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TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 95 No. 10

TODAYSCATHOLIC.org

Church elects catechumens for sacraments of initiation at Rite of Election



Jennifer Barton

At the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne, those seeking baptism in the Catholic faith stand Feb. 21 to declare their readiness to join the Church at Easter Vigil.

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrated the Rite of Election Feb. 21 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne and Feb. 28 at St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend. This rite generally takes

place on the first Sunday of Lent, and therefore is celebrated on two consecutive Sundays in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

The Rite of Election is the final step that catechumens — those who have not been baptized into any Christian faith — take toward joining the Catholic

Church. Typically, this rite takes place in conjunction with the Call to Continuing Conversion, in which candidates — those who are already baptized — reaffirm their commitment to coming into full communion with the Church through reception of the sacraments of Communion and confirmation. This year, for social dis-

tancing purposes, only the Rite of Election was celebrated, as the Call to Continuing Conversion is not an essential rite.

During his remarks, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades expressed joy at receiving the new members

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TODAY'S CATHOLIC

(ISSN 0891-1533)
(USPS 403630)

Official newspaper of the
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend
P.O. Box 11169
Fort Wayne, IN 46856

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260-456-2824

Published weekly except for the last Sunday in December; and every other week from third Sunday in May through fourth Sunday in August, by the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, 915 S. Clinton St., P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, IN 46801. Periodicals postage paid at Fort Wayne, IN, and additional mailing office.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Today's Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN 46856-1169 or email: circulation@diocesefwsb.org

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BUREAU OFFICE: 1328 Dragoon Trail, Mishawaka, IN 46544. Telephone 260-456-2824. Fax 260-744-1473.

News deadline is 10 days prior to publication date. Advertising deadline is nine days before publication date.

Today's Catholic may be reached at :

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US House passes Equality Act in a 224-206 vote

BY JULIE ASHER

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The House of Representatives passed the Equality Act in a 224-206 vote Feb. 25.

A couple days ahead of the vote, the chairmen of five U.S. bishops' committees said its mandates will "discriminate against people of faith" by adversely affecting charities and their beneficiaries, conscience rights, women's sports "and sex-specific facilities."

The bill, known as H.R. 5 and recently reintroduced in the House, also will provide for taxpayer funding of abortion and limit freedom of speech, the chairmen said in a Feb. 23 letter to all members of Congress.

H.R. 5 amends the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations, public education, federal funding, the credit system and jury duty.

"Human dignity is central to what Catholics believe because every person is made in the image of God and should be treated accordingly, with respect and compassion," they said.

"This commitment is reflected in the church's charitable service to all people, without regard to race, religion or any other characteristic."

"It means we need to honor every person's right to gainful employment free of unjust discrimination or harassment, and to the basic goods that they need to live and thrive," they continued. "It also means that people of differing beliefs should be respected. In this, we wholeheartedly support nondiscrimination principles to ensure that everyone's rights are protected."

H.R. 5 "purports to protect people experiencing same-sex attraction or gender discordance from discrimination. But instead, the bill represents the imposition by Congress of novel and divisive viewpoints regarding 'gender' on individuals and organizations," they said.

"This includes dismissing sexual difference and falsely presenting 'gender' as only a social construct," they said. "As Pope Francis has reflected, however, 'biological sex and the sociocultural role of sex — gender — can be distinguished but not separated.'"

Signing the letter were: Bishop Michael C. Barber of Oakland, California, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Catholic Education; Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, chairman of the USCCB Committee for Religious Liberty; Bishop David A. Konderla of Tulsa, Oklahoma,



CNS composite; photos by Paul Haring, Gregory A. Shemitz, Brendan McDermid of Reuters

Five committee chairmen of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, in a Feb. 23 letter to members of Congress, opposed the reintroduced Equality Act. The chairmen are Bishop David A. Konderla of Tulsa, Okla., Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage; Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Bishop Michael C. Barber of Oakland, Calif., Committee on Catholic Education; Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kan., Committee on Pro-Life Activities; and Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, Committee for Religious Liberty.

chairman of the USCCB Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage; and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

"It is one thing to be understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life, and another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality," the bishops said, further quoting Pope Francis.

"Tragically, this act can also be construed to include an abortion mandate, a violation of precious rights to life and conscience," the committee chairmen added.

"Rather than affirm human dignity in ways that meaningfully exceed existing practical protections, the Equality Act would discriminate against people of faith," they said. "It would also inflict numerous legal and social harms on Americans of any faith or none."

The measure first passed the House May 17, 2019, in a bipartisan 236-173 vote, but the Senate did not act on the bill after receiving it. President Donald Trump had threatened to veto the measure if it ever reached his desk.

House leadership pledged to see it reintroduced in the 117th Congress. On Feb. 18, Rep. David Cicilline, D-Rhode Island, reintroduced it. Democratic Sens. Jeff Merkley of Oregon, Cory Booker of New Jersey and Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin are expected to reintroduce a Senate version soon.

A group of faith leaders who

support the Equality Act who held a webinar for the media Feb. 24 included Sister Simone Campbell, a Sister of Social Service, who is the outgoing executive director of Network, a Catholic social justice lobby organization.

Network has long supported the measure, she said. "It's critically important to ensure there is no discrimination in our nation especially with regard to the LGBTQ community."

In the Catholic faith, all are welcome, she said, "and if all are welcome, all need to be protected. I think the bedrock position of our faith is to welcome and secure safety and the ability to flourish for all."

Campbell and representatives of other faiths, including Jewish, Muslim and other Christian leaders, said in the webinar that the measure "will not reduce religious liberty," as protected by the First Amendment and religious exemptions in current law, "but it will reduce religious bigotry."

However, the U.S. bishops' committee chairmen said in their Feb. 23 letter that if passed, the Equality Act will "discriminate against individuals and religious organizations based on their different beliefs by partially repealing the bipartisan Religious Freedom Restoration Act, an unprecedented departure from that law and one of America's founding principles."

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act, or RFRA, is a 1993 law that protects religions against government intrusion.

Among its other provisions, the bishops said, the measure

would expand "the government's definition of public places into numerous settings, even forcing religiously operated spaces, such as some church halls and equivalent facilities owned by synagogues or mosques, to either host functions that violate their beliefs or close their doors to their broader communities."

The USCCB on its website posted an "Action Alert" — <https://bit.ly/3qVHIkL> — asking Catholics to write to their representatives and senators to urge them to vote against the Equality Act.

Some state Catholic conferences have done the same, including the Montana Catholic Conference. In a Feb. 24 "Call to Action," it said: "Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. The Equality Act ... in many ways does the opposite and needs to be opposed."

Editor's Note: The full text of the bishops' letter to members of Congress can be found online at <https://bit.ly/3dEDhXE>.



Photos provided by John Paul Lichon

Dome of the Rock at Temple Mount, Jerusalem, is seen from a distance. The church, which is also a holy site for Jews and Muslims, is for Christians the site of several moments in Jesus' ministry that are retold in the Bible. It will be visited in 2021 by participants in the Frassati Fellowship, an effort to re-energize and educate those who minister in the Catholic Church in the U.S.

Fellowship aims to rejuvenate ministers of US Church

BY JODI MARLIN

A visit to the Holy Land can be transformative for the faith life of Christians. Among those who work in ministry in the Catholic Church, the monumental and formative experience also finds fertile ground for evangelization.

The leadership and staff of Verso Ministries, a Notre Dame, Indiana, pilgrimage company, want to give back to the Catholic Church in the U.S. from among their blessings by showing parish ministers, Catholic schoolteachers, diocesan staff and those in nonprofit Catholic ministry what an understanding of the physical context of Christ's earthly ministry can mean for their own spirituality and for the faith of those with whom they engage. A new fellowship opportunity developed by the company offers an academically informed tour of sites in the Holy Land, accompanied by a process that will equip them to share what they learn with others.

Practically everyone has heard the Bible stories that take place in the Holy Land, believes Verso founder and CEO John Paul Lichon. "They've heard of the cities of Bethlehem and Jerusalem; they've heard the stories of what Jesus and His disciples did in boats on the Sea of Galilee. But I think there's a disconnect. It can be hard to imagine them in places we've never seen. Sometimes we forget that these places still exist."

He likened a visit to the Holy Land to going to visit a college roommate's hometown.

"You see their parents and the restaurants they always talk about. You meet their old friends and see the high school they went to. You get a differ-

ent perspective, and you learn things about the person that makes your picture of him more complete. It's that same kind of feeling. You more intimately know who Jesus is after visiting His birthplace and the places He ministered. It's a very personal kind of awakening. I can only hope that's going to impact the way that those who work for the Church will teach and pass on the faith."

Pilgrimage and ministry — Verso's origins are rooted in both. Lichon started the company in late 2016 after feeling

called to make a career change during a pilgrimage of his own to World Youth Day in Poland.

"We've always viewed this business as a ministry, as our calling to get people to these holy places. It's an evangelistic exercise, not just traveling, visiting these places and even celebrating Mass each day. It's truly an opportunity for evangelization, an opportunity to impact people's life of faith."

That passion for ministry, coupled with the inspiration

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Frassati Fellows will prepare with prayer, reading, mentorship and other formative activities to grow from seeing places such as the Church of the Beatitudes, located on the Mount of Beatitudes, where Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount.



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, March 7: 10:30 a.m. — Mass, St. Joseph Hessen - Cassel Church, Fort Wayne
 Monday, March 8: 12:30 p.m. — Virtual Meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Doctrine
 Tuesday, March 9: 11 a.m. — Virtual Meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Administrative Committee
 Wednesday, March 10: 11 a.m. — Virtual Meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Administrative Committee
 Thursday, March 11: 12:30 p.m. — Virtual Meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Doctrine with Theological Societies on "Laudato Si"



Madagascan puppet shows emphasize health, nutrition



Dooshima Tsee

In some rural communities in Madagascar where rates of malnourished children are among the highest, households do not understand the gravity of poor nutrition. When Frankline, above, and her husband were pregnant with their youngest son they were told how doctor visits, hand washing and "rainbow" foods are necessary to stay healthy: Now, Thorin is reaching developmental milestones.

In Madagascar, families gather to watch puppet shows that entertain and teach. They love seeing the brightly colored puppets talk to each other, tell stories and ask the crowd questions. After each show, parents leave with new information to help their families.

