Jesus gives suffering a purpose, bishop tells Marian students

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, some Marian High School students had to forego celebrating Mass in person with their bishop or having him visit their classrooms during a pastoral visit to Mishawaka Feb. 11. Nevertheless, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades clearly communicated his affection for the school and his delight in being with them on the feast of their patroness, Our Lady of Lourdes. He said that in his work as bishop he relies heavily on two former Marian principals in the Secretariat for Catholic Education, Secretary Carl Loesch and Superintendent Dr. Joseph Brettmacher. He commended the excellent job principal Mark Kirzeder, his faculty and staff have done in making in-person learning a reality this school year despite the virus. He led the students in applauding the staff for “persevering through the pandemic with the hard work of providing an excellent Catholic education.” The bishop praised every aspect of life at Marian: academics, the arts and even the school’s athletic accomplishments.

Concelebrating a morning Mass at the school with Bishop Rhoades were Marian’s two chaplains, Father Nathan Maskal and Father Daniel Niezer. The bishop recalled that both were along when he led a pilgrimage to World Youth Day in Madrid 10 years ago. Despite the thrill of gathering with Pope Benedict and 3 million young people in Madrid, he said, almost all of the 150 diocesan pilgrims called their two days at Lourdes beforehand the highlight of the trip.

Maskal was a seminarian at the time, but Niezer had just graduated from high school. A remark at Lourdes that perhaps he would become a priest bounced off him at the time, he said, but he now looks back and clearly sees Our Lady’s hand on his life. He added that serving as chaplain at a school dedicated to her is like coming full circle.

Feb. 11 was also World Day of the Sick, and the bishop addressed the role of suffering in the lives of Christians and its role in a person’s sanctification.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades enters in procession at Marian High School, Mishawaka, at the beginning of Mass during his pastoral visit to the school Feb. 11.
After 11 months of ‘giving up,’ what is there left to give up this Lent?

BY MARK PATTISON

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Since childhood, the typical U.S. Catholic’s response to Lent is giving up, as in “What are you giving up for Lent?”

If you haven’t been keeping track, Catholics in the United States and worldwide — just about everyone, really — have been giving up a lot since the coronavirus pandemic struck 11 months ago, with no clearly defined end in sight. You would need to find on both hands to name some of the things that have been lost, not to mention nearly a half-million lives lost in the U.S. alone.

So, given all that, how should a Catholic approach Lent this year?

“I believe this Lent isn’t the year to give up something, because we’re already doing it voluntarily,” said Marie Dennis, senior adviser to the secretary general of Pax Christi International.

It’s time, Dennis said, to “dig deeper and to think more deeply about what are the lessons that we’re learning from this pandemic. For example, how are we treating the earth and the land? How are we treating each other in our society and inequality around the world when we’re looking at who is being most hurt by the COVID-19 pandemic?”

“That would be my practice during Lent,” Dennis said. “That would be to remind myself of the really deep changes that need to be made in our society and in our world as move forth from this pandemic.”

“There is real discernment that is needed this Lent,” said Marian Diaz, a professor at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago who directs grants to aid Catholic professionals in ministry.

“Many people have been giving up during the pandemic, on behalf of others during this past year,” Diaz said. “And for those people, I would just ask them to consider what do they need to do to be able to sustain that service? If our God is a God of love who comes to serve us in our creation and incarnation, we also have to consider how we are serving our brothers and sisters, but also how we are serving ourselves. What must we do to sustain ourselves during this time?”

She added, “Maybe sometimes the call is to grow in love for ourselves and we have the supports that we need so that we can make it for the long haul in terms of whatever forms of love or service or ministry that is functioning in our life and we’re committed to.”

“I just want to really express empathy for the situation that we all are going through, and the difficulty, not only in terms of the pandemic but the political situation in our country and the situations in our world,” Diaz said.

“I’m beginning to think our best Lenten practice for Lent is going to be along the lines of ‘Fratelli Tutti’ — a reflection on nonviolence as an ethic and not as some kind of namby-pamby way of avoiding conflict, but nonviolence as a strong, direct confrontation without violence to the violence that’s taking place,” said Franciscan Father Joe Nangle, former co-director of Franciscan Mission Service.

“As a religious priest, Father Nangle said his vow of poverty doesn’t give him any special insights on the giving-up concept.

“If you try to live like St. Francis, you kill yourself in this society. It’s a tough call. I try to live simply and let it go at that,” he said. “I think that laypeople are living a much more life of poverty in many ways than many of us religious. I think religious life can be very, very comfortable, I think the average layperson struggles except for the 1%.

“It has felt like a long Lent,” said Rose Marie Berger, a senior editor at Sojourners magazine, adding, “I started thinking about this a while back.”

How far back?

“I wrote my Lenten spirituality column four months ago,” Berger, who told Catholic News Service she misses physically receiving the Eucharist the most, said. “Maybe Lent this year is not so much doing something extra, giving something extra, it’s more spending some deep time in contemplation in what has been taken from us, what we have been forced to sacrifice from the pandemic, what loss and sacrifices others have made for us, and where have we been able to give in ways we hadn’t expected to — it’s a chance on how to live more closely with others.”

“I’m a big proponent of what St. John of the Cross says: If you don’t find love, bring love, and then you’ll find it,” said Bishop William D. Byrne, recently installed to head the Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts. “And so, in this time where we’ve had so much taken away from us, and … to lose hope, to be discouraged, what we need to do is bring hope, and then we’re going to find it. Bring joy, and we’ll find it.”

Bishop Byrne said, “Let’s start with the blessings. It isn’t the negativity, but embrace the positive and bringing that to people each day. In order to do that, you have to look at the other two parts of Lent. There’s prayer and almsgiving. You can’t really bring positivity without prayer. Otherwise, it’s just playing.”

He added, “You’ve got to have something at the start of the day. Get your cup of coffee or tea, and get your rosary, get your prayer book and start. Make a conscious effort in the morning and say, ‘I am going to bring positive to the people I’m going to meet this day. Disarm them with your joy, if you will. Bring hope where we’re feeling hopelessness.”

Jesus can be our companion in our suffering, said Becky Eldredge, a spiritual director and author of “The Inner Chapel,” who is based in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. “I imagine Jesus reminding us, ‘I’m here. I’m with you all. Tell me what you’re going through. Tell me what you’re feeling. Engage me in it,'” she said.

Lent is “an invitation to fix our eyes on Christ right now, right? More than just a giving up, it’s a call to go back to Christ in the here and now,” Eldredge said.

She suggested “letting Christ draw as near as possible to our suffering. A lot of what I’ve been seeing in retreat work and in (spiritual) direction is, we’re keeping Jesus a little at arm’s length. We’re not letting Him come close to our suffering.”

Eldredge added Catholics can follow Jesus’ “model of doing for others — reminding people, ‘Hey, I’m here for you. Tell me, I can listen to you.’ Show people a fixed point in Christ.”

“In the pandemic, we’ve probably settled into some routines. Some good routines, probably there may have been some unhealthy routines that we’ve settled into,” said Paul Jarzembowski, assistant director of youth and young adult ministries in the the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat for Family, Marriage, Laity and Youth.

“If nothing else, it’s a good time to examine what we’ve settled into,” Jarzembowski said. “I know I’ve got some bad habits that have crept into my time. I’ve got the COVID 19 — I’ve gained 19 pounds. I’ve been more sedentary. I haven’t been as active because I can’t.”

Lent, he added, is “a time for renewal, a time for reexamining. Lent is about giving up, but it’s a time of renewing, about making some new choices, making some resolutions, I look at it not so much as giving up as what can be renewed, what can be recharged.”

