles in the film.