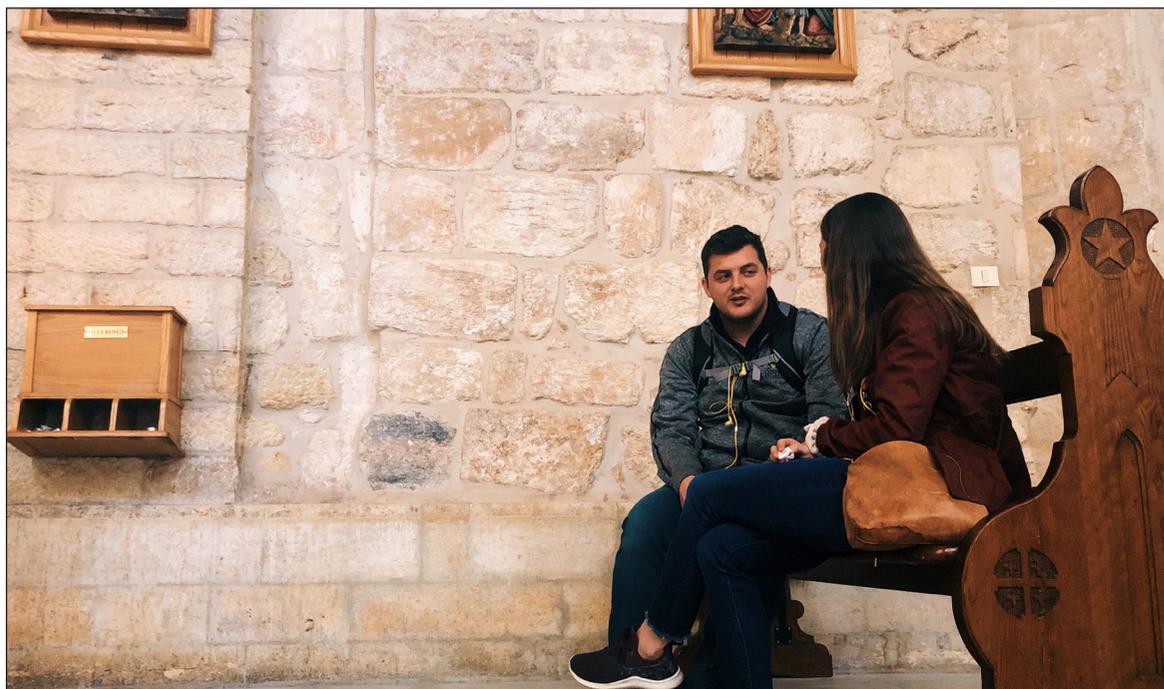
Half of all children in Madagascar are undernourished, meaning they don't have enough nutritious food to stay healthy. Parents want their children to grow up healthy and strong, and the puppet shows give them new knowledge they can use right away to make sure that happens. Community health workers trained by Catholic Relief Services use the puppets to teach families about how doctor visits, hand washing and "rainbow" foods — different colored foods like tomatoes and carrots that have important vitamins and nutrients—are necessary to stay healthy.

Frankline and Labaladezy have eight children. Their

youngest child, Thorin, is almost a year old. While Frankline was pregnant with Thorin, she and her husband, Labaladezy, watched the puppet shows and learned new ways to support Thorin's growth and development. When Thorin was born, his parents fed him different, more nutritious foods than their other children and took him to the health center for regular check-ups. Thorin is growing a lot and is reaching all his developmental milestones.

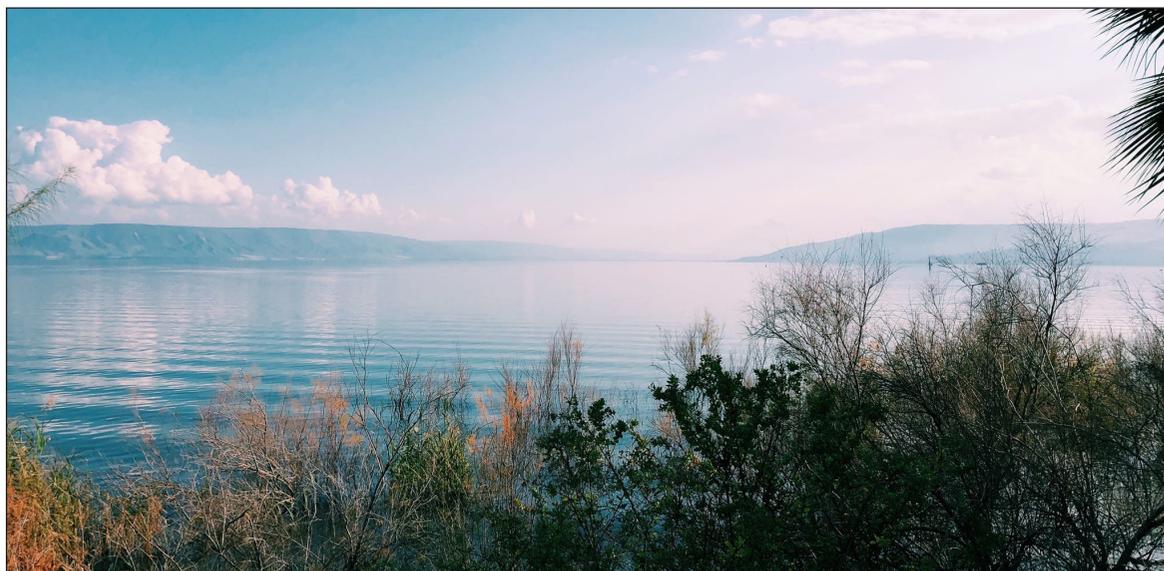
Frankline is happy her youngest son is doing so well, and she sees the positive effects of their new rainbow diet on the rest of the family. She said, "I dream that my children will stay healthy. I hope that Thorin may become a doctor or a leader in our community." Every parent wants their children to reach their full potential, and CRS is helping make sure they can do just that.

Information provided by Catholic Relief Services.



Photos provided by John Paul Lichon

Above, pilgrims rest during a visit to the Holy Land in 2019. Notre Dame, Indiana-based Verso Ministries will offer those who volunteer or work for the Church, in Catholic organizations and for Catholic schools in the U.S. an opportunity for formation in Holy Land sites that will culminate in a pilgrimage later this year. Below is the Sea of Galilee, which features prominently in Jesus' earthly ministry.



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FRASSATI, from page 3

and example of the company's patron saint, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, laid the foundation for the Frassati Fellowship.

Accepted applicants will spend a four month period of education, mentorship and establishing community before embarking on a 9-day visit to Israel, the land where Jesus ministered and His salvific mission was fulfilled.

"We were thinking about what we could do for ministry leaders to help them re-imagine their faith or be rejuvenated so they come back with renewed enthusiasm and dedication and understanding of their faith," said Lichon. "It's about helping them to think of creative ways to bring the Gospel to people, to continue this work of evangelization.

"Understanding who Jesus is is so foundational to our understanding of our faith, ourselves, our ministry, of our Church. If we can transform the lives of 25 ministers, that's going to multiply (our efforts), hopefully, when they're back in their parishes or schools."

Formation will be incorporated to prepare participants fully for the experience.

Participants will meet virtually for bi-monthly meetings that include activities presented by the team. Lichon and associate director of operations Stephanie Petrie, both graduates of the Echo program at Notre Dame and with master's degrees in theology, as well as guest educators, including clergy and University of Dame faculty, may direct the learning and spiritual development as well. Mentoring sessions will take place with clergy and experienced ministers, and participants will be expected to engage in prayer and with readings in anticipation of a July 14-22 trip to Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem and the Sea of Galilee.

The three pillars of the fellowship — formation, community and travel — have equal weight and are integral in helping ministry leaders prepare for, process and grow from what

Lichon hopes will be "an intimate encounter with the person of Jesus." The community aspect is more than having people to walk with during the experience, he noted.

"Depending on their parish and their ministry, they may not have a support system. They may not have a mentor that's walking alongside them. They may not have someone to bounce ideas off of. So to give them a cohort of people to learn from and support them and walk together with is really important as well."

Following the pilgrimage, each fellow will present a creative capstone project expressing ministerial outcomes from their participation.

Two types of Church ministers — and the ministries they lead — stand to gain the most from the Frassati Fellowship, Lichon predicted.

"First, person who has some years under their belt, who maybe is feeling tired and like, 'Gosh, I'm always giving, I'm always the leader, I never get to be the participant.' This is a way to feed and rejuvenate those type of ministers.

"The other person is someone who's 'in discernment mode,' perhaps volunteering at the parish or in part-time ministry and considering making a larger commitment. Someone who's willing to grow and is seeking something at this time," he said.

Individuals volunteering or working in paid ministry positions are welcome to apply for the Frassati Fellowship, as are those enrolled in full-time graduate studies in theology, divinity or related fields. Program cost is \$2,499, plus the cost of roundtrip airfare to Israel. This final cost includes a \$2,000 scholarship from Verso Ministries.

Applications should be completed online at www.VersoMinistries.com/Frassati-Fellowship by March 15. Finalists will be invited to a virtual interview and decisions for the 2021 cohort of 25 will be communicated the week of April 5.

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School choice, pro-life measures cross midpoint of session

At the halfway point of the 2021 legislative session, the Indiana Catholic Conference and other allies are closely monitoring and calling for public engagement on important bills that continue to advance at the Statehouse.

Last week, the Indiana General Assembly reached what is known as crossover — the midway point of the session, during which bills that are still active move from one legislative chamber to the other. This is a long session of the legislature, held every other year and culminating in the passage of the state's two-year budget.

A major proposal to expand school choice is among the measures the Indiana Catholic Conference and other advocates are tracking. House Bill 1005, which would extend the school voucher program to middle and upper-middle-class families and increase scholarship amounts for all students receiving vouchers, passed the House on a 61-38 vote. All of the Democrats in the chamber voted against the measure, along with nine Republicans.

Now that the bill has moved to the Senate, advocacy in favor of the measure will be critically important, according to John Elcesser, executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association.

"It will be more of an uphill battle in the Senate, which isn't as broadly supportive of all the expansions to school choice," said Elcesser, whose organization represents Indiana's more than 400 non-public schools, including the state's 175 Catholic schools. "Thus far Senate lawmakers have pulled much of the choice language out of similar Senate bills with the idea of rolling it in to the budget bill. It will take non-public school stakeholders reaching out to their senators if we are to be successful.

"There is strong and vocal opposition to these efforts, and we have to provide the other side of the story if school choice expansion is going to find its way into law, whether it be in House Bill 1005 or in House Bill 1001, the budget bill."

The ICC supports the legislation and encourages the Catholic faithful to contact their elected representatives on this and other matters important to the Church and the common good.

"At this critical point in the legislative session, there are bills that need to be supported, and bills that need to be defeated," said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. "So we are asking everyone to make their voices heard."

A significant pro-life bill is another measure that the ICC is watching closely. House Bill 1577, authored by Rep. Peggy Mayfield, R-Martinsville, would require abortion providers to offer additional information and resources to women who are considering abortion, including an ultrasound image of their unborn child.

The most intensely debated aspect of the bill involves providing women with information about possibly reversing a chemical, or medication, abortion. This method of abortion, which is reserved for use up to 10 weeks of pregnancy, involves the ingestion of two pills within a 24- to 48-hour period. Women sometimes change their minds after taking the first pill, mifepristone, and the legislation would require abortion providers to inform them about an option that could potentially save the unborn child — taking the hormone progesterone after that initial abortion pill is consumed.

Planned Parenthood and the American Civil Liberties Union oppose the measure, and two

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

Indiana physicians testifying against the bill questioned both the safety and the effectiveness of abortion pill reversal. But another obstetrician, Dr. Christina Francis, argued that there is a simple principle behind the method.