People in Robstown, Texas, receive the COVID-19 vaccine Feb. 9.
in the life of St. Bernadette, who was afflicted with severe asthma and lived to be only 35. Although the spring the Immaculate Conception directed her to uncover at Lourdes has brought medically certified, miraculous healings to many pilgrims, its waters have also given countless others “a different miracle … the gift of strength and peace, and even joy in bearing the cross of illness and suffering,” he said.

Although the Marian students who celebrated Mass with the bishop are young, so were both Bernadette and the beautiful young woman who appeared to her, he noted.

In a year of pandemic, many in the world have encountered suffering: sickness, anxiety, and the loss of loved ones. “Jesus gives suffering a purpose — that purpose is love — suffering united to Jesus is a way to participate in His saving Passion and respecting creation, and living our faith, respecting life Christ’s Body and Blood … By transformation of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus, the transformation of created things, the transformation of the world. The Eucharist strengthens us to do so.”

Campus Minister Angie Higginton found help organize the students’ participation in the Mass, which was celebrated in person by upperclassmen. Unsuccessful to participate from their classrooms via Google Meet. The lector was senior Nomsa Andendo, and along with seniors Martin Ludwig and Spencer Forslund was Leo Versprini, a proud member of Marian’s first cohort of Bernadette Scholars. Bishop Rhodes pointed out that Bernadette herself had little formal education and had no idea what Mary meant by the title “Immaculate Conception.”

After Mass, Marian’s 2021 valedictorian and salutatorians were announced. Valedictorian Kathleen Hicks graduated from St. Joseph Grade School, South Bend, where she and parents Joyce and Philip Hicks belong. Salutatorian Alyssa Webb, daughter of Cibele and Patrick Webb, is also a St. Joseph parishioner but previously attended Trinity School at Glennlawn. Salutatorian Regan Burns graduated from St. Pius X School in Granger. Her parents, Linda and Dan Burns, were in attendance. Bishop Rhodes teased Regan about wearing a Clemson rather than a Notre Dame face mask.

Like an amazing 85% of Marian seniors, the three are earning dual high school and college credits from Indiana University or Ivy Tech Community College. Dual credit or advanced placement honors courses are offered in languages, literature, science, business, art, history, economics and calculus at the school. Marian is the only local high school ranked in the top 10 in Indiana for college preparedness, and students have also recently earned science awards.

Bishop Rhodes commended the members of the school’s liturgical choir, who provided beautiful music for the feast day. Art students received more than 80 awards in the recent Scholastic Art competition, including senior Michael Loesch, whose painting, “2020 Quarantine Time” won a Gold Medal; and Scholastic named the son of Carl Loesch and Marie Harrer an American Visions nominee. Additionally, art teacher Elaine Desmarais won the Ann Hamilton Award for Inspired Teaching in the Scholastic Art Competition for 2020-21.

Bishop Rhodes commended Marian’s athletic teams for sportsmanship as well as excellence. He hinted at giving them a special blessing that might catapult them to state championshipships next year.

In honor of the feast day of the school’s patroness, students enjoyed free doughnuts during their lunch hours following the bishop’s visit.

In parting, Bishop Rhodes prayed, “May God bless you and may Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Bernadette intercede for you!”
Media road map: Guidance from a pope and a saint, both named Francis

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — When Pope Francis met with a Catholic News Service delegation marking the agency’s 100th anniversary, he encouraged the agency to continue to foster dialogue and honest communication.

“We need media that can help people, especially the young, to distinguish good from evil, to develop sound judgments based on a clear and unbiased presentation of the facts, and to appreciate the importance of working for justice, social concord and respect for our common home,” he said in his written message.

At a time of increased division, U.S. Catholic journalists should promote unity in diversity that beats with “one heart” and “try to get people to talk to each other, reason together and seek the path of fraternity,” he said.

If that sounded like marching orders for the Catholic press, there have been plenty of road maps posted along the way on how to get there.

Pope Francis, in fact, has used his whole pontificate, soon to enter its ninth year, laying out a very clear path away from the temptation to fall for the sins of disinformation, calumny, defamation and “a love of dirt” or scandal.

Analyzing every speech and message by the pope to reporters and communicators, one Catholic communications professor said he has boiled it down to following three virtues:

Loyalty to “go out,” “listen” and “care for,” he said.

Giving context, showing the bigger, more complex picture and showing solutions, he added, are part of “constructive communication that fosters understanding and getting people to come together.”

The overarching guide, Tridenti said, is wanting what is best for all of humanity and rekindling joy in people’s hearts, which comes when “one goes out to repair bit by bit all the things we have slowly destroyed” in a spirit of human fraternity.

Going out to rebuild something broken echoes a similar call taken up by St. Francis of Assisi, who also has much to offer to communicators.

Franciscan Father Enzo Fortunato, a journalist and director of the monthly magazine San Francesco, which also celebrated its 100th anniversary, told CNS their founder showed “a good word is also a good action.”

The 13th-century saint went out into the world, showing respect for people and creation, and seeking to bring peace to people — both in their relations with others and within their own hearts, he said by phone from Assisi Feb. 8.

“The most beautiful story to tell in mass media is the one that begins with people’s hearts,” that is, their backstory and experiences, “their failures and successes,” he said.

Communication in the spirit of St. Francis, the friar said, is like a tree whose roots are Jesus, and whose three main branches are peace, solidarity — particularly with the poor — and caring for creation.

“These are the three facets of communications that are seen and mirrored in the three great encyclicals of this pontificate: ‘The Light of Faith,’ the faith as the light toward peace; ‘Laudato Si’ on the importance of one’s relationship with everything that surrounds us in creation; and ‘Fratelli Tutti’ on solidarity and fraternity,” he said.

While the first encyclical helped complete a trilogy started by Pope Benedict XVI, the last two were fully in the vein of Pope Francis with direct ties to St. Francis of Assisi, his papal namesake.

Catholic media, “which has an important role to play on every level,” can also take inspiration from this saint, Father Fortunato said.

“Franciscan communication finds its strength in its ability to point out the good, to live the good and follow the good,” the priest said. Likewise, “Catholic media hinge on the good,” since the Gospel as good news is intrinsic to its mission.

“And the good is always contagious,” he said. “We need to combat the world with stories of goodness and beauty.”

Tridenti said this is how the Catholic press can best move forward, instead of — what sometimes happens — blaming the downfall of professional journalism on the emergence of social media content creators.

“If we take back our mission of being journalists,” he said, “we would fill a void and be that person who truly goes toward those situations” that need telling, who truly listens and tells the story in a “language of hope,” inspired by a Christian desire to do good for others.
Legal path to driving for undocumented gaining traction

Despite roadblocks, momentum continues to grow across the state for providing undocumented immigrants with legal driving privileges—a move that some lawmakers and advocates including the Catholic Church believe would address basic human needs while offering larger economic and public safety benefits.

For the seventh year, legislation has been introduced in the General Assembly to issue driving privilege cards to residents of Indiana who cannot provide proof of their identity and lawful status in the United States. Indiana is home to an estimated 100,000 undocumented immigrants, and the cards would allow them to drive legally and to purchase car insurance. “This can be boiled down to one simple word, and that’s opportunity,” said Sen. David Niezgodski, D-South Bend, whose Senate Bill 319 is his fourth attempt to bring forth driving card legislation. “Undocumented residents should have the opportunity to do things that we don’t even think twice about — going to buy groceries, looking for a job to do better by their families, taking their children to a doctor when they’re sick.”

The lawmaker points out that every day throughout Indiana, undocumented residents are driving without proper training or documentation. “We can’t just continue to look the other way.”

Once again, however, his efforts have hit an impasse. Senate Bill 319 was assigned to the Committee on Homeland Security and Transportation but will not receive a hearing. A similar bill in the House of Representatives, House Bill 1158, is awaiting action in the Committee on Roads and Transportation.

