‘Like dying and going to heaven’
Couples blessed at wedding jubilee Mass

A celebration of holy matrimony takes place at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, Sept. 20. One husband who attended the Mass recalled the day he met his bride of 50 years as “Like dying and going to heaven.”

A round two dozen married couples celebrating their 25th, 40th, 50th and 60th wedding jubilees were recognized and blessed at a wedding anniversary Mass celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Sunday, Sept. 20, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

The bishop welcomed all those who were in attendance at the Mass and the couples celebrating their anniversaries at home, watching the liturgy via livestreamed video. The Mass remains available to watch on YouTube @diocesefwsb.

Tom and Barbara Federspiel, parishioners at St. Jude Parish, Fort Wayne, were among the couples marking their anniversary at the morning Mass. The Federspiels were celebrating their 50-year union.

Tom recalled the way that the couple first met each other several decades ago. “She’s been so faithful, so wonderful. I found her in a convent,” he recalled. “She decided she wanted seven kids and she loved to cook, and I thought ‘Oh! This is like dying and going to heaven!’ So, I’ve been blessed.”

He added that the best part of their 50 years of marriage was “probably the kids. We have six.”

“That, and just sharing the joys and sorrows together. You don’t have to do it alone,” his wife added. “Church keeps us going.”

During the jubilee Mass, Bishop Rhoades prayed for the couples. “May you continue to walk together on this journey, helping each other, encouraging each other, caring for each other and respecting each other,” he said.

He reminded them that their journey has a destination: heaven. “Remember, your task in marriage is to help each other get to heaven.”

To this end, the Federspiels heavily involve themselves with the St. Jude Perpetual Adoration Chapel. At a time when many people are asleep, Tom spends hours in the chapel — a tradition he has continued each week for over 30 years. Barbara regularly adores in the morning hours.

Before the couples stood and held hands to renew their wedding vows, the bishop asked them to recall the graces they received on their wedding day.

“On the anniversary of that celebration at which you joined your lives in an unbreakable bond through the sacrament of matrimony, you now intend to renew before the Church the promises you made to one another. Turn to the Lord in prayer,” he asked, “that these vows may be strengthened by divine grace.”

The Federspiels, along with the rest of the anniversary-celebrating couples, turned to each other, holding hands and joining in prayer and thanksgiving for their spouse. Then they prayed together: “Blessed are you, Lord, for in the good and the bad times of our life, you have stood lovingly by our side. Help us, we pray, to remain faithful in our love for one another so that we may be true witnesses to the covenant you have made with mankind.”

After the couples prayed, the bishop blessed them, saying “May the Lord keep you safe all the days of your life. May he be your comfort in adversity and your support in prosperity. May he fill your home with his blessings.”

Another Mass to recognize anniversary couples will take place at 2 p.m. Oct. 11 at St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend. It will be livestreamed as well, on the diocesan YouTube channel.
October webinars offer Catholic voters a guide for informed decisions

BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

A mid the noise, confusion and competing voices of the 2020 election season, the Catholic Church offers clarity for the faithful and a call to approach the voting booth with a well-formed conscience.

In October, Catholics in Indiana will have the unique opportunity to hear the Church’s perspective about these matters directly in their own homes. Three live webinars − “Beyond Secular Politics: Walking in Faithful Citizenship” — will combine the Church’s timeless teachings with the latest in technology to bring important insights to Catholic voters. The webinars, which are free of charge and identical in content, will be sponsored and hosted by the Indiana Catholic Conference, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church statewide.

While neither the Church nor the ICC supports or opposes a specific candidate or party, Catholics are called through fulfillment of our civic responsibility to shape morality in the political arena,” said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC. “We do this when we vote by remembering our Catholic social teachings of loving our neighbor, caring for the least among us and supporting policies that promote the common good. We are also called to respect our environment and to protect the dignity of workers and society’s most vulnerable members.

The webinars, scheduled for Oct. 5, 7 and 10, will be hosted live by Espada and newly appointed associate director of the ICC, Alexander Mingus. Content for the hourlong sessions will be based on the latest political participation guide published by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, titled “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.”

Unfortunately, politics in our country often can be a contest of powerful interests, partisan attacks, sound bites, and media hype,” the bishops’ document reads in part. “The Church calls for a different kind of political engagement: one shaped by the moral convictions of well-formed consciences and focused on the dignity of every human being, the pursuit of the common good, and the protection of the weak and the vulnerable.”

This teaching document on the Church’s perspective on major public policy issues that promote the common good.

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

The USCCB has produced a guide for Catholic voters in every U.S. presidential election year since 1976. Although the bishops update and revise the guide every four years to reflect current issues facing the country, the guide is not an endorsement for any particular candidate for office.

“Not to diminish the importance of this election, but there is an element of going beyond that — to understand our political participation as Catholics not just as casting a vote, but about having conversations with our friends and family members, to lovingly help them understand the entirety of Church teaching,” Mingus said. “In addition, we can pressure our elected officials whenever they depart from policies that promote the common good.

“We can have a great impact on so many levels,” he continued. “But limiting ourselves to angry comments on social media or text messages does little to convert the hearts of others.”

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

To access the USCCB political participation guide, visit www.usccb.org.
Historic designation for St. Rose of Lima Church

BY JENNIFER BARTON

People in Fort Wayne still jokingly ask residents of the small town of Monroeville, “Monroeville, are you guys still there?”

It’s an ongoing joke, but St. Rose of Lima Parish in Monroeville is most definitely still there. It has even put itself literally on the map this year. Both the church and the rectory were accepted into the National Registry of Historic Places Aug. 27.

St. Rose staff learned about the designation when a letter was sent to Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Sept. 1 from the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office. A certificate will be presented to parish representatives at the 2021 Indiana State Fair.

The process was a long and sometimes rocky one, the idea stemming from the parish’s sesquicentennial celebration in 2018. Blane Ryan, parishioner and retired high school history teacher, spearheaded the campaign with the full backing of the parish. He worked with the Architecture and Community Heritage organization of Fort Wayne and historic preservationist Jill Downie to complete the application process and even helped fund the first application personally.

Father Lourdino Fernandes, affectionately known to his parishioners as Father Dino, was pastor of St. Rose at the time and gave Ryan permission. The first petition was rejected, but the parish refused to give up.

Few churches are listed on the National Historic Registry, according to Ryan. “Since St. Rose has always been a huge part of the community and we have quite a strong presence in Monroeville ... it would be fitting to see if we could get national historic landmark status.”

He compared his ideas for St. Rose to the similar churches of St. Louis, Besancon in New Haven and St. Peter in Fort Wayne, which are both known for their beautiful and historic sanctuaries. Ryan wants people to enter the sanctuary and be awed by the beauty of the church and lift their thoughts to God.

With a bicycle path running through town and the Monroeville Community Center offering showers and laundry services to cyclists, Ryan sees this as an opportunity for a historic stop along the route. A sign designating the historic site could bring more people to St. Rose, and he would love to amaze them with the church’s anistry.

More than anything, though, Ryan believes in preserving what was passed down by previous generations.

He clarified that even if a building is put on the registry, it doesn’t mean it cannot be changed or renovated; it simply means that these buildings have government support for preservation. “I’m a firm believer that we have to save some of the older buildings,” Ryan said. “We have to preserve the past for future generations. Tearing things down isn’t the answer.”

That doesn’t mean the church hasn’t seen its share of demolition. In 2013, St. Rose purchased the former Monroeville Elementary School building a few blocks from the church and uses the location as the parish school. Around a hundred students are enrolled this year.