"Though abortion supporters claim that this is experimental, nothing could be further from the truth," said Dr. Francis, a Fort Wayne-based physician who chairs the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists. "The reversal of mifepristone with progesterone is consistent with a basic scientific principle that we all learned about in medical school."

The ICC also provided testimony in favor of the bill during the House committee hearing.

"The Church consistently stands in firm support of pregnant women and their unborn children," said Alexander Mingus, associate director of the ICC. "We believe this bill's provisions align with the Church's vision of the dignity of the human person. We also recog-

nize that this legislation is just one piece that's necessary as we advocate for the proper support, health care, spiritual care and tender concern for vulnerable women who face the daunting challenges of abortion."

Another effort that the ICC considers pro-life has once again stalled at the Statehouse despite backing from Gov. Eric Holcomb and a host of advocates. Legislation that would have required employers to provide women with reasonable accommodations during their pregnancy — adjustments as simple as offering them more frequent breaks or access to appropriate seating — failed to gain traction.

One more disappointment for the ICC and other advocates during the first half of the legislative session was the overriding of Gov. Holcomb's veto of a landlord-tenant bill that was rushed through last year's General Assembly. Senate Enrolled Act 148 was the result of language added to an unrelated Senate bill during the 2020 legislative session and passed with little opportunity for debate.

SEA 148 was the only bill the governor vetoed last year. The ICC and others wanted the veto to stand because the legislation placed an even greater imbalance in the relationship between landlords and tenants, which in Indiana typically favors landlords. Ultimately, however, lawmakers overturned the veto.

"During a time when the pandemic has caused untold numbers of people, through no fault of their own, to be without an income to pay rent, government entities should be compassionately working to keep people housed, not making it easier for them to be thrust into the streets," Espada said. "As we move forward with the second half of the legislative session, we will always stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable among us and call on the Catholic faithful to do the same."

To follow this and other priority legislation of the ICC, visit www.indianacc.org. This website includes access to I-CAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church's position on key issues. Those who sign up for I-CAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.



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Human rights advocate Sister Dianna Ortiz dies after brief illness

CLEVELAND (CNS) — Ursuline Sister Dianna Ortiz was teaching indigenous children as a missionary in Guatemala in 1989 when her ministry was torn apart in the midst of the country's brutal civil war. Guatemalan soldiers abducted her from a garden Nov. 2, detaining her for 30 hours. She reported being gang raped and tortured repeatedly until she escaped. Returning to the United States, Sister Ortiz became a human rights advocate and peacemaker, starting an organization for torture survivors and becoming a visible presence of nonviolence at vigils and marches in the nation's capital. Sister Ortiz, 62, died while in hospice care in Washington early Feb. 19 after a return of cancer. Friends reported that Sister Ortiz had tested positive for the coronavirus in the fall while on a trip to New Mexico. Although she had mild symptoms and was able to return to Washington, she continued to feel ill for weeks afterward. Medical tests Feb. 12 discovered inoperable cancer. Friends and colleagues recalled Sister Ortiz, who for the last year was deputy director of Pax Christi USA, for having a gentle spirit that guided a steely determination to work for justice and peace for three decades. "She was a witness to justice and human rights. So much of what she did was pretty quiet," recalled Marie Dennis, senior adviser to the secretary general of Pax Christi International, who lived with Sister Ortiz in the Assisi Community in Washington since the early 1990s.

Catholic agencies welcome access to Ethiopia's Tigray region

NAIROBI, Kenya (CNS) — Catholic relief agencies in Ethiopia welcomed a move by the government to allow more access in Tigray, the semi-autonomous region in the north, where a military operation displaced millions and left an unspecified number of people dead. Amid increased international calls for unrestricted access, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali announced Feb. 24 that 135 personnel from bilateral and multilateral organizations had been cleared to travel and undertake aid work in the region. Seven international media organizations, including The New York Times, the BBC and Reuters, also were granted access. "This is all what the humanitarian agencies have been seeking. They have been asking for access to the region so that they can provide the much needed services to the people," Andre Atsu, the Jesuit Refugee Service regional director in Eastern Africa, told Catholic News Service. JRS is one of the agencies providing human-

At least 18 die in Myanmar coup protests



CNS photo/Reuters

Demonstrators flash a three-finger salute March 1 during a protest against the military coup in Yangon, Myanmar. Cardinal Charles Bo of Yangon called for patience and tolerance on Feb. 28, a day when at least 18 anti-coup protesters were shot dead by Myanmar security forces. "Today, the riot has been severe nationwide," he said a tweet on @CardinalMaungBo, an unofficial account with a weblink to the Archdiocese of Yangon. "The police are arresting, beating and even shooting at the people. With (eyes) full of tears, Sr. Ann Nu Thawng begs & halts the police to stop arresting the protesters." The tweet said about 100 protesters escaped from police because of the nun.

itarian assistance in the region, where half of the 6 million population is reportedly displaced.

Family Rosary's annual 'Try Prayer! It Works!' contest accepting entries

EASTON, Mass. (CNS) — "Try Prayer! It Works!" — an annual contest sponsored by Family Rosary — is now accepting entries from children in kindergarten through 12th grade who are enrolled in a Catholic school, religious education program, parish or other organizations, including home school. All U.S. contest entries must be submitted by March 25. This year's theme is "Do Whatever He Tells You" (John 2:5) and is aimed at helping families explore how Mary's example and intercessory prayer can help people follow God's will. "From Mary, especially through

the prayer of the rosary, participants can explore how Mary's maternal influence can lead families closer to Jesus," said a Family Rosary announcement about the contest. The contest guidelines can be found online at <https://bit.ly/3sl9isa>. The main Family Rosary website is www.FamilyRosary.com. This contest invites families to light a candle and pray together, and then share this year's theme as a family reflection. "We hope that families will grow closer to each other and deeper in the faith as they share this reflection experience," said Holy Cross Father Jim Phalan, national director of Family Rosary.

Cardinal prays on CNN program marking 500,000 COVID-19 deaths in U.S.

WASHINGTON (CNS) — During a

Feb. 22 evening program on CNN, Washington Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory offered a prayer for those who have died from COVID-19 asking God to "grant eternal peace to all our sisters and brothers lost to this disease. Let us now open our hearts to recall those who have died from the coronavirus," Cardinal Gregory prayed. "Strengthen those families and friends who remain behind, to comfort one another and to wipe the tears from our eyes. May each one find peace and let the memory of our loved ones itself be a blessing." The cardinal called it "a great honor and privilege" to offer the prayer at the invitation of Jake Tapper, CNN anchor and chief Washington correspondent on the program "We Remember 500,000: A National Memorial Service for Covid-19." It commemorated the milestone reached Feb. 22 when the United States surpassed 500,000 deaths due to the coronavirus. Over 1,200 coronavirus deaths were reported

Feb. 22, bringing the nationwide total to 500,103. More than 28.2 million Americans have been infected by the virus. Also, as of Feb. 22, close to 13% of the U.S. population has received the first round of the COVID-19 vaccine, and about 6% of Americans have received both shots.

Vatican official insists religious services are 'essential services'

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — For believers, the ability to practice their faith and receive spiritual guidance are "the highest of essential services," and pandemic practices over the past year have shown they are not automatically super-spreader events, the Vatican foreign minister said. Speaking Feb. 23 during the high-level segment of the U.N. Human Rights Council session in Geneva, Archbishop Paul R. Gallagher said, "There are numerous examples of how the freedom of worship can be guaranteed while taking all the necessary precautions to protect reasonably public safety." Pope Francis, the Vatican and most bishops around the world acknowledged and accepted most of the measures imposed by local and national governments to ensure public health and slow the spread of the pandemic, he said. But some measures have gone so far as to "impinge on the free exercise of numerous human rights. Any limitations on the exercise of human rights for the protection of public health must stem from a situation of strict necessity," he said. "Such limitations must be proportional to the situation, applied in a non-discriminatory fashion and used only when no other means are available."

For Lent, read the Gospel, fast from gossip, pope says at Angelus

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — People should fast from gossiping and spreading hearsay as part of their Lenten journey, Pope Francis said. "For Lent this year, I will not speak ill of others, I will not gossip and all of us can do this, everyone. This is a wonderful kind of fasting," the pope said Feb. 28 after praying the Sunday Angelus. Greeting visitors in St. Peter's Square, the pope said his advice for Lent included adding a different kind of fasting "that won't make you feel hungry: fasting from spreading rumors and gossiping. And don't forget that it will also be helpful to read a verse from the Gospel every day," he said, urging people to have on hand a pocket-size edition to read whenever possible, even if it is just a random verse. "This will open your heart to the Lord," he added.

New NBA player credits his faith, family, school

BY JOHN SHAUGHNESSY

INDIANAPOLIS (CNS) — On the day his dream came true, Desmond Bane stood in front of the modest home where he grew up, wanting to pay tribute to all the people who supported him along the way.

Flashing a huge smile, the 22-year-old Bane created a video that focused on his family, his friends and all his supporters in his hometown of Richmond.

In that emotional moment, Bane thought of his great-grandparents — how he had lived with them since he was 2, how they loved him, and how they guided him to live a life rooted in faith, hard work and humility.

In the background, the video also captured a glimpse of the driveway where he had been playing basketball since he was 3, where he and his friends played countless games, and where he dreamed of playing in the NBA.

Now that dream was within hours of becoming a reality on Nov. 18 — the day of the NBA draft. Looking into the camera, Bane was trying to describe how he was feeling, and what it would mean for him — one of the 20 graduates of the 2016 class of Seton Catholic High School in Richmond — to be drafted.

"You can't really put it into words," Bane said into the camera. "It's starting to hit now. I mean, looking here at the home I grew up in, being in the city I grew up in, my family here, close friends here. It's indescribable, it's indescribable."

Later that night, in that same house, Bane sat next to his great-grandmother, Fabbie, in a room filled with family and friends, watching the televised broadcast of the NBA draft.

And when the NBA commissioner announced that Bane was the last pick of the first round, the room erupted in cheers, smiles and pure joy as Bane hugged his great-grandmother.

The only regret of the day was that his great-grandfather, Bob, wasn't physically part of the celebration. He died July 20 after contracting COVID-19.

Still, Bob's photo was prominently displayed on a table in front of where Bane sat. And he had the feeling that his great-grandfather — who was one of his coaches in his youth — was with him, celebrating the dream that came true.

Fast-forward to Jan. 31 — two days before Bane returned home to Indiana as a member of the Memphis Grizzlies, to play for the first time against the team he rooted for as a child and a youth, the Indiana Pacers.

Less than two months into the season, Bane was already being hailed by NBA analysts as "among the surprises of the 2020 rookie class."