Niezgodski said education—both for fellow legislators and for the public—is key to gaining further support for driving cards. A starting point is making clear that the cards would be restricted only to matters related to driving and purchasing insurance—not for voting, for instance.

Despite the legislative setbacks, the northern Indiana lawmaker believes he has made inroads in the past year—and he gives much of the credit to a diligent group of young advocates in his own backyard. Undergraduate students at the Notre Dame Student Policy Network, a student initiative at The University of Notre Dame, took on this issue as a public policy topic and conducted extensive research. The result was “Safer Roads, A Stronger Indiana: Projected Social and Economic Effects of Driving Privilege Card Legislation in Indiana,” a report that could influence the public debate for years to come.

Patrick Aimone, one of the founders of the SPN, said the students’ research uncovered numerous reasons for Indiana to join nearly 20 other states in offering driving cards to undocumented residents. They found that access to driving cards would boost the state’s economy—$68 million in increased revenue for insurance companies to $141 million in additional car sales over three years, as well as higher overall spending on goods and services. Their findings also supported public safety.

“Right now, if undocumented residents get into an accident, regardless of whether it’s their fault, it triggers fears of legal consequences for driving without a license,” Aimone said. “So there are greater rates for hit-and-runs, and it’s harder for police to do their investigations.” Aimone also views his work through the lens of Catholic social teaching.

“I see this campaign as a corporal work of mercy,” Aimone said. “The federal government is in charge of enforcing immigration law, and that belongs to them, but this is an issue of state law. And it’s a question of whether or not senators and representatives have it in their hearts to be merciful towards people who are living here, who have set down ties to their communities but who are probably living in fear.”

An advocate at the opposite end of the state knows this struggle all too well. Bertha Melendres, director of Hispanic ministry for the Diocese of Evansville, came to the United States from Mexico at age 11 as an undocumented immigrant. As a resident of California, for years until she was able to obtain legal citizenship, Melendres drove to school, work and church without a license and with constant anxiety.

“How can they participate in their communities but who are probably living in fear.”

“We are encouraged to see all the involvement across the state with regard to this issue,” said Angela Espada, executive director of the KCC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. “While we are disappointed that Senate Bill 319 did not get a hearing, we will continue our efforts to advocate for this type of legislation that we know has had positive outcomes in other states.”

To follow this and other priority legislation of the KCC, 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.
**Bill would block taxpayer funding of abortion, make Hyde Amendment permanent**

WASHINGTON (CNS) — U.S. Rep. Chris Smith, R-New Jersey, has introduced a bill to prohibit use of federal taxpayer dollars to fund abortions. H.R. 18 — the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Fund Disclosure Act of 2021 — would make the long-standing Hyde Amendment permanent and keep in place similar provisions to ensure no federal dollars are used to pay for abortion and health plans that include abortion. “When federal taxpayer dollars are not available to help effectuate the demise of unborn babies, lives are saved,” said Smith, a Catholic, who is co-chair of the Congressional Pro-life Caucus. “Abortion violence must be replaced with compassion and empathy for women and for defenseless unborn baby girls and boys.” Smith’s bill, which was introduced Feb. 5 and has over 130 co-sponsors, also would prevent the federal government from funding abortions; codify the Smith Amendment, which prohibits federal employee health care plans from funding abortion; prohibit federal funding of abortion in several other federal programs throughout government agencies; and ensure that the Affordable Care Act conforms with the Hyde Amendment. The Hyde Amendment, first enacted nearly 45 years ago, outlaws federal taxpayer dollars from directly funding abortion except in cases of rape, incest or when the life of the woman would be endangered.

**Meet elected officials as ‘missionary disciples,’ Archbishop Gomez says**

WASHINGTON (CNS) — “When we speak to our elected officials, we speak as missionary disciples, as followers of Jesus Christ,” said Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles in a Feb. 9 closing message to the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering. “We speak as citizens of faith,” Archbishop Gomez said in his message, delivered online — as was the entirety of the annual meeting for social ministers in the Church. “And as faithful citizens, we are here to call our nation to true justice, to respect the sanctity and dignity of every human life, to never close our hearts or turn our back on people in need,” added the prelate, who is president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Just as the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering was virtual, so too were the Capitol Hill visits. “Thank you for your witness. It is so important what you are doing,” Archbishop Gomez told Catholic Social Ministry Gathering participants.

**Survivor of genocide says there is joy, ‘much freedom in forgiveness’**

ORLANDO, Fla. (CNS) — Immaculee Ilibagiza found freedom in forgiveness after seeing her family wiped out by genocide in Rwanda in 1994, and she shared her extraordinary journey toward that forgiveness in an evening keynote Feb. 5 during the SEEK21 conference. She was one of two keynote speakers who addressed the theme of forgiveness; the other was Edward Sri, a theologian, author and a founding leader of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, which sponsored the annual Feb. 4-7 conference, which was held online this year and drew over 26,000 participants from across the globe. Holding her father’s rosary in her left hand, Ilibagiza shared her story of suffering and how she discovered forgiveness of her sins could set her free and forgiving the crimes of others also could lift pain from her heart. “Hold on to God, no matter what is coming. Focus on prayer. Read the Bible and go to Mass,” she told her listeners. “If I can forgive, anyone can forgive. I know the pain and damage of unforgiveness. There is so much joy. So much freedom in forgiveness.”

**Catholics in Qaraqosh, Iraq, call it ‘miracle’ that pope will visit**

BEIRUT (CNS) — The largest Syriac Catholic congregation in the world is preparing physically and spiritually for Pope Francis’ upcoming visit to Qaraqosh, Iraq. "Words can’t describe how happy we are," said Syriac Catholic Father Roni Momeka told Catholic News Service. "The people feel that it’s a miracle that the pope will come here," Father Momeka said. "They are happy not only for the visit, but they are happy that Pope Francis is thinking about those people who are in pain, those people who lost everything, but who never lost their faith." Father Momeka said Qaraqosh is bustling with activity, the streets already awash with papal flags and banners in preparation for the pope’s March 7 visit, part of his March 5-8 visit to Iraq. Parishioners have been busy cleaning and painting the interior of the Church of the Immaculate Conception, transforming the blackened interior to its original radiance for the pope’s visit. The church, built by parishioners in the 1950s, had seating for 2,200 people. It was vandalized, desecrated and burned by the Islamic State. Pope Francis is scheduled to pray the Angelus there. Court says inmate’s pastor should be with him; Alabama cancels execution

WASHINGTON (CNS) — After the Supreme Court blocked the execution of an Alabama man because it ruled his pastor should be allowed to be with him, the state canceled the execution. In a divided midnight vote Feb. 11, the justices upheld a lower court’s ruling that Willie Smith III’s pastor should be allowed to be in the execution chamber, which the state opposed. The court also vacated a stay of execution from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit in a separate ruling that said the state failed to provide Smith, who is intellectually disabled, help in reviewing paperwork that would have allowed him to choose an alternate method of execution. The Supreme Court action with both decisions would have ultimately allowed the execution to proceed if the state agreed to allow Smith to be accompanied by his pastor, but the state called off the execution, scheduled for Feb. 11, just after the court’s order. Commenting on the court’s ruling on Twitter early morning hours of Feb. 12, Robert Dunham, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center, said it remains unclear if the Supreme Court believes that the Constitution requires a state to allow a prisoner to have his religious adviser minister to him at the time of execution.