The current church has gone through many changes throughout the years, and now Ryan hopes to “restore it back to its former glory. Not that it’s not beautiful now, but it is God’s house.”

The current St. Rose of Lima Church building has been placed on the National Registry of Historic Places. The designation honors its age of more than 100 years and qualifies the parish for potential funding to restore it to its original glamour.

A newspaper clipping attests to the 1889 construction of the parish church. A certificate will be presented to parish representatives at the 2021 Indiana State Fair.
Two Catholic women judges top short list as possible Supreme Court nominees

BY CAROL ZIMMERMANN

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Two Catholic women judges are on the short list of possible candidates to fill the vacant Supreme Court justice seat after the Sept. 18 death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

The judges are Amy Coney Barrett, a federal appellate court judge in Chicago, and Barbara Lagoa, a federal appeals court judge in Atlanta.

President Donald Trump told reporters the afternoon of Sept. 19, and rallygoers later that evening, that he intended to pick a Supreme Court nominee in the coming days, and it would likely be a woman.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky, pledged hours after Ginsburg’s death that he would hold a vote on Trump’s nominee to fill the court vacancy. Despite blocking President Barack Obama’s nominee in 2016, after Justice Antonin Scalia’s death and President Donald Trump’s promise to”only fill the Supreme Court seat if we get a Republican majority in the Senate,” McConnell and other Republicans have said the situation is different this time because the same party, Republicans, control both the Senate and the White House. To move Trump’s nominee through the Senate would require a simple majority vote.

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has said that if he wins the election, he should be the one to nominate Ginsburg’s successor.

One of the first names to emerge as possible contender for Ginsburg’s seat was Justice Brett Kavanaugh, who was nominated by Trump in 2018 after Justice Anthony Kennedy retired, a slot that was widely viewed as a potential opening for a Supreme Court justice who would not bear in the discharge of my duties as a judge.”

The other name that emerged as short-list contender for the Supreme Court — and quickly gained traction as a potential election boost for the Trump — was Lagoa, the 52-year-old Miami-born daughter of Cuban exiles.

Last year, Lagoa spoke at a Florida reception of the St. Thomas More Society, when she was asked about the impact her faith would have on her interpretation of the law.

At the time, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-California, told her: “The dogma lives loudly within you, and that’s a concern.”

Barrett responded: “It’s never appropriate for a judge to impose that judge’s personal convictions, whether they arise from faith or anywhere else, on the law.”

After this hearing, several Catholic leaders spoke out against the line of questioning used on her that focused on her faith.

Feinstein had referred to Barrett’s speeches and a 1998 article she wrote about the role of Catholic judges in death penalty cases. The senator questioned Barrett about upholding Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that made abortion legal.

When Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Illinois, asked Barrett if she considered herself an “orthodox” Catholic, Barrett said: “If you’re asking whether I take my faith seriously and am a faithful Catholic, I am. Although I would stress that my present church affiliation or my religious beliefs would not bear in the discharge of my duties as a judge.”

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‘Unrealistic’ limits on public worship ‘willful discrimination’

SAN FRANCISCO (CNS) — San Francisco’s archbishop told hundreds of Catholics gathered near City Hall Sept. 20 that “it is because of our Catholic faith that we are being put at the end of the line” by city officials in enacting what could be the country’s harshest pandemic restrictions on religious worship.

“The city continues to place unrealistic and suffocating restrictions on our natural and constitutional right to worship. This willful discrimination is affecting us all,” said Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone. “Yes, discrimination, because there is no other word for it.”

He made the comments in a homily at a Mass that followed eucharistic processions to a plaza near San Francisco’s City Hall.

On Sept. 13, in a memo to all priests of the archdiocese, Archbishop Cordileone announced that three parishes were organizing eucharistic processions starting at different points and ending up next to City Hall, to be followed by Masses outside the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption. He urged all parishes to participate.

More than 1,000 Catholics participated in the archdiocesan “Free the Mass” demonstration.

In his memo, in an op-ed in The Washington Post Sept. 16 and in his homily, the archbishop said Catholics are asking to be treated like anyone else in being able to exercise their right to worship in public at a “level consistent with other activities” in the city, like shopping, protesting and gathering in a public park.

Church leaders have no issue with the faithful being asked to follow safety protocols amid the pandemic, he said, and he has reiterated that being asked to adhere to these measures is within the purview of city and health officials, but keeping people from worship is not.

“Months ago, we submitted a safety plan to the city including masks and social distancing, just like indoor retail stores did,” explained in his homily, “The city said yes to indoor retail, but we Catholics are still waiting to hear back.”

Right now, he said, people can shop at Nordstrom’s at 25% capacity “but only one of you at a time is allowed to pray inside of this great cathedral, your cathedral? Is this equality? No, there is no reason for this new rule except a desire to put Catholics — to put you — at the back of the line.”

The archbishop made several references to the “back of the line” and “end of the line” in his homily, titled “Going to the End of the Line for the Glory of God.”

He said that Sunday’s Gospel reading from Matthew reminded him of the time he spent as pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Calexico, California, at the U.S.-Mexico border and his morning jog along the border fence.

“There I would see the exact scene Our Lord describes: men standing in the streets, waiting to be hired to work in fields so they could make a day’s wage,” he said. “Like the workers at the Eleventh Hour, these men were at the end of the line: the ones left out and ignored by society, the people barely able to survive.”

One time he gave a ride to the bus station to a man who had entered the country illegally and was trying to get to the next stop to start his new life in the United States. He bought the man a ticket so he could continue on his journey.

“I was aware that I was breaking the law, since it is against the law to provide transportation to an undocumented immigrant,” he continued. “But the highest law is love of God and love of neighbor, and that law has to take precedence over the human-made law of the state when government would ask us to turn our backs on God or our neighbor in need.”

“Now in San Francisco, all of us here are being put at the end of the line,” he said. “No matter how rich or poor, no matter whether newly arrived or from families that have been here for many generations, it is our Catholic faith that unites us, and it is because of our Catholic faith that we are being put at the end of the line.”

Archbishop Cordileone noted that amid the pandemic, the work of the Catholic Church of San Francisco has been ongoing, such as Catholic Charities’ outreach to the homeless and the efforts of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul assisting the needy at the parish level.

He thanked the priests, religious and “the sacrificing lay faithful, for what you are doing to keep the love of Christ alive and visible in these distressing times.”

St. Vincent de Paul Parish invites you to celebrate

Vincentfest Sunday, Sept. 27
Open House to celebrate the blessing of the Oratory of St. Mary Magdalene noon-4 p.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m.
followed by Praise and Worship 6:30-8 p.m.
Outside in the Life Center Parking Lot FOOD TRUCKS at 5:30 p.m.
Bring lawn chairs - social distancing required
Collection of items for St. Henry Thrift Store all weekend in the parking lot
1502 E. Wallen Rd., Fort Wayne
Ruth Bader Ginsburg is remembered as ‘jurist of historic stature’

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who died Sept. 18 at age 87, has been described in countless tributes as a cultural icon and a giant despite her small size. “Our nation has lost a jurist of historic stature. We at the Supreme Court have lost a cherished colleague. Today we mourn, but with confidence that future generations will remember Ruth Bader Ginsburg as we knew her — a tireless and resolute champion of justice,” said Chief Justice John Roberts in a statement released by the court. Ginsburg was buried by her family at her home in Washington when she died from complications of metastatic pancreatic cancer. The second woman appointed to the court, who served there for more than 27 years, is primarily remembered for her pioneering work for gender equality and for writing pointed dissents and asking tough questions. In anti-death penalty and pro-immigrant opinions, she sided with Catholic Church leaders, but she differed with them in her support for legalized abortion, same-sex marriage and the mandate that contraception be covered in all health insurance plans.