In a game against the San



CNS photo/Jesse Johnson, USA TODAY Sports via Reuters

Desmond Bane of the Memphis Grizzlies shoots the ball in the first half against the Minnesota Timberwolves at the Target Center in Minneapolis Jan. 13. Bane is a 2016 graduate of Seton Catholic High School in Richmond, in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Antonio Spurs Jan. 30, he helped the Grizzlies to a 129-112 win, hitting six of eight shots, including all 3 three-pointers that he took. Yet the next day in a phone interview with *The Criterion*, newspaper of the Indianapolis Archdiocese, Bane approached his strong start to the season with humility.

"If I said it was easy, I'd be lying to you," he said. "It's been an extreme learning curve. We've had some injuries and some other things come up, and I've had the opportunity. I've tried to make the most of it."

That approach defines Bane. He played at one of the smallest high schools in Indiana and became an Indiana All-Star.

He received only one scholarship offer to continue playing at a major college — Texas Christian University — and he was named to the Big 12's all-conference first team in two seasons.

And now he's in the NBA, making a significant contribution as a rookie.

He has made "the most of it" at every turn, yet he deflects the credit back to his great-grand-

parents.

"My great-grandparents did a great job of instilling values in me," said Bane, who makes a point of calling his great-grandmother at least once a day and usually twice.

"It's indescribable the things I learned from them. There's not a lot of stuff they haven't seen. The experiences they've seen helped me think about life and what you want to get out of it."

For Bane, that goal includes making the most of his Catholic faith.

"It serves as my backbone when things are going great and not going great," he said. "You always have it to lean on. I wouldn't be where I am without it."

As the principal of Seton Catholic High School, John Markward has seen how Bane lives his faith.

"I am truly amazed by Desmond's faith and passion. When he is in town, you will always see him at church," said Markward, a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond.

"He is not afraid to post

something about God on social media, and he praises God for his blessings. In today's society, there are many people that would shy away from this for fear of being viewed differently."

On the day of the NBA draft, Bane returned to the Seton Catholic gym to talk to the current students about his journey — his way of giving back for what he calls "the close-knit connection" he had with students and staff during his four years there.

"I told them I was sitting in those same seats as them not long ago," Bane said about the basic theme of his talk. "I told them, 'Whatever dream you have, do it, and you'll live a happy life.'"

Living your dream is just part of his approach to life. Living your life with character is equally important to him. A predraft analysis of him noted, "Bane is regularly praised for his character and approach to the game."

"Character is huge, whether you play basketball or not," Bane said. "The person you are will last longer than playing basketball. My great-grandmother instilled that in me at an early age. Whether it's the janitor or the CEO, you treat them all with respect."

Markward said Bane "has remained a humble person throughout his journey. His approach to life, how he treats others and his faith are admirable."

Josh Jurgens, the head coach of Seton Catholic High School's boys' basketball team, said Bane is "always that person who wants to make everyone around him better."

"He was the first player in the gym and the last one to leave," he told *The Criterion*. "When you have that out of your best player, it's easy to hold everyone else accountable."

Jurgens noted his 9-year-old son, Tripp, is the proud owner of a Desmond Bane Memphis Grizzlies' jersey. As a father, Jurgens views Bane as a worthy hero for his son.

"He's an old soul raised by his great-grandparents," Jurgens said. "They raised him right, for sure. He listened to what they taught him about becoming a better person, staying humble, working hard and being kind to people. He took all that to heart. He gives back. He doesn't forget people or where he came from."

Bane says he never could.

"The people who I have in my career and my life are special people. Those are the people I've known my whole life," he said.

"There's no reason to act differently because of the position I'm in now. I'm extremely grateful for the position I'm in, and I'm extremely grateful to have those people around me. They've been following me my whole life and make me feel supported."

Shaughnessy is assistant editor of The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.



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Walking with Moms in Need —

Initiative asks parishioners to be Christ's p

BY KEVIN KILBANE

For Jackie Oberhausen, the idea behind the U.S. Catholic bishops' new Walking with Moms in Need initiative is clear.

"We all are our brother's keeper," said Oberhausen, the Walking with Moms in Need committee administrator at Our Lady of Good Hope Parish in Fort Wayne. "If we are going to proclaim we are pro-life in word, it also has to be in deed."

That means investing the time and effort to serve as a support system for pregnant women and for mothers with children.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has asked each American parish to develop its own Walking with Moms in Need ministry. The initiative is inspired by St. Pope John Paul II's encyclical "Evangelium Vitae" ("The Gospel of Life") and its 25th anniversary in 2020.

Along with encouraging more pregnant women to choose life, the Walking with Moms in Need initiative also has the potential in Indiana to reduce infant mortality — the death of a child before age 1. The state and various organizations have been working in recent years to reduce Indiana's infant mortality rate, which had ranked among the highest in the nation.

Planning underway

The bishops urged parishes to start planning their Walking with Moms ministry in March 2020 with a goal of launching it in March 2021. The novel coronavirus pandemic disrupted that timetable, forcing parishes in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and elsewhere to delay organizing their Walking with Moms ministry.

Many parishes in the diocese now have started the planning process, said Katy Burke, associate director for the diocese's Marriage and Family Ministry.

U.S. bishops asked their parishes first to identify existing resources in the area so information can be provided to pregnant women and mothers with children. They then encouraged parishes to fill gaps in their community's resources, and to extend that help into the community beyond the parish. To assist the parishes, the USCCB posted information and planning aids at walkingwithmoms.com.

The Fort Wayne-South Bend diocese also has created its own Walking with Moms website, walkingwithmomsfwsb.com. It includes basic information and links to a community resource guide compiled by St. Joseph Community Health Foundation

for the Fort Wayne area and to the HerMichiana resource guide for the South Bend area.

Help parishes can offer could range from spiritual and emotional support and financial assistance to providing basic necessities or just serving as a listening ear, Burke said.

"It's a great way to take care of baby and to support mother and make sure she is being taken care of," she added.

Parishes can collaborate to provide help, Burke noted. For example, if one parish already has a strong young moms support group, nearby parishes could refer their mothers to that group.

Parishes also can support the work of social service providers such as Catholic Charities and Women's Care Center.

"Catholic Charities has a rich history of assisting mothers in need for the past 99 years," said Gloria Whitcraft, chief executive officer of the Catholic Charities organization in this diocese.

"The Walking with Moms in Need initiative brings together the professional services of organizations like Catholic Charities and the support of the faithful in parishes so that, as a Church, we are accompanying mothers and children who may otherwise feel alone, scared and unsure of where to turn for help."

Burke hopes parishes will continue the Walking with Moms ministry on a long-term basis.

Getting started

St. Jude Parish in Fort Wayne has begun gradually rolling out its Walking with Moms in Need ministry.

"We are asking the Holy Spirit to guide us," said Amy Delaney, a parish member who leads the volunteers planning their outreach.

Pastor Msgr. Robert Schulte introduced the Walking with Moms initiative to the parish in October and has been a strong supporter, Delaney said.

After identifying community resources already in place, such as Women's Care Center locations, she and other volunteers found the list almost overwhelming. They are compiling community resources information for parish staff and creating a user-friendly resources guide for Walking with Moms volunteers.

Right now, however, they believe parish members can best assist moms through prayer and personal relationships with expectant mothers, Delaney said.

Walking with Moms in Need prayer cards created by the USCCB have been placed at the back of St. Jude Church, and parishioners are encouraged to take one home to pray for



USCCB

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops created this prayer card to encourage parishioners to pray for pregnant mothers. St. Jude Parish in Fort Wayne is among the parishes that have bought the cards, placed them at the back of the church and encouraged parishioners to take one home to pray for pregnant women.

expectant mothers, she said. Her organizing group also has begun recruiting more volunteers to walk with expectant mothers on a one-on-one basis during what can be a stressful journey to birth.

Getting the word out

At St. Pius X Parish in Granger, information about the Walking with Moms ministry is in bulletins and on its website and social media, said Barb Williams, a member of the organizing committee and chair of the parish's Respect Life ministry. Priests also have been

given business cards containing information about the ministry, which they can pass out to people in need during confession, Williams said.

The parish plans to offer person-to-person support once the danger from the coronavirus pandemic has eased.

St. Pius wants moms experiencing a crisis pregnancy or challenges with their children to know help is available and that their church family is there to support them, Williams said.

Their planning group has found the biggest challenge facing women is a lack of awareness about what help and sup-

port is available, she said. Along with South Bend-area community resources, St. Pius also plans to connect women with some of its own ministries.

The Stephen Ministry, for example, walks with people as a caring friend, she said. The Elizabeth Ministry has about 100 volunteers who help women or mothers by doing things such as delivering meals, offering babysitting, doing laundry or mowing a family's lawn while they are with a sick child at Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis, said Brie Milligan, a volunteer who leads the Elizabeth Ministry and who

presence for pregnant women and mothers

Learn more about Walking with Moms in Need

walkingwithmoms.com or
walkingwithmomswsb.com

Walking with
Moms in Need



also serves on the Walking with Moms planning committee.

Sharing Christ's presence

At least two other parishes also are far along in their planning.

Our Lady of Good Hope hopes to launch its Walking with Moms in Need ministry March 25, the feast of the Annunciation. The feast celebrates Mary learning of and accepting God's plan for her to become the mother of His son, Jesus Christ.

Our Lady of Good Hope plans to focus initially on helping women who live within the parish's geographic boundaries, said Oberhausen, the Walking with Moms planning committee administrator and a pastoral associate at the parish.

They also have learned that a gap in local community resources is personal relationships — having someone there to hold your hand or advocate for you, she said. By coming alongside that woman, she added, Christ becomes present to the mother through the volunteer.

The planning committee has developed an interactive, informational flyer about Walking with Moms that can be used on the parish website, she said. Members plan to place a printed version of the flyer at various locations in their area.

The committee developed a separate flyer that explains the ministry and how people can volunteer with or donate to it.

"A lot of times," Oberhausen said, "there are people who want to do something but they don't know what they want to do. They just need to be invited."

A PRAYER FOR PREGNANT MOTHERS

O Blessed Mother, you received the good news of the incarnation of Christ, your Son, with faith and trust. Grant your protection to all pregnant mothers facing difficulties.

Guide us as we strive to make our parish communities places of welcome and assistance for mothers in need. Help us become instruments of God's love and compassion.

Mary, Mother of the Church, graciously help us build a culture of life and a civilization of love, together with all people of good will, to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and lover of life.* Amen.



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with Moms assistance by placing information in the church gathering area and by setting up online links for women who don't go to St. Anthony, Pulver said.

"Our church should be the beginning of the support system," she added, noting her parish also has identified a need for mentors for pregnant women and young mothers.

Mentoring can be where parishes have the greatest impact, said Kim Ryall, executive director of the Compassionate Pregnancy Center locations in Angola and LaGrange.

Ryall said her centers provide many services to women, ranging from ultrasounds and pregnancy tests to education sessions and parenting classes. What seems to make the biggest difference in a young woman's future is having an ongoing and trusting personal relationship with an advocate. Ryall believes it will be very helpful for her center to be able to refer women to a program like Walking with Moms in Need at St. Anthony.

Her other advice for parishes: Young women do almost all of their communication and research using their smartphones. So, all information about Walking with Moms should be available in a digital format.