**COVID-19 affects often-overlooked populations, according to CSMG panel**

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The coronavirus pandemic has affected virtually every American at some point over the past year, but there are some groups in U.S. society for whom the effects have gone unnoticed, Catholic Social Ministry Gathering participants said Feb. 8. The comments came during a program hosted by Bread for the World, one of the gathering’s major sponsors. Essential workers, health care workers and deaf Americans have had their lives altered by the virus, as a panel of speakers asserted. Essential workers are “still going to work every day” and “haven’t missed a day at work,” said Kimberly Mazycz, relationship manager for national partnerships at Catholic Relief Services, the U.S. bishops’ international relief and development agency. “While we’re working from home, for them it’s not possible,” she said. “Many of us still eating the way we ate before,” but for essential workers, “they may not have those nutrients on their own tables,” Mazycz added. Not the gathering’s major sponsor, the Vatican said it remains unclear if the Supreme Court believes that the Constitution requires a state to allow a prisoner to have his religious adviser minister to him at the time of execution.

**New York celebrates Lunar New Year**

A boy in the Chinatown area of New York City uses a microphone as he takes part in the 22nd New York City Lunar New Year celebration Feb. 12 amid the coronavirus pandemic.

**God wants to open hearts, forgive, heal, pope says**

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Gospel story of Jesus healing the leper illustrates how nothing will stop God from tenderly and compassionately drawing close to people who want to be healed and saved, Pope Francis said. “Each one of us can experience wounds, failures, shame, selfishness that make us close ourselves off from God and others,” the pope said. “Sin closes us in on ourselves because of shame, because of humiliation, but God wants to open our heart.” “Jesus announces to us that God is not an idea or an abstract doctrine, but God is the one who ‘contaminates’ Himself with our human woundedness and is not afraid to come into contact with our wounds,” the pope said Feb. 14, commenting on the day’s Gospel reading before praying the Angelus with visitors in St. Peter’s Square. On a brilliantly sunny, but frigid day, Pope Francis asked people in the square to give a round of applause to priests who model God’s close ness, tenderness and forgiveness in the way they administer the sacrament of reconciliation.
Around the Diocese

Catholic Youth Organization basketball champions

Almost 4,000 thank you notes were created by St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School students and delivered to Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne for distribution to the hospital’s employees during Catholic Schools Week. The students wanted to celebrate and show their appreciation for their friends and neighbors in health care, who are working tirelessly to care for the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Provided by Lois Widner

Provided by Sarah Shively

Provided by Joni Lazoff

Provided by Jeanne Hohenstein

Avilla students Zoom to Rome

Students in Pam Lepley’s St. John the Baptist School, Fort Wayne, first grade class pray a decade of the rosary with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades as part of the school’s celebration of Catholic Schools Week. Several members of the Fort Wayne and Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend communities were asked to Zoom-record a decade of the rosary, and students prayed a decade of the prayer with each of them.

Provided by Lois Widner

Provided by Joni Lazoff

Provided by Jeanne Hohenstein

Catholic Schools Week prayer leaders

In Avilla, St. Mary School students and staff were able to “Zoom Over To Rome” during Catholic Schools Week Jan. 31-Feb. 6. They spent some virtual time with diocesan seminarians Mark Hellinger, Samuel Anderson and Zane Langenbrunner, who are currently studying at Pontifical North American College. The students promised to keep all of the seminarians in their prayers.

Provided by Lois Widner

Provided by Joni Lazoff

Provided by Jeanne Hohenstein
Superstars of service — Lindsay Klinker

BY TAMI DELUCENAY

Growing up active at St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Fort Wayne, was an intricate part of Lindsay Klinker’s faith formation.

“My parents took me and my three siblings to church each week, I attended St. Vincent school and Bishop Dwenger High School, but it wasn’t until I participated in Life Teen that I had a conversion experience,” shared Klinker. “I encountered Jesus and discovered a personal relationship with Him. I’ve been running after Him ever since.”

Klinker is the middle school youth director at St. Vincent, coordinating and leading the ministry. The journey that led her to the ministry was nothing but a continued path following Christ wherever He led.

Throughout her high school years, Klinker was very involved with Life Teen. She served in leadership roles with the youth program and also took on leadership roles in campus ministry at Bishop Dwenger.

She attended Marian University for an undergraduate degree in elementary and special education. “My studies at Marian allowed me to receive my B.A. in elementary education along with fostering my passion for ministry. I started campus life groups, which encouraged students to participate in small groups, praying and studying the Scriptures.

“My friend and I would pass by St. Matthew Cathedral Parish each time we would head back to campus, and one day we decided to stop in and see how we could help. I was able to continue my love for ministry as we helped in their youth ministry and confirmation programs during my college years.”

Returning to her roots at St. Vincent de Paul School upon graduation, Klinker taught kindergarten, along with continuing to help in the high school youth program. During a team brainstorming session on how to better reach the teens and how do they get them to come back, they discovered that by the time teens start high school, encouraging faith formation is a little too late. The need for a strong middle school program became obvious, so Klinker went to work.

“I started to do some research and developed a plan for the middle school students. I presented the plan to Msgr. Kuzmich and it became apparent right away that this was going to need a full-time coordinator. I was hired and have been serving in this role since 2011.” She and the young people work with The Edge ministry, a middle school curriculum of Life Teen.

There have been some changes throughout the past 10 years, but the ministry continues to grow. Klinker said she is always searching out new ways to help the young teens to encounter Jesus.

Through the dedication of a strong core team, small groups of seventh and eighth grade students meet weekly.

“The teens gather together for a game, a speaker, small-group discussion and time in prayer. During the pandemic this has taken place completely in a small group setting, thanks to our incredible core team,” explained Klinker. “The young people are also given retreat experiences to foster a deeper relationship with Jesus; a girls retreat, a boys retreat, an opportunity to attend Catholic Youth Summer Camp and a fun week of activities learning about the Mass, called Mass Hysteria.

“I attribute my strong faith to the guidance of my parents, grandparents, godparents and other holy mentors throughout my life, as well as the encouraging support of close friends and my fiancé, Chris Lushis. I take time to nurture my faith by growing in daily Mass, adoration in our new oratory, praying the rosary and by having a consistent daily prayer life. By surrendering myself with a community of great friends outside of my parish also helps me to find balance and take care of my body and soul,” Klinker said. “I have been able to find balance and constantly renewed energy to help me with my ministry for the long haul.”

Make time for the Lord during Lent

BY KATIE MURRAY

The Lenten season is a time of fasting and almsgiving in repentance and preparation for the resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday. Most Catholics are asked to fast from eating meat on Ash Wednesday and every Friday for 40 days, a sacrifice made to express love for God and acknowledge one’s sins, when I do that, I pray to God instead and think about what His Son went through for us. That way I am giving more back to Him.”

While it may be easier to abstain from superficial pleasures like a certain food or entertainment option, more profound sacrifices tend to have more of an impact on the penitent.

There is no way to do it all. “I attribute my strong faith to the guidance of my parents, grandparents, godparents and other holy mentors throughout my life, as well as the encouraging support of close friends and my fiancé, Chris Lushis. I take time to nurture my faith by growing in daily Mass, adoration in our new oratory, praying the rosary and by having a consistent daily prayer life. By surrendering myself with a community of great friends outside of my parish also helps me to find balance and take care of my body and soul,” Klinker said. “I have been able to find balance and constantly renewed energy to help me with my ministry for the long haul.”

parish to support one another. “This year I will be able to go to church more often during the week, rather than just on the weekend. I’m going to try to go to confession more and try to receive Communion more frequently. I’m looking forward to that.”

She also feels that Lent is a time in which to support and seek support from others. “By reminding someone else that that we all go through this together and that we are a family in the parish is comforting,” said Cooper.

Cooper added that “with all the problems going on in the world right now, the one thing that people need to do is to listen to God. You can be busy, busy, busy, but there has to be a time of day to talk to God. That’s important. You put yourself in that zone and say a prayer to Him to help you come closer to Him. I do that every day, even outside of Lent. Love Him with your whole heart. Give that time back to Him.”
 Welcoming the stranger —
Catholic Charities leverages experience, expertise to handle potential immigration policy changes

FORT WAYNE — In an executive order Feb. 2, President Joe Biden signaled a pending shift in immigration laws and policy. The order created a task force to reunify immigrant families and promised the development of a strategy to address irregular migration across the U.S. border with Mexico as well as promote the integration of immigrants.