Social distancing central to cloistered nuns’ sacrifice for the greater good

PITTSBURGH (CNS) — When it comes to social distancing, cloistered religious communities are way ahead of everyone. For thousands of years, secluded religious orders have been devoted to prayer and work, ordinarily in silence. The physical separation that is part of a cloistered life is a central aspect of their sacrifice for the greater good. Passionist nuns founded, with the help of Passionist fathers, their first American monastery in Pittsburgh in 1910. The nuns then formed the first retreat house for women in the region that includes Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. Three members of the Passionist nuns in Pittsburgh recently spoke about the many lives amid the pain and uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sister Mary Grace, who trained in her early life as a psychologist, has been a Passionist for 15 years, said it’s understandable that many people are having difficulty coping during the pandemic. “God made us in his own image, and God is Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in relationship,” she said in an interview for Catholic News Service. “Human beings are made for relationship. That’s who we are. And so, to have that dimension cut off is a very painful and difficult thing.”

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act called ‘huge win for women’

A pregnant woman is seen outside the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington in this 2016 file photo. The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act was passed with a bipartisan vote by the House Sept. 17. The National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd said House passage of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act Sept. 17 is a “huge win for women” because it prohibits employment practices that discriminate against making reasonable accommodations for job applicants or employees affected “by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.” This applies to private sector employers with over 15 employees as well as public sector employers.

Pew sees religious voters’ support for 2020 nominees mirroring past elections

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Support for Republican President Donald Trump and Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden from voters who identify as religious appears to adhere to earlier patterns, a Pew research center polling, 59% of white Catholics say they’re voting for Biden, Hispanic Catholics shift the other direction, favoring Biden 65%. Ninety-two percent of Black Protestants say they’re voting for Biden, and as for Trump, 83% of white evangelicals say they’re either voting for him or leaning in his direction.

Knights of Holy Sepulchre give $3.5 million to a special fund to support Holy Land

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Knights of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, especially its schools and charitable outreach. “Despite the difficult conditions on a global level, generosity was not lacking,” said a statement Sept. 17 from the order’s Vatican headquarters. About 30,000 Catholic men and women around the world are knights or dames of the Holy Sepulchre, pledging to support the church of Jerusalem. Cardinal Fernando Filoni, grand master of the order, announced in May a special COVID-19 Humanitarian Support Fund because “the Holy Land, where the very economic livelihood of thousands of families lies in religious pilgrimages and tourism, has been seriously affected.”

Christian communicators can bring hope to world in crisis, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — It is important to have Christian media that provide quality coverage of the life of the Church and that are capable of forming people’s consciences, Pope Francis said. Professional Christian communicators “must be heralds of hope and trust in the future. Because only when the future is welcomed as something positive and possible does the present become livable, too,” he said. The pope made his remarks Sept. 18 in a private audience at the Vatican with staff members of Terlito, a Belgian weekly magazine specializing in Christian and Catholic perspectives. “In the world we live in, information makes up an integral part of our daily life,” he said. “When it is quality (information), it lets us better understand the problems and challenges the world is called to face,” and it inspires people’s attitudes and behaviors. “The presence of Christian media specializing in quality information about the life of the Church in the world, capable of contributing to the formation of consciences, is very important,” he added.

Biotech company ends use of aborted fetal cell lines for vaccines

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic pro-life leaders say they are seeing improvement in the development of vaccines with the use of ethical animal cell lines instead of cell lines derived from abortions. A resolution by Sanofi Pasteur to no longer use an aborted fetal cell line in producing its polio vaccine, a move recently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Sanofi Pasteur, the largest biotech company in the world devotion entirely to vaccines, requested the agency’s approval for switching from using an aborted fetal cell line called MRC-5 to using an ethical animal cell line to produce its polio combination vaccines Pentacel and Quadracel. The vaccines division of the French multinational pharmaceutical company has been developing a vaccine but currently developing a COVID-19 vaccine by utilizing “cell lines not connected to unethical practices,” said a spokesperson. Sanofi Pasteur also recently ended production of its stand-alone polio vaccine, Pavlovsk, which also had been manufactured using MRC-5, according to the president of the National Catholic Bioethics Center, based in Philadelphia.
Sisters of Providence to host first virtual Come and See retreat


The event will begin at 7 p.m. on Oct. 23 and conclude at 2 p.m. on Oct. 24. It will be facilitated by Sisters of Providence Vocations Director Sister Joni Luna.

Those who attend the weekend retreat will learn more about the Sisters of Providence, and foundress St. Mother Theodore Guerin. They will meet sisters and hear how the Congregation lives out love, mercy and justice.

“Our aim and purpose remains the same as with other Come and See retreats, but the process we’ll use to deliver the message has changed,” Sister Joni said. “We are inviting women discerning religious life to join us. We will provide a space for women to slow down from their busy fast-paced lives and listen to what their call might be.

“Attendees will become acquainted with the Sisters of Providence and our mission and interact with our women in initial formation. We will also provide a time and space for questions and wondering about religious life in the 21st century.”

Sister Joni said this will be the congregation’s first time to conduct a Come and See Weekend retreat via Zoom.

“However, the advantages just might outweigh that loss. The way I see it, more women will be able to attend. It will be more cost-effective, and more importantly, women will be in the comfort of their own space which might just give them the confidence to log on with us.”

The retreat is open to single, Catholic women, ages 18-42.

For more information or to sign up, visit ComeAndSee. SistersofProvidence.org or call Sister Joni at 361-500-9505 or email jluna@spsmw.org.

Tools and Toys sale benefits St. Charles

Knight Pat Morello, left, and a St. Charles Borromeo parishioner try out a donation of tools to the St. Charles Knights of Columbus Council 451 first-ever Tools and Toys Garage Sale in August. The Knights hosted the sale to help generate funds for the Fort Wayne parish during the costly pandemic. Proceeds totaled more than $3,600, far exceeding expectations, and all proceeds went directly to the parish.

Ave Maria Press honors retired publisher

Father Kevin J. Sandberg, CSC, left, presents former Ave Maria Press publisher and CEO Tom Grady with a bronze plaque of St. Joseph, a replica of one in the new Corby Hall. Father Sandberg is a member of the Ave Maria Press board of directors and honored Grady Sept. 11 for his 15 years of service to the Catholic publishing house. Grady has been in book publishing for 40 years, was named a 2020 Spirit of Holy Cross Award recipient earlier this year and received the Association of Catholic Publishers 2020 Hall of Fame Award in September.

Red Masses to be celebrated in diocese

For more than 775 years, “Red” Masses have been celebrated annually. Asking God’s grace and wisdom upon the start of the judicial year, the Red Mass invites into worship and fellowship all persons in the legal profession.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will celebrate two Red Masses this year on either side of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. The Masses will begin at 5:15 p.m. on Sept. 29 in South Bend and at 5:30 p.m. Oct. 5 in Fort Wayne. Both will be hosted by the St. Thomas More Society. On the South Bend side, the Mass will take place in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on the campus of the University of Notre Dame. In Fort Wayne, it will occur at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, neither celebration will offer a reception or speaker afterward. All lawyers, judges, staff, regardless of religious affiliation, are welcome.