U.S. bishops and local diocesan officials understand developing and continuing the Walking with Moms ministry may be a challenge for some parishes, the diocese's Burke said. They hope all parishes will attempt to help, even if only holding a monthly diaper collection drive or collecting funds for a women's shelter. She encourages parishes to dream big and use the talents of the people in their pews.

"No one parish is going to be able to do it all," Burke said. "But everyone can do something."



We thank you,
heroic mothers,
for your
invincible love!

The Gospel of Life, 86

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USCCB

This social media graphic is one of the resources created by the USCCB to help parishes across the country reach out to help pregnant women and mothers through the Walking with Moms in Need initiative.

The back of the prayer card created by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for use with the Walking with Moms in Need ministry features a prayer.

In addition, she said the parish plans to take up a collection to help the ministry buy items women may need, such as diapers, baby wipes, and baby clothes and shoes.

Our Lady of Good Hope is creating a template for how they organized their Walking with Moms ministry so it can be used by other parishes, if interested, she said.

Being an advocate

St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Angola, which includes St. Paul Chapel in Clear Lake, hopes

to start its Walking with Moms ministry in May, possibly around Mother's Day, said Shelley Pulver, the planning team leader who is active in the parish's pro-life efforts.

Planning team members are completing an inventory of existing resources in the Angola area and compiling the information into a database that can be updated, Pulver said. Parishes outside of the Fort Wayne and South Bend metropolitan areas have to develop their own local resource inventory.

The planning team hopes to make women aware of Walking

USCCB

Sisters' Storybook Corner exudes joy of vocation

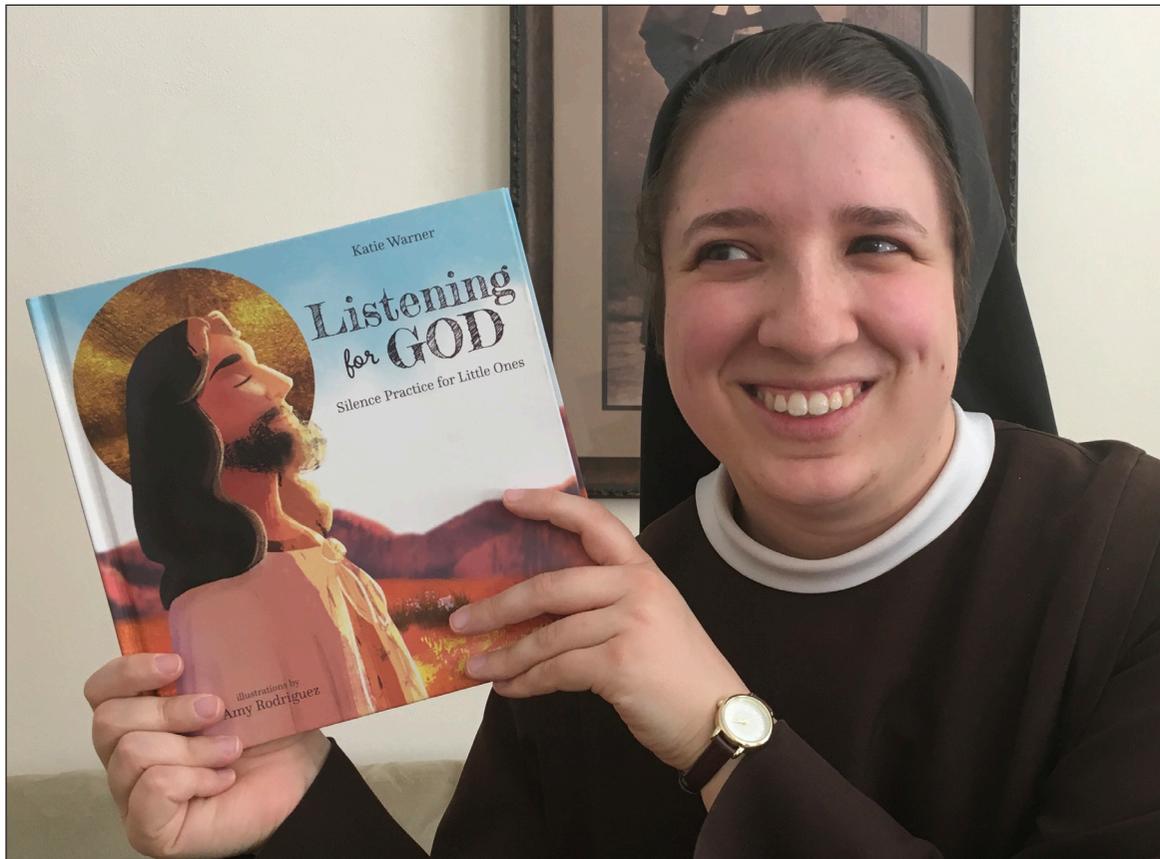
BY JENNIFER BARTON

The Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration in Mishawaka have taken on an additional duty in their vocational life this winter – serving as storytellers for children of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Beginning with Christmas stories in December, the sisters have created around 20 videos of themselves reading children's stories in what is called the Storybook Corner.

The idea came about when Carl Loesch, secretary for Catholic Education, “tried to think of a way to bring the sisters to our schools,” despite that fact that in-person school visitors are limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He contacted Sister Marie Morgan, OSF, to ask if she would be willing to take on a project to reach out to schoolchildren in a different way. A month later, Sister Regina DeVreese, OSF, responded with the first of the videos.

“We started with the Christmas ones because it was the Christmas season and we had lots of decorations up in our convent, so we had that for the scenery,” Sister Regina explained. Many of the first books they read were in the possession of St. Francis Convent, but later a collaboration with Mary Dlugosz, librarian at Marian High School, Mishawaka, and her daughter, a teacher at Our Lady of Hungary School in South Bend, allowed the sisters to borrow more popular children's stories to read. The types of books vary based on what the sisters receive, though at some point they hope to be able to take requests from students — provided they can borrow the requested book from local contacts.

While the sisters enjoy reading the fun children's stories, they say that the greater purpose behind the videos is to show



Sister Mary Bosco Davis, OSF, takes great pleasure in reading stories for young children's enjoyment. She and her fellow Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration in Mishawaka have compiled a series of videos of themselves reading children's books that can be viewed on the Fort Wayne-South Bend diocesan website.

young people bits of the convent and aspects of the religious life. Sister Regina commented, “If kids aren't seeing sisters, they might not think it's a possibility to give their life to God. Hopefully, that awakens the desire in them to give their life to God, or even just to listen to Him and pray more often or grow in their friendship with Jesus.”

Loesch has long felt blessed by his many personal connections with the Sisters of St. Francis and wanted to bring the love that he has for them to others, he said. “My hope is that the recordings of sisters reading stories may in a small way help children to connect with the sisters, to share their joy and to see the beauty of a vocation well lived.”

The videos demonstrate the sisters' deep love for God and for others, as well as their zest for life. Through the videos, students also get to see inside the motherhouse in Mishawaka, which serves as a lovely backdrop to the stories.

Sister Regina, who was placed in charge of the project, said that she has worked to bring in as many of the sisters as she could. “I think each sister has her own unique gifts and joy and person-

ality that she brings to the video and every sister is such a delight for me to be with and watch. I'm having a lot of fun just being with them.”

The sisters who have participated agree that the experience has been a blessing for them. “It's been really fun to see,” said Sister Lissetta Gettinger, OSF. “We like children's stories and seeing the creativity that has come along with that.”

Being called upon to read to

children is a “delight” for Sister Mary Bosco Davis, OSF. “I think it's fun because you get to do accents and things. ... I thoroughly enjoy it. It's fun to see the different styles the sisters bring to each book.”

Sister Mary Bosco normally serves as a teacher in Lafayette but was recalled to the motherhouse due to the pandemic. She is comfortable working with young people and often thinks of her students as she reads, she said. She's also known for animating the stories with the aid of props such as a stuffed Paddington Bear.

One of Sister Regina's favorite videos is a taping of the book “Saintly Rhymes for Modern Times.” Around a dozen of the sisters contributed to that taping, each introducing one of their favorite saints to young listeners.

All of the videos are collected on the diocesan website, and Loesch said they have been shared with the Catholic schools of the diocese and with some other families who have young children. “I've heard that their children love watching the videos. I have to admit that each time I watch a new recording, I find myself smiling at the joy that the sisters convey.”

The sisters have no timeline for when they will stop making recordings, but Sister Regina noted that “our foundress's motto is ‘He leads, I follow,’ and I had no idea this project was coming; I had no idea what it would become, so we're just going along with it as it happens.”

The videos may be viewed at diocesefwsb.org/storybook-corner.

Catholic Kid's Corner

“Let the little children come to me.” Mt. 9:14

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

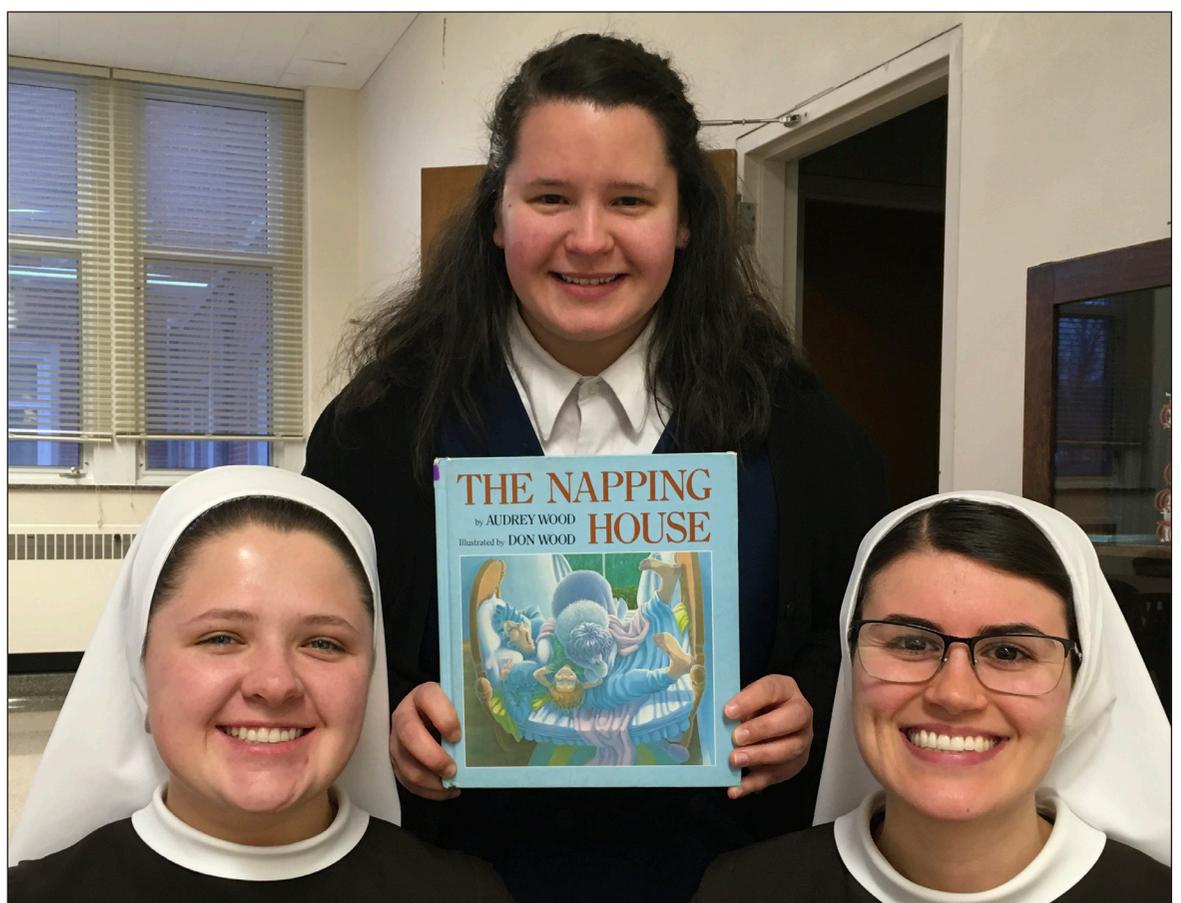
This week, I will follow Jesus by:

Write your commitment in the box above then color in the footprint each day you take that step to walk with Jesus!