Looking ahead at the possibility of reforms in immigration law in the United States, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend forsees people in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend having many questions about these potential changes. The most important of these questions is, once passed by Congress, who can be trusted to interpret and implement changes in the law quickly and effectively?

Legal immigration work is complex and multi-layered, said Gloria Whitcraft, CEO of Catholic Charities. The organization is equipped with extensive expertise to assist immigrants within the new legal landscape.

“It is in the best interest of the consumer and our communities that changes in immigration law are interpreted correctly and that related services are provided by accredited experts,” stated Whitcraft. She stressed that the value of employing CCFWSB’s experienced and accredited professionals is that they can combine their call to serve with the need to uphold U.S. immigration law and policy.

After 20 years of building this critical infrastructure for legal immigration work, CCFWSB has the personnel, expertise and credentials to respond quickly to and manage well even the most intricate reforms.

“The consumer cannot afford to take chances with their legal case, and the community at large depends on CCFWSB’s competency in these legal matters,” she said.

CCFWSB is the only agency in northeast Indiana recognized by the Department of Justice and only one of a handful throughout the state. Today, CCFWSB possesses the expertise to accept some of the most complex immigration cases that others cannot. “The first task is to determine the person’s eligibility,” explained Luz Ostrognai, CCFWSB immigration supervisor. “For this we carefully examine references and history, including any possible criminal back- ground, which would disqualify them.”

Ostrognai leads a team of professionals who serve the 14 counties of the diocese. She is the only one in northern Indiana fully accredited as an immigration professional, a designation that is granted when someone demonstrates a mastery of immigration law and procedures.

After confirming eligibility, the task is to determine which of the dozens of federal regulations apply to the applicant. Everything must take place in the right sequence, using the correct forms and documentation.

“Someone can be turned down and not know why,” said Ostrognai. “This often occurs when some well-meaning, inexperienced person attempts to help. After 20 years, we know how to prevent problems and achieve the correct outcome.”

As the domestic charitable arm of the Catholic Church, CCFWSB’s job is to respond to the Gospel imperative to serve those in need and welcome the stranger. Whitcraft stressed that all of CCFWSB’s programming aligns with Catholic Church teaching that marriage and the family are the central social institutions that must be supported and strengthened.

In this context, the Catholic Charities team works diligently to keep immigrant families together, and, whenever possible, reunite families who have been separated. As with all clients, the goal is to strengthen families and help them reach their God- given potential and become economically self-sufficient.

Institute for Catholic Innovation seeks big ideas

HUNTINGTON — OSV Institute for Catholic Innovation has announced the opening of application submissions for the 2021 OSV Challenge, a multi-round entrepreneurial competition designed to incubate unique project ideas in any stage from Catholics whose faith has motivated them to make a difference. With three prizes on the line valued at $100,000 each, the Institute seeks to build up Catholic innovators with the professional guidance, spiritual formation and personal development needed to accelerate initiatives that will make the biggest impact on the Church and the world.

“We are not aiming to fund the next good idea, but to invest in people — emerging innovators and seasoned trailblazers — by forming a new generation of entrepreneurs who are not afraid to re-look at how we encounter and evangelize the truth and beauty of the Catholic Church,” said OSV Institute President Jason Shanks. “The OSV Challenge is a search for Catholic innovators with world-changing ideas.”

The OSV Challenge developed in response to the alarming statistic that the Catholic Church loses 6.5 people for every one convert, with millennials disillusioning at an unprecedented rate. Those who leave often cite a lack of vitality, beauty and relatability in their churches. With pews being further emptied as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, creative solutions have never been more important.

Applications are encouraged from inventors, artists, entrepreneurs, community leaders and any layperson ready to unleash a world-changing idea. Funding areas of special interest include Hispanic experience, parents and family, Catholic education, disaffiliation, youth ministry, parish life, social justice, technology and creative arts.

The challenge will culminate with Demo Day on Sept. 18, when finalists will have an opportunity to present their final pitches to a panel of expert judges and investors before the three winning initiatives are announced. A new incentive announced for 2021 is the ability to earn additional prizes as contestants advance through the various stages of the challenge.

The application window closes at noon April 2. Prospective challengers can learn more about the OSV Challenge and apply at osvchallenge.com.

LUZ OSTROGNAI

OSV Challenge, a search for Catholic innovators with world-changing ideas.
Book chronicles St. Bernard Parish history

BY JENNIFER BARTON

History, once lost, cannot be rediscovered; it can only be speculated upon. So Wabash County Associate Historian Michael Thompson and St. Bernard Parish secretary Ann Unger have been working hard to keep a piece of local history remembered and documented with a newly published book, “History of St. Bernard Church 1864-2020.”

According to Thompson, the project was a joint effort between himself and Unger that began around 2008. Unger, who has been secretary since 2003, was aware of a previous written history of the parish, but nothing had been updated since 1975.

“It was a dream — a long-ago dream,” to update the parish’s history, Unger said. And she knew just who to ask for help with the work.

Completion was initially slated to coincide with the parish’s sesquicentennial in 2014. With Thompson volunteering his time researching parish history and some unexpected delays including the passing of former pastor Father Sextus Don, work was incomplete at that time and the book only came to publication last year. The delays, while unfortunate, allowed Unger to add more photographs and snippets of history.

Thompson began his research with the 1975 booklet written by a former curator of the Wabash Historical Museum and member of St. Bernard. “From there, it took on a life of its own,” Thompson stated.

Digging up the past can be a difficult venture, though. Oftentimes, there are few records of people, places and events that make up a significant chunk of history. This is frequently the case especially for churches, whose records are subject to things like fires or poor archiving. Of the amount of research involved in putting St. Bernard’s history together, “It was like a jigsaw puzzle — a piece here and a piece there,” Thompson stated.

Unger had special archives to turn to: scrapbooks kept by previous parish secretaries, whom she stated kept “excellent, detailed records.” Freda Reidan began this practice decades ago, and Rita Fedewa continued the work of collecting newspaper articles, committee meeting notes and photographs. Today, the parish has a closet full of these scrapbooks. They proved to be excellent primary sources for Thompson to delve into. He also gives credit to Janice Cantrell, archivist for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, for her assistance in filling in some of the gaps.

One aspect of the book that Thompson is particularly pleased with are the profiles and pictures of every priest who served at St. Bernard Parish. The internet was an invaluable resource for Thompson and Unger when searching for photos of the parish’s earliest priests.

The effort was not solely Thompson and Unger’s, though. “I asked for help from the parish,” Unger stated, noting that many parishioners came forward to identify people in the numerous photos as well as telling their personal stories. Parishioners Bob Martin and John Schetzsle visited Unger in the parish office to share their memories of the stained glass windows, causing the writing of the book to stall. When Father Levi Nkwocha arrived in 2018, Unger gave him a tour of the church and asked him: “What do you see in that window?”

With his background in theology from the University of Notre Dame, Father Nkwocha was able to give a detailed description of the symbols used in the windows.

“The church is not only a building. It is the people. These people, living or dead or yet to be born, are St. Bernard Parish.”

ANN UNGER, DEDICATION PAGE

After several rounds of proofreading and editing, the parish was finally ready to take the completed manuscript to a private bookbinder in North Manchester in December. All that parish members expect to gain from publication is for anyone with an interest in local history to own a record of the parish’s history — and to remember it.

In his years as a historian, Thompson admitted, he has only seen around five parish history books in public libraries. He would like to see that change.