The first recorded Red Mass was in the year 1245 in Paris, France. The tradition had spread to England by 1510 and the start of the Michaelmas on Sept. 29, the feast of the Archangel Michael. To this day, a Red Mass is still celebrated at Westminster Cathedral in London.

The tradition spread to America. In 1928, in New York City, the first Red Mass was celebrated. Many cities across the country now offer a Red Mass, from Washington, D.C., to Atlanta.

In the nation’s capital, representatives of all three branches of government gather to worship at a Red Mass on the Sunday before the Supreme Court reconvenes in October for its new term.

The name derives from the color of the scarlet robes worn historically by the judges, as well as the red liturgical vestments worn by the clergy. The Mass is celebrated in honor of the Holy Spirit, the source of all wisdom, understanding, fortitude and good counsel. These gifts are especially needed in the day-to-day labor of the legal profession.

Canon lawyers and judges also celebrate the annual Red Mass, seeking the same blessing of wisdom and understanding.

At the Mass, the bishop will publicly invoke God’s blessings upon those entrusted with the administration of justice, and upon all public officials who serve the common good.

The South Bend Red Mass will be livestreamed via the Campus Ministry of the University of Notre Dame at www.campusministry.nd.edu.

The Fort Wayne Red Mass will be livestreamed on the diocesan Facebook page and YouTube channels.
Student-led ministry blessed at Indiana Tech

BY CHRISTOPHER LUSHIS

W hen Peter sees Jesus transfigured upon Mount Tabor, he exclaims, “Lord, it is good that we are here!” After witnessing this moment of glory, the apostles then begin their journey toward Jerusalem, where Jesus proceeds to enter into His passion, death and resurrection. This mountaintop experience allows Peter to contemplate the majesty of the Lord alongside his fellow companions and receive the strength and courage to face the trials that are soon to come.

Similarly, encountering Jesus through the sacraments, Scripture and faith-based community provides Catholics with the remedy for the trials and struggles life in a secular world can bring. These burdens are felt profoundly on many college campuses, where important questions of faith, morality, ideology and lifestyle are often answered with non-Christian, or even anti-Christian, responses.

At many of the institutions throughout the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, students have access to resources and support for deepening their faith and persevering through the daily challenges they face. This includes not only the Catholic colleges, but also those without any historical Christian designation.

At the Fort Wayne campus of Indiana Tech, since 2017 it has been the students themselves leading the charge to nourish their Catholic faith and put it into action on campus. Senior Paxton Simerman, a graduate of Bishop Dwenger High School and parishioner at St. Charles Borromeo, has developed the Catholic Warrior student group as it hosts weekly on-campus Masses and Bible studies. Participants also are making arrangements for regular opportunities for reconciliation and eucharistic adoration.

These opportunities have provided a greater sense of fellowship, community and awareness for how the intentional group of disciples can live their faith in a largely non-religious environment. Simerman shared: “Right now we are doing a FOCUS-based Bible study on living out the Gospel that is geared toward college students. We’re able to go deep in our conversations. One girl started coming who had been away from the faith for over a year. As someone who is trying to grow the ministry, I don’t always see the effects, and I wonder about the work and effort put into the planning. But to receive feedback like that is a true Holy Spirit moment, reminding of the good work God does when we allow Him to work in our lives.”

While the upswing in numbers has been modest, she emphasized that “it has been amazing to see the group grow. Since it has become an official student organization, we’ve been able to publicly promote our events on campus and have seen consistent increases in student attendance and the length of time we spend discussing Scripture in our meetings. Because people with great knowledge and love for their faith are coming to participate, it allows us to go deeper. I wouldn’t be able to lead a Bible study like this otherwise. The first couple weeks have been amazing, and I look forward to seeing how deep we can go.”

Freshman Jessica Hartmus, a graduate of Bishop Luers High School, Fort Wayne, and a parishioner at Sacred Heart, stated: “In the college world, if you want to talk about anything religious, you have to first start with the formal philosophical proofs for God’s existence, oth-

Photos provided by Randy Smith

erwise you’re often dismissed or people don’t care. But here, because we understand and agree on the basics, we can get into the more complex ideas about Scripture. I also know that since everyone here is accepting of my faith, I can be myself, and I don’t have to be on the defensive about everything I believe. We can all discuss questions about Church teaching, how to understand it and respond intelligently about it.”

She added that “it has been beautiful to see Paxton’s leadership and humility as she seeks to learn more about her faith and guide the group, yet still acknowledging that she has much more to learn in her spiritual life.”

“Sometimes I’ll get a question in class about the Catholic perspective on something because the professor knows I’m Catholic,” Simerman said. “In those instances, I know I can bring the issue to our group for further discussion. There have been times when I wasn’t completely sure how to respond in the moment, but after bringing it to our conversations here, I could go back to my professor with a logical and comprehensive answer to their inquiry. Just because I’m leading this group doesn’t mean I know everything. We’re simply trying to provide new opportunities to give the Holy Spirit room to work in our lives.”

Dave Stevens, senior director of institutional advancement, and associate professor Maximo Ortego serve as faculty advisors for the Catholic Warriors. They likewise shared their admiration for Simerman’s leadership and initiative to provide a receptive Catholic environment for her peers, from which they can go forth in confidence to live their faith with enthusiasm. Additionally, they expressed their gratitude for the celebration of Mass on campus, which allows for practicing faculty and staff to participate as well.

Junior A.J. Smith, a homeschooled graduate and parishioner at St. Paul of the Cross, Columbia City, also said that Catholic Warriors offers an extra boost during the week.

“Since Indiana Tech is not a Catholic or Christian school, it’s nice to have an area and group on campus where I can be a sacramental Catholic and grow my faith. I’ve learned a lot from the Bible study and from the priests who come for Mass, since we have pizza and discussions afterwards. The priests have been open to sharing their vocation stories and answering various questions about the faith.”

The priests who have supported Catholic students at Indiana Tech include Father Tom Shoemaker, Father Patrick Hake, Father Daniel Whelan and Father Wimal Jayasurya.

“I’m impressed by the initiation of the group,” shared Father Hake, pastor of St. Peter Parish in Fort Wayne. “They started that group without any help from a parish. They saw a need, a desire and took steps to bring it to reality. I’m very happy to support them. We need that sort of initiation at every level of the Church.”

Catholic students at Indiana Tech gather with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades following a Mass celebrated on campus in 2018.
As federal fiscal year nears, refugee resettlement agencies fear the worst

BY RHINA GUIDOS

WASHINGTON (CNS) — U.S. organizations that work to resettle refugees fear that an upcoming battle with the Trump administration over the number of displaced people allowed into the country may be the fiercest yet.

Even as the U.S. High Commissioner for Refugees pleads this summer with countries to take in more of the 79.5 million displaced people worldwide, the United States, under the Trump administration, has consistently lowered each year the refugee cap — the maximum number of displaced people the country decides to be resettled in a year.

Within hours after taking office in 2017, the Trump administration announced it was cutting the cap of 110,000 allowed under the Obama administration to 50,000. Last year, the administration announced it was setting the cap at 18,000 — far fewer than 10,000 have been allowed in.

Under previous administrations, the refugee cap had averaged around 95,000, with about 85,000 resettled annually in recent years through the Refugee Act of 1980, which created the Federal Refugee Resettlement Program.

For decades, many U.S. Catholic organizations, along with other faith groups, have taken part in helping some 3 million who have found refuge via the program as they fled wars, persecution or famine.

But future U.S. participation in that process is in question.