Find other faith-based activities and printables posted at the beginning of each month at todayscatholic.org/kids

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Novice Sister of St. Francis M. Chiara Luce, postulant Bri and novice Sister M. Emmanuel will read “The Napping House” in upcoming weeks.

Light of Christ shines in Catholic schools administration

BY COLLEEN SCHENA

The annual Mother Theodore Guerin Award, given to two administrators during the You Can Lend a Hand Luncheon each year, honors a principal on each side of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend who embodies the Christ-focused tenacity of St. Mother Theodore Guerin, administrator of the first Catholic school established in the diocese in 1846.

In lieu of public recognition at the annual January luncheon, which was canceled due to the pandemic, 2021 recipients of the Mother Theodore Guerin Award – Jennifer Veldman of Holy Family School, South Bend, and Robert Sordelet of St. Charles Borromeo School, Fort Wayne – were celebrated by their schools with decorated office doors and cards from faculty and students.

Veldman, entering her 10th year in Catholic education, is a first-time recipient of the Mother Theodore Guerin award. Being able to intertwine her faith and her role as administrator has been one of her many joys since switching from public to Catholic schools as a teacher, she said.

She began her Catholic school career with three years instructing kindergartners at Christ the King School in South Bend. Veldman transitioned to a kindergarten position at Holy Family in 2015 and also expressed interest in the work of Joseph Miller, a certified administrator who was at Holy Family at the time. Seeing precisely the path Veldman was anticipating, Miller created an assistant principal position and hired her. "It's honestly divine intervention at its best," Veldman marveled. "God puts the right people in your life at the exact moment they need to be."

When Miller became the administrator at St. Adalbert School in South Bend in 2017, Veldman accepted a role as Holy Family interim principal for the six months; she is now in her fourth year as principal at Holy Family.

Some of her fondest memories and favorite experiences come from the simple joys of being a principal, she said, "any day that I can go into a classroom and read a book or be a part of their lesson. The best thing for me is to make it personal. To really get to know your students and staff is ultimately what makes the building thrive."

"I absolutely love every moment. Through prayer and hard work and determination, you wake up the next day and are ready to take it on."

Colleagues of Veldman commended her ability to support her students, teachers, faculty and staff while keeping Christ at the center of all they do. "She is a wonderful example of serving others with determination, com-



Provided by Jennifer Veldman
Principal Jennifer Veldman receives a surprise from her Holy Family School community after she was honored with the diocesan Catholic schools' Mother Theodore Guerin administrative award for 2021. "It makes me so emotional because this right here, this is how I want everyone in our school to feel," she said. "Everyone here just goes above and beyond for each other."



Provided by Robert Sordelet
Robert Sordelet, who also received the Mother Theodore Guerin Award this year, poses with congratulatory door decorations hung by his students and faculty and teachers at St. Charles Borromeo School, alongside cards they made. "Everyone was so good to me about it. It's a blessing to serve in a Catholic school," Sordelet said.

the school." The students he has worked with have been continual sources of joy and inspiration for him too, he said: "There's a joy to their lives, and it's beautiful."

Sordelet is a legacy at St. Charles Borromeo, being part of a continued family presence at the school and parish. One of his mentors and pillars as an administrator has been Sister Genevieve Raupp, OSF, whom he had first met as a fifth grade student.

He graduated from Bishop Dwenger High School and found himself furthering his education in New Mexico on the Navajo reservation, teaching high school students during the week and playing "a lot of basketball" with residents on his weekends.

He took a position teaching English conversation in Japan for a year and returned to the Fort Wayne area to serve as a teacher at New Haven's St. John the Baptist School. While teaching – and through his first year as principal – Sordelet finished his master's in education at what is now Purdue University Fort Wayne.

Since his entry into administration 25 years ago, Sordelet has become an advocate for school safety, a humble mentor and a common sight for both school and parish families of St. Charles Borromeo. St. John the Baptist principal Zachary Coyle called him "tireless" and "a man for Christ." He's grateful, he added, for Sordelet's mentoring and guidance.

Peer-selected from the diocesan principals for their emphasis on service and leadership, Veldman and Sordelet said they are "extremely thankful" for the recognition. Yet the first thing both recipients emphasized was that each and every one of the diocese's administrators deserve the same honor and praise.

"Everyone deserves this award this year because everyone has worked exceptionally hard during this tiring year," Veldman said.

Sordelet agreed. "This award could have gone to any principal this year in the diocese. We have good people who have been working so hard this year to keep their schools going."

passion and courage," praised St. Anthony de Padua School principal Karen Bogol. "We are blessed to have her as a colleague and an advocate for our Catholic school community."

Sordelet, a second-time recipient of the award, welcomed the opportunity of receiving the honor so he could highlight the graciousness and service of the community at St. Charles Borromeo and the faithfulness of the parish community. "No matter what we need, they continually support the mission of

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Them's fighting words!

When Father Angelo Bianchi, a wonderful Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions missionary, married my wife and me, he gave us some bad advice.

Oh, it sounded good at the time. "Don't ever go to bed angry," he told us in front of many witnesses.

What my wife and I learned over many years of marriage was just the opposite: When you are angry, go to bed. The odds are, things will look different after a good night's sleep. And if there is still an argument to be had, it will likely be at a lower volume.

Maybe this advice won't work for everybody. Maybe I'm the only husband who gets cranky when he's tired, but I doubt it.

I've been thinking about anger and fights lately. We don't seem to do it very well in our Church. We don't seem to do it very well in our society. Clergy and laity throwing shade. Politicians calling each other names. Our arguments rarely seem truly constructive.

The snark and the bile, the public smackdowns and the passive-aggressive digs remind me more of middle school boys fighting on a playground. The past four years we saw a lot of this, but it certainly didn't start or end there.

Maybe a few lessons that happily married couples have learned over the years might help.

Like avoid the kitchen sink arguments. That's when you bring up all the things that really tick you off. You start out arguing about the housework, and

you end up arguing about the vacation and the car and the kids and the dog. Don't try to settle every score, or you won't settle any.

And while you're at it, don't re-litigate all the old fights from days gone by. Keep focused on the matter at hand that needs addressing.

Pay attention to what your spouse is saying rather than just thinking of the quick putdown in response. When nothing else works, try listening.

Always avoid generalizations that begin with "you always" or "you never." They're probably not true and certainly not helpful if you really are hoping to win your partner over.

It is particularly helpful to keep the gloves on, which most certainly doesn't seem to be a rule for politics these days. Savvy spouses know when to shut up and when not to stab at a sore spot with a little dig. It might feel good in the moment, but it almost always comes back to haunt you.

And if the couple is fortunate enough to be parents, always remember who is watching when you argue.

On the one hand, it's not good if you act as if a marriage never has conflict and you suppress your differences. What you want to do is model for your children how arguments and disagreements can be had without going nuclear, and how to make up after the disagreement is vented.

When they are in their own relationships someday, they will thank you for it.

Maybe this advice won't be



AMID THE FRAY

GREG ERLANDSON

that useful in society as a whole these days. A lot of what passes for debate and argument in our public life is really just sound and fury anyway, signifying very little of substance. It's talk radio. It's social media. It's the fury of the self-righteous.

On the other hand, there have got to be adults somewhere who know how to have a civil disagreement, even over very important issues, without bringing the house down on top of them.

Of course, my wife had an alternative solution to handling our marital disputes. "Just admit I'm right," she said.

Yes, dear.

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

The resurrection of the body

Our students are back on campus, and it has been a breath of fresh air. We asked them to quarantine for the first two weeks of the semester, since they were coming from all parts of the country and some of them would undoubtedly be shedding the virus.

During this period, we conducted classes by Zoom. Last Monday, I met my students in person for the first time. They are freshmen, and I have known them only as little electronic images on my office computer.

We are observing all the COVID-19 proprieties. Desks are 6 feet apart. Everyone wears a mask. I even have a free-standing plexiglass sneeze guard that I can stand behind. It makes me feel like I'm in an aquarium.

When the students filed into class, they looked different from what I had imagined they would. Several were much taller. A few got dressed up for the occasion. There was a warmth to the gathering, as many of them also met in person for the first time.

It's not yet like former days. Though some of them are cute, face masks are a real barrier to interpersonal relations. Bank robbers wear them because they make it hard to identify people. So too with my class. It took me several days to recognize students just by their eyes and hair.

And it's still hard to tell what they are thinking. We have begun to apprehend that people on the autism spectrum communicate and read facial



INTELLECT AND VIRTUE

JOHN GARVEY

expressions differently from neurotypical people. This often leads to misunderstanding in both directions. Masks make reading faces nearly impossible, not just difficult.

For those of us with glasses, it's even harder. Mine fog up when they're inside my mask. Then there's no seeing in or out.

And of course, nobody touches these days. Hugs may have stopped when Joe Biden's critics went after him in 2019. But in the time of COVID-19, we can't even shake hands. That has been a hard habit for me to break. I can't get into elbow bumps or the Vulcan salute.

So we're not all the way back, but our return to something approximating in-person instruction has been a kind of miniresurrection. The university and its people have, as it were, come back to life. And it has been a reminder that our bodies are an essential part of what it means to be human.

Our prolonged time online has naturally focused attention on developments in artificial intelligence. We have taught machines

GARVEY, page 13

The Ten Commandments: God's pattern for our lives



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Third Sunday of Lent John 2:13-25

The Book of Exodus is the source of the first biblical reading this weekend. This book is about the Hebrew people, enslaved and dreadfully mistreated in Egypt. Eventually, they escaped from Egypt and found their new homeland.

None of this good fortune, of escaping and of ultimate settlement in a land of their own, happened as a result of coincidence, luck or human strategy. Rather, God's power led the Hebrews to a successful escape from Egypt. Moses, their leader in this endeavor, was God's representative, chosen by Him for the task.