Thompson has served as associate historian for over a decade, a position that is appointed by the county historian under the Indiana Historical Society. His interest in history was piqued when his seventh grade teacher discovered that he was a direct descendant of Francis Slocum, a white woman who had been captured by Native Americans and eventually assimilated into the Miami tribe. From that time onward, Thompson became enamored of local history.

Unger described him as very detailed and meticulous — perfect for the job of recording St. Bernard history. “I like to promote history,” Thompson said. “I thought the history needed to be done; it definitely needed to be updated and further expanded.”

Keeping that history alive is of great importance to Thompson and Unger. “I think it’s important to know where we come from,” Thompson said. Unger agreed, adding, “It is the people that make the parish. It’s what the people of St. Bernard’s contributed; how they made history.”

One such contribution came during the flood of 1915. St. Bernard opened its doors to anyone who needed assistance, providing food and shelter to those displaced by floodwaters. Thompson commented, “It brought the community together — not just Catholics were affected.”

During their research, Thompson and Unger also discovered where the parish’s name came from. They had not been able to figure it out before. But in one of the county recorder’s documents, a key date in the signing of the property was the feast day of St. Bernard of Clairvaux. They assume that this is where the name originated.

Father Nkwocha is pleased to bring the final product to his parishioners, and challenges other parishes to consider recording their own histories. “It is a rich document, a book that anyone can read.”

“History of St. Bernard Church” is only available to purchase through the parish office, though Thompson has donated copies to several local libraries to add to their collections.
When it comes to dating, an official “rule book” doesn’t exist. In fact, as the world changes, with communication and human relationships being continually redefined, how to date becomes increasingly more confusing. The constant barrage of social media and cultural platforms offer so much “advice” that it’s difficult to know how to have dating relationships that are stable, intentional and life-giving.

While not always understood or taught clearly, the traditional Catholic approach to dating involves looking toward getting married in the Church as the end goal. From this perspective, decisions are often made very differently than in relationships where the focus is more on the immediate moment or that proceed without a clear understanding of where things are meant to culminate.

Catholic dating couples focus on building their faith through participation in the sacraments, since their eventual marital union is itself a sacrament in which they themselves are the primary ministers. They also pray together, following the moral and spiritual guidelines of the Church, and share their desires for ultimate vocational joy. In living out this process, both people often find that they have deeper intimacy and communication, greater fulfillment — both as individuals and together in relationship — and that they are better strengthened to live in committed service to one another.

Lindsay Klinker of Fort Wayne, who is currently engaged, shared: “Regularly spending time in prayer together has kept God as the focus of our relationship. Often this time in prayer, whether silent or shared, has been a great source of intimacy for us. There is a deeper connection that happens between us, even when we’re praying separately. But also, when we’re sharing our hearts with God, it naturally leads us to share our hearts more easily with one another.”

Chelsie Huff, who was recently married at Klinker’s parish of St. Vincent de Paul, added, “As you’re studying and learning the Gospel, which gives you something to talk about together, you are also led us to consider real life issues and situations — those that really matter. By talking through these kinds of scenarios in our relationship, it helped us with our ability to communicate.”

Her husband Ted shared that when they began dating, “I had to make a choice up front if I was going to come back into the Church and be more serious about it. It was a hindrance for me initially, but it allowed me to say from the beginning, ‘I’m not going to make a partial commitment. If I’m going to do this, it’s going to be serious because I know there’s more at play here. I need to have a faith transformation.’ And as our relationship grew, there was a lot more thought and faith involved in it.”

Chelsie added that having the conversations Catholic marriage preparation encourages couples to have “helps you prepare yourself for the future you don’t even know you have yet.”

Catholic couples who are dating are asked to trust the wisdom of the Church as it refers to physical intimacy and living situations. Couples find that a Catholic approach to physical intimacy allows them to both share and receive love from their significant other in a way that safeguards their emotions and allows them to clearly discern the relationship they are in.

The boundaries established by Catholic moral teaching really protect your heart and allows for clarity in dating and determining whether the person you are dating is who you are meant to marry,” Klinker said. “You don’t have to wonder if the other person’s actions match their intentions, and you’re protected from unintentionally lying with your actions as well.

“Making a lifelong decision is hard without the added complication of physical attachment to another person. Catholic moral teaching helps you to discern the future with a clear mind and heart,” she added.

Trey and Kate Sorg, recently married at St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr Parish, South Bend, took this a step further, saying, “Catholics are not Puritans. There is a proper time and place for affection, time spent together and increased intimacy through talking and silence. Yes, even silence. The Church prescribes these ideas so as to aid people in their discernment of the person they are dating so the couple may not only stay together for the entirety of their shared life, but that their life is one of happiness and joy.

“As we share in a common life together, there will be certainly be moments which are heavenly, but also those which are Calvary-esque,” he said.

“But as Fulton Sheen described, we see that it takes ‘three to be married’ to enter into this sacramental union with the aim, through the help of God, to love supernaturally.”

Through a Catholic approach to dating, men and women are challenged to love through self-gift — realizing it is not primarily about yourself as an individual. As Vatican II’s Gaudium et Spes states, “Man cannot fully find himself, except through a sincere gift of himself.” In light of this, the Sorgs said, “It is this manner of love to which all Catholic couples are called, and the more we perfect the gift of ourselves for the sake of the other, the more God will bless this marriage and our family together will become sanctified.”

But practically speaking, dating and marriage are not always easy. To self-sacrifice for one’s loved is a natural desire, but it takes supernatural assistance to live out on a daily basis.

To have a Christ-centered relationship, consider attending Mass at least weekly and praying together. Go to confession regularly. Share prayer intentions with one another. Read Sacred Scripture and share reflections. Sit together in prayerful silence, in a chapel or in a dedicated space of a home. Have conversations about the faith, and ask what each person believes about the longings and desires of their hearts, how they primarily give and receive love. The “Five Love Languages” is a very useful guide — and how they would hope to eventually function together as a family.

Recommended reading is a critical review of the documents of the Church on marriage and family together, primarily “Casti Connubii” by Pope Pius XI, “Familiaris Consortio” by Pope John Paul II and “Amoris Laetitia” by Pope Francis. Reflect upon Fulton Sheen’s “Three to Get Married,” watched the “Beloved” series on Formed.com and prayerfully read, practice and consider, prior to marriage, what is being promised in Catholic wedding vows.

While discussions and documents are helpful, the theoretical becomes much more practical when seen lived firsthand. Therefore, it is often of greatest value to consider the wisdom of holy married couples and learn how they went about dating, how they endured difficult moments, and how they offered advice they recommend and how they seek to embody their Catholic faith as a family.
How are we entering into the second Lent with COVID-19?

With the arrival of Lent, we enter into a time of reflection. For 40 days, Jesus entered the desert, fasting and praying before beginning His public ministry. For 40 days, we model His behavior. We observe a time of introspection and of self-emptying, of prayer and of sacrifice. We push our own desires aside to make room for God’s will.

This Lent is starting differently. As we begin our second Lent with COVID-19, we are still enduring, as many people have termed it, a “long Lent” that began last Ash Wednesday and, to the pandemic, just kept going. For nearly a year, we have been living a life of significant sacrifice. For the good of our neighbor, we have abstained from social events and strapped on masks for any and every outing. We have skipped vacations and have altered routines. And we have endured the kind of mental, emotional and spiritual fatigue that comes with months on end, and ever on.

For these reasons, it is somewhat natural to be at a loss for how to engage in Lent this year. As one influential Catholic voice on Twitter asked recently: “How does one prepare for a new Lent when last year’s Lent doesn’t seem to have ended yet?”

The Church’s tradition teaches us that through the practice of fasting, prayer and almsgiving, we empty ourselves and, in turn, make room for God. Over the past year, we have certainly emptied ourselves. The question remains: Have we filled up the emptiness with God? To answer that question, it may be helpful to begin with a look back. In the spirit of Ignatian spirituality and the popular Daily Examen, we can and should take time in prayer to reflect on the past year as a whole.