News agency Reuters reported Sept. 10 that Trump administration officials may postpone refugee admissions altogether for the upcoming fiscal year, citing COVID-19 concerns, or soon announce further cuts to what is already the lowest refugee cap in modern history.

In a Sept. 10 press call hosted by Refugee Council USA, which included a panelist from Catholic Charities Dallas, a volunteer at a Catholic refugee resettlement agency, and Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, among others, participants expressed worries about how the administration has chiseled away at the program and its possible demise if a second term of the Trump presidency comes to fruition.

In 2019, the State Department said about the cap on numbers that it was focusing on “assisting refugees where they are concentrated,” citing a “humanitarian and security crisis along the southern border that already imposes an extraordinary burden on the U.S. immigration system.”

The long-standing refugee program, Lofgren said, made the United States “a beacon of hope for those fleeing terror, abuse, and brutal regimes,” and, “it serves as a much-needed reminder of the compassion that our nation needs right now.”

It helped panelist Sarah Soper, an Iraqi refugee, who now is a refugee resettlement specialist with Catholic Charities in Dallas. As long as she could remember, she said, she never “lived in a war” — a war she had to leave because of her job in Iraq.

“Because of the war,” she said, “I lost my first child and that moment really changed my life.”

She taught that being a good person doesn’t guarantee that something bad can’t happen to you when you live a country in conflict, she said.

“In a war zone, you can witness people killed every day, witnessing brutal action,” she said during the Refugee Council USA panel.

Her brothers began working with the U.S. Army in the area as interpreters and she began helping nonprofits funded by UNICEF and UNESCO to help families in Iraq. Seeing that work was “the seed to start a new life in the United States,” she said.

“So, we, as a family applied to come to the U.S.,” she said.

Because of the federal refugee program, they now have been in the U.S. for nearly eight years.

Getting a new chance at life, she decided to help others do the same through Catholic Charities, she said, the place that had helped her in her journey in a new country.

“The agency really took care of me,” she said. “That moment when I was starting working to serve refugees, that was another moment which changed my life. I am in a position to share my personal experience with (refugees), to give them hope, besides the services.”

But she watched that experience crumble for many others as the consequences of drastically reducing the refugee program meant fewer people would be coming through the doors of Catholic Charities.

“It wasn’t easy in 2018 when they zeroed out my office, and we didn’t have refugees anymore,” she said. “But I knew that the Trump administration had reduced the number of people like her able to come in to the U.S., she said. “I cried my eyes out. I took it so personally because I really believe that every single human being in this earth deserves a safe land for himself, herself and for their children.”

When pandemic threatened residency, immigrant turned to Catholic Charities

As federal fiscal year nears, refugee resettlement agencies fear the worst
The Challenge of Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship

Part II of II: Making Moral Choices and Applying Our Principles
This brief document is Part II of a summary of the US bishops’ reflection, Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, which complements the teaching of bishops in dioceses and states.

Part I of the summary of the US bishops’ reflection, Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, considered the core principles that underlie Catholic engagement in the political realm. Part II is a consideration of the process by which these principles are applied to the act of voting and taking positions on policy issues. It begins with the general consideration of the nature of conscience and the role of prudence. The application of prudential judgment does not mean that all choices are equally valid or that the bishops’ guidance and that of other church leaders is just another political opinion or policy preference among many others. Rather, Catholics are urged to listen carefully to the Church’s teachers when they apply Catholic social teaching to specific proposals and situations.

How Does the Church Help the Catholic Faithful to Speak About Political and Social Questions?

A Well-Formed Conscience
The Church equips its members to address political questions by helping them develop well-formed consciences. “Conscience is a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act. . . . [Every person] is obliged to follow faithfully what he [or she] knows to be just and right” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1778). We Catholics have a lifelong obligation to form our consciences in accord with human reason, enlightened by the teaching of Christ as it comes to us through the Church.

The Virtue of Prudence
The Church also encourages Catholics to develop the virtue of prudence, which enables us “to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1806). Prudence shapes and informs our ability to deliberate over available alternatives, to determine what is most fitting to a specific context, and to act. Prudence must be accompanied by courage, which calls us to act. As Catholics seek to advance the common good, we must carefully discern which public policies are morally sound. At times, Catholics may choose different ways to respond to social problems, but we cannot differ on our obligation to protect human life and dignity and help build, through moral means, a more just and peaceful world.

Doing Good and Avoiding Evil
There are some things we must never do, as individuals or as a society, because they are always incompatible with love of God and neighbor. These intrinsically evil acts must always be rejected and never supported. A preeminent example is the intentional taking of innocent human life, as in abortion. Similarly, human cloning, destructive research on human embryos, and other acts that directly violate the sanctity and dignity of human life including genocide, torture, and the targeting of noncombatants in acts of terror or war, can never be justified. Nor can violations of human dignity, such as acts of racism, treating workers as mere means to an end, deliberately subjecting workers to subhuman living conditions, treating the poor as disposable, or redefining marriage to deny its essential meaning, ever be justified.

Opposition to intrinsically evil acts also prompts us to recognize our positive duty to contribute to the common good and act in solidarity with those in need. Both opposing evil and doing good are essential. As St. John Paul II said, “The fact that only the negative commandments obliges always and under all circumstances does not mean that in the moral life prohibitions are more important than the obligation to do good indicated by the positive commandment.” The basic right to life implies and is linked to other human rights such as a right to the goods that every person needs to live and thrive—including food, shelter, health care, education, and meaningful work.

Avoiding Two Temptations
Two temptations in public life can distort the Church’s defense of human life and dignity: The first is a moral equivalence that makes no ethical distinctions between different kinds of issues involving human life and dignity. The direct and intentional destruction of innocent human life from the moment of conception until natural death is always wrong and is not just one issue among many. It must always be opposed. The second is the misuse of these necessary moral distinctions as a way of dismissing or ignoring other serious threats to human life and dignity. Racism and other unjust discrimination, the use of the death penalty, resorting to unjust war, environmental degradation, the use of torture, war crimes, the failure to respond to those who are suffering from hunger or a lack of health care or housing, pornography, human trafficking, redefining civil marriage, compromising religious liberty,
or unjust immigration policies are all serious moral issues that challenge our consciences and require us to act.

**Making Moral Choices**

The bishops do not tell Catholics how to vote; the responsibility to make political choices rests with each person and his or her properly formed conscience, aided by prudence. This exercise of conscience begins with always opposing policies that violate human life or weaken its protection.

When morally flawed laws already exist, prudential judgment is needed to determine how to do what is possible to restore justice—even if partially or gradually—without ever abandoning a moral commitment to full protection for all human life from conception to natural death (see St. John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, no. 73).

Prudential judgment is also needed to determine the best way to promote the common good in areas such as housing, health care, and immigration. When church leaders make judgments about how to apply Catholic teaching to specific policies, this may not carry the same binding authority as universal moral principles but cannot be dismissed as one political opinion among others. These moral applications should inform the consciences and guide the actions of Catholics.