As the flight was underway and the people wandered across the bleak Sinai Peninsula in search of the land God had promised them, Moses received from God, and gave to the people, what long has been called the Ten Commandments.

By observing these commandments, the people fulfilled their obligations under the Covenant and also found the path to peace and justice in life given by God, a path that they themselves could not have devised.

St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians supplies the second reading. For people living in the first century A.D., the proclamation and the deification of a convicted felon was hard to accept.

The Jews, suffering under Roman oppression and enduring so much, were not so apt to revere Roman law or to see profound wisdom and justice in the system established to enforce Roman law. Corinth's Christians, however, many of whom had been pagans, regarded Roman jurisprudence to be supremely wise. Yet, a Roman court tried and convicted Jesus of high trea-

son. The consequence of treason, again as set forth in Roman law, was death by crucifixion — for persons who were not citizens of Rome itself.

Paul asserts that Jesus, the convicted felon, is the key to salvation. He admits that this reality is a "stumbling block for the Jews, and an absurdity for the Gentiles. It was glorifying a condemned convict.

For its Gospel reading, the Church this weekend furnishes us with St. John's Gospel. This reading recalls the time when Jesus, shortly before Passover, entered the temple precincts and found a brisk traffic underway in the things needed for ritual sacrifice.

Furious, as described by this Gospel, the Lord drove the merchants away. He then predicted that the temple would fall — in itself a virtual blasphemy — and then made the astonishing announcement that he would rebuild the colossal structure in three days.

It had taken many people many years to build the temple in the first place. Scholars and

leaders later used this occasion to argue that Jesus was a blasphemer and a troublemaker.

The reading establishes Jesus as God's voice, and God's agent. As bystanders watched this happening unfold, they were reminded of God's word in the Scriptures. The Lord's actions reminded them of God.

They do not fully comprehend the Lord's words and actions because they are humans; nothing less, but nothing more.

Reflection

Lent reminds us of our humanity, but, everlastingly, it is hard for humans to admit their human limitations. Admitting our limitations frightens us and puts us in our place.

To compensate, we celebrate our human accomplishments. We congratulate ourselves, for example, on the brilliant insights into the workings of the human body. Then COVID-19 bluntly showed us that we are not as smart as we might wish to be.

We, despite our knowledge, are at the mercy of storms, earth-

quakes and evil decisions. In less critical moments, we are shortsighted and foolish.

God loves us. Amid our inadequacies, He forgives us and redeems us. He gives us Jesus, the Son of God, as our Savior. How do we attain this blessing? In the Ten Commandments, God gave us the pattern of our lives. Obey the Commandments.

READINGS

Sunday: Ex 20:1-17 Ps 19:8-11 1 Cor 1:22-25 Jn 2:13-25

Monday: 2 Kgs 5:1-15b Pss 42:2-3; 43:3-4 Lk 4:24-30

Tuesday: Dn 3:25, 34-43 Ps 25:4-5b, 6, 7bc, 8-9 Mt 18:21-35

Wednesday: Dt 4:1, 5-9 Ps 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20 Mt 5:17-19

Thursday: Jer 7:23-28 Ps 95:1-2, 6-9 Lk 11:14-23

Friday: Hos 14:2-10 Ps 81:6c-11b, 14, 17 Mk 12:28-34

Saturday: Hos 6:1-6 Ps 51:3-4, 18-21b Lk 18:9-14

A wrought-iron meditation

Occasionally, it helps to remember our humanness. It helps to recognize the fragile nature of our shared need to simply breathe. The healthy bluster of team spirit aside, it helps, at times, to lay down our flags and banners to recognize, in all humility, the interdependence of our existence on this spinning planet because the journey we take through the universe is one we take together.

I write these thoughts as a pandemic leaves a trail of emptiness and loss across the globe; heightening our awareness of the tenuous nature of existence; causing us to take stock, wait and re-imagine our connections.

Spending seemingly endless days in a masked dance of awkward social distance, I find my formative years rushing suddenly to mind as I work and teach in a way I've never expected.

It is as if my personal dictum that every aesthetic experience informs all subsequent human experiences is being put to the test, causing me to search through my visual memory for images capable of resonating with my need to cope.

Scanning mentally through the past 67 years, I am reminded of how I came to find my place and purpose by embracing the study of a broad range of creative expression. I realized this most recently as I was preparing an 18th century wrought-iron sculpture of the crucified Christ for potential display. In this singular corpus, the physicality of both subject and material merge in a compelling metaphor for the human condition.

Iron, steel, bronze and brass were integral to my introduction to art as life. I cannot look at a piece of wrought iron without hearing my father's voice describing the beauty and strength of the first iron gate I saw waiting for repair in his workshop. Born in the late 1920s with a keen awareness of the good life being wrapped in a weave of family, faith and purposeful work, my father, the first college-educated member of his family, chose to root his business instinct in the working of metal. He married a painter's daughter and together they raised six children. Artisanshop being an ever-ascending path, my father's growing facility with all forms of metal became written in the texture and color of his hands.

While leaving the need for forging and casting to others, my father's ability to fabricate and refinish became his calling

card. As a child, I was given the freedom to explore his workshop filled with piles of scrap ornamental pieces stacked with an eye toward accessibility, waiting to become whatever he imagined. I came to know the brittle, muted character of cast iron, the glorious visual resonance of weathered bronze, and the lyrical pattern of hammered copper. I learned to appreciate a well-chased casting, the glow of a finely polished brass lamp, and the permeating taste and smell of welding, grinding and buffing.

Though my father worked a minimum of 12 hours a day, six days a week, for nearly all my childhood, he never missed Sunday Mass or dinner, and these priorities seem somehow present in the wrought-iron corpus.

Employed in the making of weapons, tools and functional forms across many cultures, wrought iron, or "worked iron," has been a utilitarian standard since 500 B.C. Iron used in the wrought-iron process is low in carbon content and more fibrous than cast iron, which cannot be formed with a hammer. Wrought-iron work can be as

small as a nail and as large as a city gate. Beyond its intended use, it often consists of twists, turns and flourishes that are at once functional and ornamental.

Occasionally, a master metal worker will smith a figurative work. Artisans in the Congo have been doing so for centuries. Due to the difficulty of maintaining control of a large piece of white-hot iron, most are small, 14 cm to 50 cm, but in the hands of skilled artisans, as with the figure of Christ in front of me, such objects carry an aesthetic weight well beyond the gravitational pull of the material.

Dating between A.D. 1780 and A.D. 1820, the figure is clearly European, most likely forged in the Netherlands, where it appeared in an estate sale. The corpus is 30 cm tall from head to foot. The outstretched arms extend the form to 38 cm with the hands 25 cm apart. Forged independent of a cruciform support, the artist, most likely a master blacksmith, provided a welded loop from which the corpus can be hung in position. It is unknown whether the cross on which this corpus hung was initially wrought iron or wood.

It would have taken several hands to secure the heat-drenched metal as it was shaped: constantly turning and hammering, reheating and tooling. The body, arms, legs and head are

GUEST COMMENTARY

BOB NOWAK

all of one piece. Once a bar of iron, it was heated in the forge, split with hammer and chisel to create arms and legs and then slowly beaten into form. The hair, crown of thorns and the cloth around Christ's mid-section were added after the body was complete.

The figure's rich, burnt-umber hue aside, what is most striking about this sculpture is the face.

The head is long and crowned with a double-wrapped wreath of thorns. The blacksmith's focus is to reclaim the moment following Christ's last breath. With His head turned, falling at a 45-degree angle to the direction of the body, Christ's suffering has passed. With eyes swollen and closed, the lower lip relaxes. Christ's hair, matted and looping down and across His shoulders, is delicately tooled. His beard, scraping the middle of His chest, is full and reminiscent of those early scenes of the crucifixion found in Romanesque paintings and sculptures of 11th century.

A ubiquitous symbol in Catholic practice, many depictions of the Christ crucified are overly sentimental, mass-produced and given less individual attention than a street sign. This image, however, is not among them. It is a word spoken from the heart. An honest gut-wrenching gasp of faith reverberating like the ping of a hammer striking metal. Through it, the maker is clearly seen to be praying in iron.

The process of forging and refining ore is a biblical metaphor for human suffering, something of which I believe these artisans, both master and apprentice, were deeply aware. The power to create form and meaning from inert materials is the artist's lot; none take it lightly. Those who are closest to the elemental nature of materiality, the anonymous blacksmiths and my father among them, nurture a physical relationship with their media; knowing the metal is essential to the creative process.

I believe both the artisan who created this corpus and my father would find common ground in talking about how the work defines the maker as the maker gives form to the work. Undoubtedly, the 18th-century artisan would have experienced the hammering and battering of Jesus' body, pulled deep from a bed of coals 1300-1500 degrees Celsius, as a palpable visual reading of the passion story. There would be no escaping this awareness.

As an image of meditation, whatever transformation this

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for March 7, 2021

John 2:13-25

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

PASSOVER	WENT UP	SHEEP
DOVES	HE MADE	A WHIP
OF CORDS	DROVE	TEMPLE
COINS	MONEY	CHANGERS
WHO SOLD	HOUSE	MARKET
CONSUME ME	SIGN	SHOW US
DESTROY	RAISE	SPOKEN

DROVE OUT

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P N A N A J O A W H I P
F A G E D A M E H D P U
A I S Y L M A R K E T T
S L P S J P T L E D K N
H Y O W O Q M H O U S E
O A K S H V S E F D C W
W U E E C D E S T R O Y
U T N V R U Y R J O I E
S W H O S O L D A P N N
X C C D R O V E D I S O
R F H C H A N G E R S M
O D O C O N S U M E M E
    
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work accomplished for its creator continues in today's visual reading. The paradox of an almighty God sharing in human suffering by submitting to the full measure of human cruelty in an effort to affect a deeper understanding of the gift of our existence, is a rare story among the peoples of the earth.

Regardless of who imagines control of the Christian narrative, the image of Christ's crucifixion endures for this simple, cross-cultural, boundary-jumping reason: All of us will suffer in life, and yet, it need not consume us. Suffering is present at each person's birth and walks with us, accompanied by hope and strength, all of our days. If we, like the Christ, find the courage to set aside our protective barriers

and see our own face in the experience of others, then we will endure.

As the sculpture reveals, occasionally ... it helps to remember our humanness. It helps to personally recognize our shared vulnerability; to gather the strength to reach through the veil of human suffering, and, in so doing, touch at least one hand, so that none may journey through life alone. I can think of no better salve, no better word, and no better image to help heal the loss laid before us.

Bob Nowalk is a teacher at Culver Academies, a college preparatory boarding school in Culver, Indiana. This article is from his blog, The Unintended Curator.

GARVEY, from page 12

to learn on their own and have begun to wonder whether computers, sometime soon, might pass the Turing test, i.e., exhibit intelligent behavior indistinguishable from a human's.