Review the challenges brought by each passing month. How was life different from a typical year? Where did we struggle? What are we grateful for? How was God there? What opportunities for grace did we seize? What might we have missed? A time of crisis sometimes reveals a hidden virtue. Do we need to ask any others to join us? Is there a change we need to make?

As we pray, are there certain events from the year upon which God is drawing us to reflect in a particular way? What can we learn from those experiences? How can we grow spiritually from this time of great challenge and need? Might we do differently if presented with similar situations in the future?

Then, we should look ahead to what’s to come. Yes, it’s been a long year, and another season of Lent is just getting started. But don’t forget that Easter is just getting closer, not farther away.

In defense of hope

Our bedtime routine with our 3-year-old daughter is quite simple.

Bath. Nighttime snack of strawberries and grapes. Read books. Brush teeth. Put on our pajamas. “Tell us a story, Mommy?” “It’s only Tuesday, sweetie. We do that on Sunday. We save the ice cream truck for that day.”

I always think of the old “Remember the Ice Cream Man?” song my parents used to sing to me. “Remember the ice cream man who comes around on a Sunday? I’d ask my dad if he thought I could have some ice cream. He always said, ‘We’re going to wait for the next Sunday.’”

For the ice cream man, as well as some of the other childhood icons that disappeared because of the pandemic, this Lent is just getting started.

How are we entering into the second Lent with COVID-19? How are we entering into the second Lent with COVID-19? Is it a second Lent with COVID-19? Is it a second Lent with COVID-19? What will we take away from this Lent with COVID-19?

Reflecting on this Lent 12 months after our first Lent with COVID-19, we should look at the unexpected, the broken plans and the changes in our lives. We have skipped vacations and have altered routines. And we have endured the kind of mental, emotional and spiritual fatigue that comes with months on end, and ever on.

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The Lord offers eternal life and peace if we implore His mercy.
Why we need a distribution of power

A crucially important feature of Catholic social teaching, about one frequent, the emphasis or misunderstood, is a clear aim against the concentration of power within a society. This perspective on liberation can happen economically, politically, or culturally. By a basic and healthy instinct, Catholic social teaching wants power, as much as possible, distributed widely throughout the community, so that one small segment does not tyrannize the majority or prevent large numbers of people from enjoying the benefits that are theirs by right.

We can see this phenomenon perhaps most clearly in the political economy. If one organization manages to monopolize its segment of the economy, it can set prices arbitrarily, hire and fire according to its whim, preclude any competition that might provide better products and/or higher wages for employees. One should think here of the “trust-busting” work of Theodore Roosevelt in the early 20th century and the similar concern today for large technology companies like Google, Facebook, Amazon and other high-tech conglomerates that exercise an almost unchallenged dominance in their fields.

A cornerstone of Catholic social teaching is what is traditionally called “distributive justice” — which is today’s equitable allocation of goods within a society. Now this can take place through direct government intervention, for example through anti-trust legislation, minimum wage requirements, programs to aid the poor, taxation, etc., but it can also happen more indirectly, through the natural rhythms of the market. In “Centesimus Annus,” John Paul II observes that profit-making itself can and should signal to private entrepreneurs that there is money to be made in that segment of the economy and that they should, accordingly, get involved. The bottom line is this: spreading out wealth within a society tends to make an economy both more just and more efficient.

We can furthermore see this dynamic in the political realm. If one party comes to dominate a nation, a state, a city or a community, corruption almost inevitably follows. Unchallenged, the ruling conglomerate can impose its will, compel the acceptance of its vision and eliminate prospective opponents and critics. It is quite obvious that this sort of arrangement obtains in banana republics, communist dictatorships and oppressive theocracies, but it is also apparent, to a lesser degree, in local and state governments in our own country. If you doubt me, ask yourself why pro-life candidates in Illinois, Massachusetts or California could never hope to be elected to office. When that conglomerate couples itself with economic power, the corruption becomes only deeper and more intractable.

Once again, according to Catholic social teaching, the desideratum is the breaking up and spreading out of power throughout the society. This could happen in a number of ways: equipping a variety of parties, providing for a greater turnover within legislatures, lifting up various expressions of local government, allowing for mediating institutions, strengthening the system of checks and balances, etc.

Though perhaps less obvious than the first two instances, a third example of this dangerous hyper-concentration of power is in the cultural arena. Under both the Nazi and Soviet dictatorships of the last century, only very definite types of art, music, and literature were acceptable, and any deviation from the norm was quickly squelched by the state. Today, strict censorship of the arts holds sway in many Islamist societies, as well as in communist China. But lest we think we in the West are free of this sort of cultural monopoly, take a good look at the kind of strict leftist ideology that exists in practically every film or television program produced in Hollywood. This is not brutal state censorship to be sure, but it is indeed a sort of monopolization of cultural power that effectively excludes rival expressions of the good, the true and the beautiful. Once again, it

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ful hope for something very specific: the coming of our savior, Jesus Christ.

This is our hope: Him. His return. Jesus Christ, present to us. Our hope rests in His promise, that He will be with us until the end of the age. And He will come back so we can be with Him forever. It is only with His return — His very presence in our lives — that we will find the opportunity to worship properly, the chance to heal fully, the blessing of perfect peace, united to Him.

We don’t necessarily know when that coming will be. It probably won’t be tomorrow or even next week. But we still hold onto the hope that it will happen someday. And we pray with fervent hope that we are ready. That we can greet Him and say, “I am happy to see you, Lord, and that He will look at us and say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

We wait in joyful hope and ask, “Will it be tomorrow?” And we pray diligently that we will welcome the coming of our savior with hearts ready for His return.

And maybe He’ll show up in a battered old ice cream truck bearing a tin jingle, an assortment of sweet treats ready for us all.

Kate Fiehe McRady is an international Catholic speaker and author.

The Our Sunday Visitor Editorial Board is comprised of Grettchen R. Crowe, Scott P. Richert, Scott Warden and York Young.

SCRUPTURE SEARCH

Gospel for February 21, 2021

1 Peter 3:18-22 / Mark 1:12-15

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the First Sunday of Lent, Cycle B: Jesus’ mission. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

CHRIST

FLESH

NOAH

BAPTISM

SUFFERED

ALIVE

THE ARK

HEAVEN

ABR

SUFINC

ONCE IN PRISON

POWERS

EIGHT

FORTY DAYS

WILD

KINGDOM

REPEAT

PREPARATION

S Y A D T R O F J O S

U R E D N A O H

H H B V R E P E N T R S

G S O J A T K N A H R D

D E A N E F H N A E E P

E L L A H C O G W A S B

T F I L Y S T O I V T A

P H V W I A P T L E E P

M D E R L E C N O N D T

E R P A B T S I R H C I

I N T R I P S R O I S

I L Y A K I N D O M

The CrossWord

February 21 and 28, 2021

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us. Through his silent witness, we can learn simply to be quiet and listen to and follow the will of God in our lives — especially during these anxious times. And as we proceed through the second Lent of this “long Lent,” paying particular attention to the manner in which we live life in the hobbits’ shire in contrast to the political and economic arrangements in Mordor.

What I hope is at least relatively clear is that this uniquely Catholic approach cuts against both the extreme left and the extreme right.

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

February 21, 2021

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OSV, from page 12

osv.com
Vatican Radio celebrates its 90th anniversary

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Celebrating its 90th anniversary, Vatican Radio received well-wishes from Pope Francis and an avid listener who is the second oldest person in the world.

Sister Andre, a French member of the Daughters of Charity who made headlines recently for testing positive for COVID-19 but weathered it with no symptoms, turned 117 Feb. 11 — the eve of the anniversary of Vatican Radio’s birth on Feb. 12, 1931.