As Catholics we are not single-issue voters. A candidate’s position on a single issue is not sufficient to guarantee a voter’s support. Yet a candidate’s position on a single issue that involves an intrinsic evil, such as support for legal abortion or the promotion of racism, may legitimately lead a voter to disqualify a candidate from receiving support.¹

**What Public Policies Should Concern Catholics Most?**

As Catholics, we are led to raise questions about political life other than those that concentrate on individual, material well-being. We focus more broadly on what protects or threatens the dignity of every human life. Catholic teaching challenges voters and candidates, citizens and elected officials, to consider the moral and ethical dimensions of public policy issues. In light of ethical principles, we bishops offer the following policy goals that we hope will guide Catholics as they form their consciences and reflect on the moral dimensions of their public choices:

- Address the preeminent requirement to protect human life—by restricting and bringing to an end the destruction of unborn children through abortion and providing women in crisis pregnancies with the supports they need. End the following practices: the use of euthanasia and assisted suicide to deal with the burdens of illness and disability; the destruction of human embryos in the name of research; the use of the death penalty to combat crime; and the imprudent resort to war to address international disputes.

- Protect the fundamental understanding of marriage as the life-long and faithful union of one man and one woman as the central institution of society; promote the complementarity of the sexes and reject false “gender” ideologies; provide better support for family life morally, socially, and economically, so that our nation helps parents raise their children with respect for life, sound moral values, and an ethic of stewardship and responsibility.

- Achieve comprehensive immigration reform that offers a path to citizenship, treats immigrant workers fairly, prevents the separation of families, maintains the integrity of our borders, respects the rule of law, and addresses the factors that compel people to leave their own countries.

- Help families and children overcome poverty and ensure access to and choice in education, as well as decent work at fair, living wages and adequate assistance for the vulnerable in our nation, while also helping to overcome widespread hunger and poverty around the world, especially in the policy areas of development assistance, debt relief, and international trade.

- Ensure full conscience protection and religious freedom for individuals and groups to meet social needs, and so enable families, community groups, economic structures, and government to work together to overcome poverty, pursue the common good, and care for creation.

- Provide health care while respecting human life, human dignity, and religious freedom in our health care system.

- Continue to oppose policies that reflect racism, hostility toward immigrants, religious bigotry, and other forms of unjust discrimination.

- Establish and comply with moral limits on the use of military force—examining for what purposes it may be used, under what authority, and at what human cost—with a special view to seeking a responsible and effective response for ending the persecution of Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East and other parts of the world.

- Join with others around the world to pursue peace, protect human rights and religious liberty, and advance economic justice and care for creation.

**Notes**

¹. *Veritatis Splendor*, no. 52.
**What comes after the pandemic?**

While we are still in the midst of the worst pandemic of our century, with almost 200,000 people dead in our country alone, Pope Francis is thinking about what comes next. What do we do the day after we exit the field hospital?

“The pandemic has put us all in crisis,” the pope said in his Aug. 26 general audience. “After the crisis, a person is not the same. We come out of it, or we come out of it worse.”

What does worse look like? In his Sept. 9 talk, he reads the signs of the times. In the crisis we are now in, “some are taking advantage of the situation to instigate divisions: by seeking economic or political advantages, generating or exacerbating conflicts.”

Worse still, “others are simply not concerned about the suffering of others; they pass by and go about their own way.”

What does better look like? In a series of Wednesday talks starting Aug. 5, and soon in a forthcoming encyclical due out in October, Pope Francis is laying out his vision of a post-COVID-19 society that recognizes the inherent dignity of every human being, the common good, and the preferential option for the poor and the care for the earth.

In recognizing the inherent dignity of each person, we realize that we must not simply seek a cure for the virus. We must seek a cure for “social injustice, inequality and the lack of protection for the weakest,” the pope said Aug. 10. The Church calls this the preferential option for the poor. This is not a political option; nor is it an ideological option, a party option. Pope Francis tells us. It is, instead, “at the center of the Gospel.”

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**The Sunday Gospel**

**MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION**

**Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Matthew 21:28-32

The Book of Ezekiel provides the reading. Pivotal in Jewish history was the time spent by Hebrew captives, and by their descendants, in Babylon, the capital of the then-powerful Babylonian Empire, located roughly in modern Iraq. Babylon had been given the Promised Land militarily, in a process forever ending the two Hebrew independent kingdoms. Many survivors were taken to Babylon.

Occurring in the sixth century B.C., this event is called the exile. For the Hebrew people, the exile was a heartbreaking time. They were so far from their homeland. The exile seemed as if it would never end, and it lasted for four generations. Likely many Jews fell away from the traditional religion of their ancestors.

These people were like people in any other time. Religion seemed for many to have failed. God had failed them.

During this time, Ezekiel wrote to respond to the fury and despair of the people. The prophet colonizes tables. He confronts the people with their own sinfulness. Where was their devotion to God? How faithful had they been in being God’s people? Ezekiel went so far as to say that the people could have argued that there had been no sin. Who deserved whom?

The Epistle to the Philippians is the source of the second reading. Many early Christians were Jews by birth. Many of these Jews, such as Paul himself, had been immersed in the religious and spiritual practice, well-versed in Judaism. Many other early Christians were from pagan backgrounds. In early Christian communities, persons of both these traditions lived side by side.

Such was the case in Philippian Jewish symbols and references appear in the Epistle, but the city in no sense was Jewish. Jews were there, but Philip was thoroughly pagan, an important military base in the Roman Empire, situated in what is now Greece.

Since Christians were in the minority, surrounded by dislike and suspicion at best, the Epistle tried to reinforce their commitment to the Lord and challenge them to be firm.

This epistle magnificently proclaims Christ, the Lord, as the Savior: the center, the focus, and the example to follow. He is the Redeemer! He is everything! St. Matthew’s Gospel furnishes the third reading. It recalls an encounter between Jesus and priests and elders.

Since religion was a favorite topic for everyone at the time, even priests and persons learned in religion were interested in what Jesus said.

God is the father in the parable. The vineyard represents the heavenly kingdom. The sons are humankind.

The message is about repentance. The first son refused to obey but revised his decision. The second son promised to go into the vineyard but did not. Both sons, however, were invited to the vineyard. All people are the objects of divine love. Both sons stumbled, but one repented and was admitted as if nothing otherwise had happened.

Any sinner can repent and recover access to salvation.

**Reflection**

The weekend’s readings are in the stream of readings heard earlier during the late summer and now early fall. The Church calls us to discipleship.

We should hear this call by admitting that we are sinners. Sin is the second and insidiously convinces us that God is hostile to sinners, that they are overwhelmed, helplessly trapped in a state of sin and estrangement from God.

The greatest sinner can repent, first by recognizing that voluntary sinfulness cripples and presents a course toward ruin. Humbly, we can turn to God — any one of us. We must face the fact of our sin and ask forgiveness. God’s love will strengthen us.

If we are as repentant as was the first son in Matthew’s story, God is as wholehearted in our love for Jesus as joyfully exclaimed in the reading from Philippians, then God will welcome us to everlasting life.

**READINGS**

**Sunday:** Ez 18:25-28 Ps 25:4-9 Phil 2:1-11 Mt 21:28-32

**Monday:** Jb 16:22 Ps 17:13-3, 6-7 Lk 9:46-50

**Tuesday:** Dn 7:9-10, 13-14 Ps 138:1-5 Jh 1:47-51

**Wednesday:** B: 9:9-12, 14-16 Ps 88:10-15 Lk 9:57-62

**Thursday:** Jb 19:21-27 Ps 27:9c, 14 Lk 13:10-11

**Friday:** Jb 38:1, 12-21; 40:3-5 Ps 139:1-3, 7-10, 13-14b Mt 18:1-5, 10

**Saturday:** Rv 4:1-3, 5-6, 12-17 Ps 119:66, 119:71, 75, 91, 125, 130 Lk 10:17-24

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**Turning from sin leads to eternal life**

**Hark! The herald angels sing**

"Our American culture is prone to make angels fairies, mermaids, hobbits and gnomes are all popular prettyness in books, movies and gardens, capturing people’s imaginations. Real, spiritual creatures, such as guardian angels, cherubs and archangels are often, ironically found to be less “believable” and more absurd than other made-up characters. Babies or deceased loved ones are even called angels, forgetting their true names. Who ever really is and their spiritual value in our life of faith is recalled in a feast day, as the liturgical calendar turns towards the end of Ordinary Time.

On Sept. 29, the Catholic Church celebrates three, real, important spiritual beings, the archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. Until Vatican II, this was simply the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, or Michaelmas. But in the new liturgical calendar, all three of God’s messengers that are described by name in holy Scripture are remembered.

Each angel has a unique role to play, as well as a particular charism to focus on. We can ask for their intervention and support today especially in their particular areas of strength.

St. Augustine says “Angel” is the name of their office, not of their nature. If you seek the name of their nature, it is ‘spirit’: if you seek the name of their office, it is ‘angel’: from them they are, ‘spirit,’ from what they do ...”

These spiritual beings are special messengers of God. Unique from humans, they do not have material flesh and eat and drink, but rather are spiritual beings. Immortal, the angels have their own will and intelligence, but also shine forth the glory of God, as seen as Jesus’ birth. The shepherds outside in the fields were dazzled and surprised by the bright light and voice of the angel with the heavenly host singing “Glory to God in the highest” as described in Luke 2:14.

Angels have been with Jesus Christ throughout His life, as described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: “They protect Jesus in his infancy, serve him in the desert, strengthen him in his agony in the garden, when he could have been saved by them from the hands of his enemies as Israel had been. Again, it is the angels who ‘evangelize’ by proclaiming the Good News of Christ’s Incarnation and Resurrection. They will be present at Christ’s return, which they will announce, to serve at his judgment.”

Like the saints, angels seek to glorify God, not themselves, and thus in remembering them, the faithful turn more toward God — kneeling side by side with MILLER, page 13

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**THE LITURGICAL LIFE**

**THE FRAY**

**JENNIFER MILLER**
You’re meant to be an eagle, not a chicken: a reflection on baptism

When I was doing full-time parish ministry, one of my favorite activities was performing baptisms. I put the word in the plural, for I hardly ever baptized one baby at a time, but usually 10 or a dozen. Typically, the quite-large group of family and friends would gather in the first several pews of St. Paul of the Cross Church about 2 o’clock on a Sunday afternoon, I would welcome them and do a very short description of what was about to happen, and then the happy cacophony of 12 babies crying at once would inevitably commence. I would shout my way through the prayers and the baptisms — and a general joyfulness would obtain.

Now that I’m a bishop, I have less occasion to baptize, and I do miss it. But an exception took place last week, when I was delighted to welcome into the Church Hazel Rose Cummins, the daughter of Doug Cummins and his wife, Erica. Doug is our associate producer for Word on Fire in Santa Barbara.

I would like to share with all of you what I preached to the group gathered outside (it’s COVID-19 time) of San Roque Church in Santa Barbara for the ceremony. I asked them if they had heard the story of Father Matthew Hood, a priest of the Detroit archdiocese, who discovered, after watching a video of his own baptism, that he had not validly received first Communion, confirmation or baptism. And as a consequence of this, he had not been received into the Church.

Bishop Robert Barron

Now, once this was found out, the Archbishop of Detroit administered all the relevant sacraments to Father Hood and the young man was able to minister as a priest. You might think, “Well, that’s a strange story with a happy ending,” but it tells us, in fact, something extremely important regarding the Church’s understanding of baptism. We believe that through the words and gestures of the sacrament, something happens. Baptism is not simply a celebration of a new life, or even an act of praying for and offering a child to God. If that’s all it is, to paraphrase Fr. O’Connor, the heck with it. It is, rather, the visible sign of the invisible grace of incorporation into the mystical body of Jesus. It changes an objective state of affairs, whether we acknowledge it or not.

Having said all of this, I then stressed what we might call the subjective side of baptism. Since there were quite a few young people present, I used the well-worn parable of the eagle’s egg that tumbled out of the nest only to fall amidst a flock of chickens. When the eaglet was hatched, the only world he knew was that of chickens, and hence he spent his first years pecking on the ground and never spreading his great wings. One day, I continued, a majestic eagle flew overhead and spotted his young confrere on the ground, acting like a chicken. “What’s the matter with you?” he asked. “Don’t you know who you are?” He then taught the eaglet how to deploy his wings and soar.

So it is with the spiritual order. Every baptized person is, objectively speaking, a child of God, divinized, and destined to be a saint. But the problem is that most of those who have received this new identity promptly forget it and take on the beliefs and practices of the world. Following the prompts of television, movies, social media, pop stars and secularist ideologies, we give ourselves over to the acquisition of wealth or power or material success or fame. These things aren’t bad in themselves but considering them our highest value and running after them with all of our powers amounts to pecking on the ground like chickens. What we need, I told the little congregation gathered for Hazel’s baptism, is a strong community support to help them in prayer, asking for God’s healing and guidance, “Hail Mary, full of grace.”

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

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®
Gospel for September 27, 2020
Ezekiel 18: 25-28 / Matthew 21:28-32

Following is a word search based on the First Reading and Gospel for the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A: about God’s ways. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

| C O M M E N T A R Y |

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

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| M I L L E R , f r o m p a g e 1 2 |

them in prayer, asking for God’s help. But humans are called to one day become saints. They will never become heavenly angels, as humans are made of matter and a different form of God’s creation than angels.

Archangels are not fluffy, sweet Hallmark and Hollywood styled beings though. Often in Scripture when a person sees an archangel, they are filled with fear as with the shepherds or Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist in the Gospel of Luke.

Mary herself, asks the Archangel Gabriel clarifications of “how this can be,” being “greatly troubled at what was said” when he announces God’s plan and asks if she is open to doing God’s will.

The three archangels of this special September feast are ones of particular importance in sharing God’s messages with humans throughout history. Raphael is described in the Old Testament book of Tobit, on a healing mission, helping Tobit in his blindness, protecting Tobias in his travels, as well as healing Sarah on her wedding night.

Archangel Raphael’s power to protect and heal is one of whole mind, body and soul. Gabriel is best remembered for the Annunciation, in the Gospel of Luke, but also is sent to Daniel in a vision and to Zechariah in the temple.

Archangel Gabriel’s greeting, “Hail Mary, full of grace” is repeated daily in every Hail Mary prayed. In the New Testament’s Book of Revelation, it is Michael the Archangel, who leads the army of angels to cast out the devil and other rebellious angels into hell, and he will be present at the end of time to separate the righteous and the evil with the sword of justice. His protection is invoked throughout Church history, especially by Pope St. Gregory the Great, whose feast day was Sept. 3.

On their feast day, we can celebrate by re-reading these sacred Scripture passages with an open and pondering heart, listening in silence, with the Holy Spirit, to God’s word. We can pray the powerful prayer of St. Michael the Archangel, often recited after Mass. At noon we can stop whatever work we are doing and pray the Angelus prayer, with the rest of the universal Church, to honor St. Gabriel with the words announcing the Incarnation.

And we can ask for archangel’s intercession with the St. Raphael prayer of healing for loved ones suffering.