The French nun, who has lived through the Spanish flu pandemic, two world wars and 10 pontificates, is blind and lives in a residential home where she is a “dedicated listener of the radio that offers her a window of the world” and supports her prayer life, Vatican News reported.

Pope Francis also sent his greetings to the radio, thanking its staff, who come from 69 different countries, for the work they do and “the love you put into it.”

He said the “beautiful” thing about radio was its ability to reach the most distant and remote places.

He encouraged staff to “forge ahead with courage and creativity in speaking to the world” in ways that help people “see the truth of things.”

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State, presided over Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica Feb. 12 with employees of the newly established Vatican City State.

The pope’s inaugural message — in Latin — was heard simultaneously in New York, Quebec, London, Paris, and Sydney and Melbourne, Australia.

Cardinal Thomas Collins of Toronto is interviewed by Emer Cabrera of the English section of Vatican Radio at the Vatican in this Feb. 26, 2013, file photo. Vatican Radio, which celebrated its 90th anniversary Feb. 12, has launched a web radio service.
WHAT’S HAPPENING?

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

Drive-thru fish fry at Hessen Cassel

FORT WAYNE — St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel Knights of Columbus will offer a drive-thru fish fry at the church, 11337 US 27 S., on Friday, Feb. 26, from 4:30-7 p.m. Dinner includes fish, breaded potatoes, applesauce, coleslaw and roll for $9.

Lenten carryout fish fry

WALKERTON — St. Patrick Church, 811 Tyler St., will be hosting a carryout-only fish fry Friday, Feb. 19, from 4-7 p.m. Fish will be prepared by Tyner 100F Lodge. There will be no all-fish dinners. Cost is $10 per meal. Contact Vicky Krohn at 574-586-7152 or tvie2001@yahoo.com.

St. Vincent de Paul Scouts fish fry

FORT WAYNE — The St. Vincent de Paul Scouts will have a drive-up only fish dinner Friday, Feb. 19, from 5-8 p.m. Serving fish, mac and cheese, coleslaw, potatoes, green beans and dessert. Cost is $10 per adult; $5 per child. Contact Jan Moore at 260-489-9509.

Original Jonah fish fry drive-thru

MISHAWAKA — St. Bavo Parish, 524 W. 8th St., will host a drive-thru only original Jonah fish fry on Friday, March 12, from 4-7 p.m. Cost is $10 per dinner and includes four pieces of fish, coleslaw, chips and cookies. No presales. Contact Sue Alwine 574-255-1437 or office@stbavo church.com.

Knights of Columbus drive-thru Dan’s Fish Fry

BLUFFTON — St. Joseph Parish, 1300 N. Main St., will have a drive-thru fish fry Friday, March 12, from 4-7 p.m. featuring Dan’s Fish Fry — drive-thru only. Menu includes: fish, cheesy potatoes, green beans and dessert. Tickets are adults $10 and children ages 6-12 $6. Visit www.stjosephchurchbluffton.org or contact Rick Singer at 260-824-1380 or stjosephchurch@adams wells.com.

Forever Learning Institute Trivia Night

SOUTH BEND — Forever Learning is going virtual for trivia buffs can test their knowl edge by registering online at ForeverLearningInstitute.org. Individuals may register on their own — without a predetermined team — and join the fun. The event will be hosted by TrivialTub via Zoom. Contact Eve Finnessy, executive director, at 574-282-1901 for more information.

Miracles and their Meanings with Tim Francis

FORT WAYNE — Tim Francis is a nationally known guest speaker. He will host “Miracles and their Meanings” at St. Charles Borromeo Church, 4916 Trier Rd., on Feb. 28, and Our Lady of Good Hope Church on March 1. Both events start at 6 p.m.

Mass for the feast day of St. Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

FORT WAYNE — Our Lady of Good Hope Parish will celebrate the feast of St. Joseph with Father Daniel Whelan Friday, March 19, at Our Lady of Good Hope Church, 7215 Saint Joe Road. Sacred Music will be provided by Jessica Schuster and the young adult choir. The order of the evening is as follows: Stations of the Cross at 6:30 p.m.; prelude music at 6:50 p.m. and Mass at 7 p.m. Following the Mass there will be a procession to St. Joseph and an opportunity to venerate a second-class relic of St. Joseph.

Life Defenders Boot Camp

MISHAWAKA — Right to Life Michiana will host the Kloska Family Life Defenders Boot Camp, an in-depth pro-life training for youth and adults (recommended age seventh grade and up) Saturday, March 20, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Miller-Moore Academic Center, 1001 Bethel Circle, Suite 150. Visit www profiltemichiana.org/boot camp or contact Abby Middleton at 574-232-8433 or programs@ profiltemichiana.org.

World Apostolate of Fatima quarterly Mass and fellowship

NEW HAVEN — The World Apostolate of Fatima will be hosting their quarterly Mass and fellowship at St. Louis, Besancon, Parish, 15655 Lincoln Hwy E., Thursday, March 25. Mass will begin at 6 p.m. with adoration, rosary and benediction following. Refreshments after Mass and adoration. Visit www.Fatimaweb.org. Contact Seth Ball at seth@fatimaweb.org.

TODAY’S CATHOLIC

February 21, 2021

What are your plans for God’s gifts?

Catholic Diocese of Evansville

is seeking

Human Resources Director/Manager

The Catholic Diocese of Evansville, Indiana, which serves a Roman Catholic community of more than 75,800 across 12 counties in southwestern Indiana, seeks candidates for the newly created position of Human Resources Manager/ Director. The actual position title will be dependent on the qualifications and experience of the successful candidate.

The successful candidate will be responsible for all aspects of the diocesan benefits plan; develop, maintain and continuously improve the diocese’s comprehensive process for hiring employees; oversee the compensation system for diocesan-agency employees; develop and maintain a performance-evaluation process; and serve as an advisor to pastors and management team members parishes, schools and other diocesan agencies.

The successful candidate will be a Catholic in good standing, a bachelor’s degree is required (master’s degree preferred) in human-resources, management, organizational development, business administration or a related field. At least five years of previous experience in humanresources management is required. Designation as a Senior Professional in Human Resources or Professional in Human Resources is preferred. The successful candidate also must complete a full Criminal History Clearance.

A complete position announcement is available online at www.evdio.org/employmentopportunities.html

To apply, send a letter of application, resume and at least four references to: Search Committee, Human Resources, Diocese of Evansville, hr-manager@evdio.org.

No phone calls, please.

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REST IN PEACE

Bremen

Gloria F. Fimbianti, 93, St. Dominic

Decatur

Matthew J. Keller, 65, St. Mary of the Assumption

Shirley C. Laguna, 73, St. Mary of the Assumption

Fort Wayne

Kristina Hicks, 70, St. Vincent de Paul

Vicky L. Nussbaum, 81, St. Jude

Monroeville

Kay L. Reuille, 78, St. Rose of Lima

South Bend

Grace Devetski, 84, St. Anthony de Padua

Sister Maureen Rooney, CSC, 81, Our Lady of Loretto

Edward Stepien, 69, Holy Family

Stephen Stoczykowski, 32, Holy Family

Ralph Takach, 78, Holy Family

James Van Bergen, 56, St. Anthony de Padua

Patricia Weller, 88, St. Anthony de Padua

Deaths elsewhere


Sister is from Fort Wayne and served at St. John The Baptist

W. Ross, 91, St. Jude

Edward Ross, 79, St. George

Kay L. Reuille, 78, St. Rose of Lima

Sister Jacquelyn Hoffman, 89, Saint Mary of the Woods.

Sister is from Fort Wayne and served at St. John The Baptist

March 7 and 14, 2021

March 19, 2021

March 21 and 28, 2021

February 7 and 14, 2021

March 21 and 28, 2021

February 21 and 28, 2021
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