Together we can remember that though we are made of mortal flesh, we live in a world filled with incredible, real, spiritual beings present all around us sharing with us of God’s great plan of salvation.

| S A I N T O F T H E W E E K |

This Italian saint is famous for his relic, a phial of dark, solid blood that liquefies annually on three special September feast days. This Italian saint is famous for his relic, a phial of dark, solid blood that liquefies annually on three special September feast days.
Mass marks beginnings of national shrine a century ago

BY MAUREEN BOYLE

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception inaugurated its jubilee year Sept. 20 during a 100th anniversary Mass to commemorate the centennial of the placing of the shrine’s foundation stone, upon which the largest Catholic church in North America was built to honor Mary.

“Like so many great churches throughout the world, this basilica is an enduring project of countless hands and gifts,” said Washington Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory, the principal celebrant and homilist for the liturgy. “But above all, it is the grace of God that has made such a beautiful tribute to the Blessed Mother possible.”

Archbishop Gregory said those who began the project a century ago could not have envisioned the thousands of faithful who would join the efforts throughout the decades to sustain and support the basilica.

“The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is the Gospel vineyard that the Lord has made so fruitful through the labors of thousands of people of faith,” said the archbishop, who is the chairman of the National shrine’s board of trustees.

Joining Archbishop Gregory in celebrating the Mass were Msgr. Walter Rossi, rector of the basilica; and the priests of the basilica — Msgr. Vito Buonanno, director of pilgrimages; Father Raymond Lebrun, spiritual director; and Father Michael Weston, director of liturgy and master of ceremonies.

Msgr. Rossi welcomed attendees to the Mass while recalling the historic milestone, which took place almost exactly 100 years ago to the day.

“The foundation stone is the very first stone around which this shrine was built and is now part of the Oratory of Our Lady of Antipolo,” he said, referencing an oratory that Filipino Catholics sponsored to honor Mary.

In thanking all the shrine’s supporters — past and present — Msgr. Rossi said: “Mary’s Shrine would not be here today without the faithful support of our friends for the past 100 years. With your continued support, we look to the next 100 years of service to God’s people and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.”

For the Mass, Archbishop Gregory carried the pastoral staff of Bishop Thomas Shahan, the first rector of the national shrine, a crosier which was used by Baltimore Cardinal James Gibbons as he blessed and placed the foundation stone Sept. 23, 1920.

A chalice used during the Mass was the first chalice of the national shrine, used 100 years ago at the foundation stone placing Mass and made from jewelry donated to the shrine from the faithful throughout the United States in 1917.

Archbishop Gregory noted the many ethnic and cultural groups who established chapels within the shrine, which honor Mary and reflect their own religious devotions.

“Countless prayers and contributions have sustained and advanced the building of this great basilica that venerates the Mother of God,” he said.

The national shrine is home to more than 80 chapels and oratories that honor Mary and represent the peoples, cultures and traditions that are the fabric and mosaic of the Catholic faith in the United States.

Among those are African, Austrian, Chinese, Cuban, Czech, Filipino, French, German, Guamanian, Hungarian, Indian, Irish, Italian, Korean, Latin American, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Slovak, Slovenian and Vietnamese chapels or oratories.

The national shrine, said the archbishop, above all is a project that “continues to witness God’s grace and blessing for our country that thrives under Mary’s title of the Immaculate Conception.”

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the anniversary Mass was limited to 100 people on a first-come, first-served basis. Pope Francis granted a plenary indulgence — with the customary conditions of sacramental confession, eucharistic Communion, and prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father — for the centennial jubilee that began Sept. 20 and runs through Sept. 25, 2021.

Pope Francis visited the shrine Sept. 25, 2015, the 95th anniversary of the placing of the foundation stone.

With restrictions on people gathering at the shrine, the pontiff extended the indulgence to those who “due to reasonable circumstances” are not able to be physically present, but do so by television, internet and radio and fulfill the three usual conditions.

A celebration is anticipated for next year’s closing of the jubilee year, hopefully when the global pandemic is overcome, according to a national shrine statement.

Fidelis Chendi and his wife, Diana, were among those who attended the anniversary Mass. Chendi, an architect and a native of Cameroon, was involved in the 2017 construction of the massive mosaic that completed the Trinity Dome, the central and largest dome of the national shrine.

“It was a special honor to be here and give thanks,” he told The Catholic Standard, newspaper of the Washington archdiocese. “The shrine is the house of Mary, who is the Mother of the Church. We are so lucky to be participating.”

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is among the 10 largest churches in the world and is the preeminent Marian shrine and paternal church in the U.S.; it has been designated a national sanctuary of prayer and pilgrimage.

Among those who have visited the national shrine during its 100-year history are Pope Francis in 2015, Pope Benedict XVI in 2008, St. John Paul II in 1979 and St. Teresa of Kolkata on several occasions.

The first Mass was celebrated in the national shrine’s Crypt Church in 1924. The shrine was blessed and dedicated in 1959 upon the completion of the superstructure of the Great Upper Church. St. John Paul raised the National Shrine to the status of Minor Basilica Oct. 12, 1990.

Boyle writes for the Catholic Standard newspaper of the Archdiocese of Washington.
Siblings and grandparents are rose in honor of those children.

Memorial Mass for those who have lost a child
SOUTH BEND — Those who have lost a child before or after birth — whether recently or long ago — are invited to a special Memorial Mass on Monday, Oct. 19, at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Parish, 1300 N Main St. Adult meals $10; child meals $6.

Weekend at the Fort Wayne Bishop's House
On Oct. 24-25, Bishop Rhoades will be on retreat in the Bishop’s House. Bishop Rhoades will be joined by diocesan staff and members of the REMI program. Breakfast will be served Saturday morning at 8 a.m. followed by a Mass and dinner at 1 p.m. The retreat will end with breakfast on Sunday morning at 8 a.m. For more information, contact Lisa Everett at 574-234-7006 or leverett@diocesefwsb.org.

Four-day retreat for wives of men serving in ministry
SOUTH BEND — The Marriage Course Online — America Needs Fatima Hour of Prayer SOUTH BEND — America Needs Fatima Hour of Prayer will take place at Christ the King Parish, 52473 SR 933, Oct. 10 at noon. The parish is located on the corner of Darden Road and SR 933 in South Bend. This will be an outdoor prayer event, so please bring a chair or blanket and rosary. For additional information contact Esther Cyr at 574-272-6457.

Lunch and prayer event at St. Joseph Parish
SOUTH BEND — The Fatima Hour of Prayer will be an outdoor prayer event, so please bring a chair or blanket and rosary. For additional information contact Esther Cyr at 574-272-6457.

Fish and tenderloin fry hosted by Knights of Columbus
BLUFFTON — A fish and tenderloin fry, drive-thru only, will be from 4:30-7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16 at St. Joseph Parish, 1300 N Main St. Adult meals $10; child meals $6.

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Presence Sacred Heart Home, located just north of Fort Wayne, is a Catholic faith-based community that offers a continuum of care including independent living, assisted living, short-term rehabilitation, long-term care and memory support.

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www.TodaysCatholic.org/event

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Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, nor was ever by the assistance of thy grace, cast into anything but the end to which he was inclining, whether to salvation or to eternal life. Obtain for us, we beseech thee, the grace to stand in the presence of thy most holy face, for ever and ever, Amen.

Mary, Health of the Sick and Help of Christians, Pray for Us!

In 593, Pope Gregory the Great, had this icon of Mary, Salus Populi Romani (Health of the Roman People) carried throughout Rome, asking Mary’s intercession for an end to the plague. Likewise, Pope Francis has prayed before this icon in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, asking for an end to the pandemic. Tradition holds that the icon was written by St. Luke the Evangelist.