I have my doubts about the prospects for success. But even if a computer could fool me, it would not be human. A human being is a bodily self, not, in Gilbert Ryle's phrase, a ghost in the machine. We come into being when a sperm fertilizes an oocyte. We die when the organism ceases to be.

We don't just communicate with words and symbols. We relate to one another through

smiles and frowns, squints, raised eyebrows, inclination of the head, touches, hugs.

Lent prepares us for celebration of the day when Christ was resurrected bodily. And His resurrection made possible our own. It is an article of faith with Christians that we believe in "the resurrection of the body." It has been so pleasant to interact with real students in class, live and in person, even with the necessary restrictions. I can hardly imagine what it will be like on that happy day foreseen in the creed.

John Garvey is president of The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

Gomez: U.S. bishops' working group set up last November

BY JULIE ASHER

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A special working group of the U.S. bishops formed last November to deal with conflicts that could arise between the policies of President Joe Biden, a Catholic, and church teaching has completed its work, Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez said in a March 1 memo to all the U.S. bishops.

Catholic News Service obtained a copy of the memo issued by Archbishop Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, as a follow-up to a February memo he sent to the bishops explaining the working group's two recommendations given to him in its final report.

The March 1 memo confirms the actions taken on them.

The first of two recommendations made by the working group, he said, was to write a letter to Biden "conveying the USCCB's

eagerness to work with him on issues where we will undoubtedly express strong support, while acknowledging a lack of support on other issues where we cannot agree with anticipated policies."

The second recommendation was to develop "a document addressed to all of the Catholic faithful on eucharistic coherence," the archbishop said.

Archbishop Gomez issued the Biden letter Jan. 20, which was Inauguration Day and Biden was sworn in as the nation's 46th president. "I look forward to working with President Biden and his administration, and the new Congress," the archbishop said. "As with every administration, there will be areas where we agree and work closely together and areas where we will have principled disagreement and strong opposition," he said.

The archbishop said that the bishops hold deep concerns about "many threats to human life and

dignity in our society," including euthanasia, the death penalty, immigration policy, racism, poverty, care for the environment, criminal justice reform, economic development and international peace.

He also expressed hope the incoming administration "will work with the church and others of goodwill" to "address the complicated cultural and economic factors that are driving abortion and discouraging families."

For the U.S. bishops, the "continued injustice of abortion" remains the "preeminent priority," Archbishop Gomez said, but "'preeminent' does not mean 'only.' We have deep concerns about many threats to human life and dignity in our society."

As for developing a document on "eucharistic coherence," as Archbishop Gomez called it, he said this recommendation has been "forwarded to the Committee on Doctrine in the hope that it will strengthen an

understanding and deepen a common faith in the gift that has been given to us in the Sacrament of the Altar."

The reference to "eucharistic coherence" may reflect a growing concern among the bishops regarding Catholic understanding and practice regarding the sacrament.

While there has been fierce debate in some circles, including among bishops, over the reception of the Eucharist when one is not in accord with Church teachings, there also is a deep concern about polling that suggests a confusion or lack of understanding about the Real Presence in Catholic belief and practice.

Archbishop Gomez announced the establishment of this special working group at the end of the public portion of the U.S. bishops' fall general assembly Nov. 16-17, which was held completely online because of the pandemic.

He named Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron of Detroit, USCCB

vice president, to head up the group to address issues surrounding the election of a Catholic president and policies that may come about that would be in conflict with Catholic teaching and the bishops' priorities.

Other members were the chairmen of USCCB committees focused on various policy areas.

"We are facing a unique moment in the history of our country" with the election of Biden, only the second Catholic to become president, Archbishop Gomez said in announcing the group. "This presents certain opportunities but also certain challenges."

Biden has indicated his faith commitments "will lead to certain policies that we favor," Archbishop Gomez said, such as immigration, aid to refugees and the poor, racial justice and climate change, but he supports Roe v. Wade and has said he favors repeal of the Hyde Amendment.

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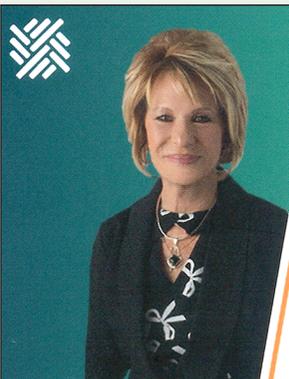
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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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.

The Light Is On For You

DIOCESE-WIDE — This Lent, every parish in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will have confessions available on Tuesday, March 9, from 6-8 p.m. If you have been reluctant to come to the sacrament, have been away for some time, or just find it difficult to get to a Saturday afternoon confession time, this is a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with Christ and His Church.

'The Chosen' watch party

SOUTH BEND — Get to know Jesus like never before! A weekly watch party of "The Chosen," will be Fridays during Lent from 6-7:30 p.m. at St. Thérèse, Little Flower Parish center gym, 4191 Ironwood Rd. "The Chosen" is the first ever, multi-season series about the life of Jesus. Kids and adults of all ages welcome. Contact Abby Kyle at abby@littleflowerchurch.org.

Drive-thru Knights of Columbus fish fry

MISHAWAKA — A Knights of Columbus Council's drive-thru fish fry will be Friday, March 5,

from 5-7 p.m. at Queen of Peace Church, 4508 Vistula Rd. For \$10 receive three pieces of fish, coleslaw, and macaroni and cheese. There are no pre-sales, and this is a first come, first served event.

Original Jonah fish fry drive-thru

MISHAWAKA — St. Bavo Parish, 524 W. 8th St., will have 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.

Drive-thru only fish fry

ARCOLA — St. Patrick Parish, 12305 Arcola Rd., will have a drive-thru only fish fry on Friday, March 12, from 4-7 p.m. at the church in Arcola. Dinner \$10, all-fish \$12 – cash or check only. Contact Patty Denihan 260-625-4151.

Knights of Columbus drive-thru only fish fry

FORT WAYNE — The St. Therese Knights of Columbus fish fry will be drive-thru only on Friday,

March 12, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at 2304 Lower Huntington Rd. Enter from Bluffton Rd. entrance. Jerry's Fish – four pieces, side of tartar sauce, mac-n-cheese, apple sauce and coleslaw for \$7. Call Duane Waterman at 260-403-1534, email at duane.waterman12@gmail.com, to RSVP.

St. Aloysius drive-thru fish fry

YODER — A drive-thru only fish fry will be Friday, March 12, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. at the St. Aloysius parking lot, 14623 Bluffton Rd. Menu includes fish, coleslaw, applesauce, chips, roll and dessert for \$10 per meal. Contact Jennifer Girardot at 260-622-4491.

Solemnity of St. Joseph Prayer Service with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

VIRTUAL — In this Year of St. Joseph, join Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades for a prayer service on the Solemnity of St. Joseph, March 19, at 1 p.m. The prayer service will be livestreamed from the Chapel of St. Joseph at Saint Joseph High School, South Bend. To participate, visit the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend YouTube or Facebook pages by searching @diocesefwsb.

REST IN PEACE

Fort Wayne

Lillian Donahue, 77, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Helen Ehinger, 107, St. Charles Borromeo

Beverly Kosiarek, 80, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Granger

Jude Chiang, infant, St. Pius X

Sandra Woltman, 72, St. Pius X

Huntington
Patricia A. Okuly, 92, SS. Peter and Paul

South Bend

Joann R. Fair, 85, Holy Family

Ray Jurek, 94, Holy Family

Wabash

Donna Burchick, 77, St. Bernard

Ray Hart, 84, St. Bernard

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

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

Saturday, March 13

4:30-7 p.m.

St. Patrick Parish in coordination with the

Knights of Columbus Hall
553 E. Washington, South Bend

Corned Beef Dinner with cabbage, potatoes and carrots **\$14**

Drive-thru or
Dine-in with advance reservations (call 339-2375) for half table of four or full table of eight.

Potato Soup with Soda Bread (2 pcs) **\$6**

Desserts: Bread Pudding, Brownie or Irish cupcake **\$2**



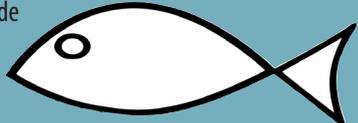
Live Irish Music



Gaelic Dancing

Calling all fish lovers!

The Knights of Columbus Father Solanus Council 11276 is sponsoring a Fish Fry Friday, March 19th from 4-7 PM at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, 10700 Aboite Center Road, Fort Wayne. All meals will be carryout only with drive-through in the school parking lot. Meals will be one size only at a cost of \$10 per meal catered by "Dan's Fish Fry" and will include 6 pieces of hand breaded fish, potato wedges, coleslaw and tartar sauce.



IF YOU HAVE SUFFERED
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ava's grace

SATURDAY, MARCH 27 | 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Via ZOOM

To register, contact Lisa: leverett@diocesefwsb.org
diocesefwsb.org/avasgrace



Now is a great time
to get involved
with Bishop Luers
High School!

LUERS SPIRIT!



The Bishop Luers Alumni Association is accepting nominations to serve on the board of directors. Join us as we connect alumni and students to promote and further the mission of Bishop Luers High School. Applications will be accepted through March 26. Apply here: <https://bit.ly/3qMV7f5>

Questions? Contact John P. Felts at alumni@bishoplurers.org.

Alums! Please support Luers Knight 2021!

See the inserts in the print edition or visit bishoplurers.org/luers-knight-2021.

Go Knights!

RITE, from page 1

into the Church during the upcoming Easter Vigil. He elaborated on God's fatherly love for His children and the unique way that Christians relate to God as a Father.

"In the early Church, the Lord's Prayer was not revealed to catechumens until immediately before their baptism. This was because they would not presume to say the Our Father until they received adoption as God's sons and daughters. Divine sonship is not part of our human nature. We need to be reborn to heavenly life through the power of Christ the Son in order to have that dignity of sonship."

Bishop Rhoades said he has "always been very interested" in understanding how non-Christians view God. He has spoken to Jewish rabbis and Muslim imams about the subject. Neither faith tradition professed to connect with God "in the sense of deep personal intimacy" in the manner that Christians do.

"I mention this because we often don't realize how remarkable it was that Jesus taught the disciples to address God so intimately and affectionately as Abba – Dad.

"So catechumens, how wonderful it will be when you pray the Our Father and address God as 'Our Father' after you are baptized, after you become His adopted children!"

The Gospel passage told the story of Jesus teaching His disciples to pray the Our Father, and Bishop Rhoades expounded on the many aspects of the well-known prayer and what it means to a full member of the Catholic Church to pray it, particularly in relation to the sacraments.

"Catechumens, baptism will be a new beginning in your life, calling God Father in a new way. Throughout the rest of your life, the Christian life, you will grow in this relationship with God our Father through Jesus, the Son, who at baptism becomes your brother. You will grow through your incorporation into His Body, the Church, the community of faith, hope, and love; the community instituted by Christ, the seed and beginning of His Kingdom."

He concluded by expressing his hope that the elect would also "be close to the woman who was 'full of grace,' our Immaculate Mother Mary."

Deacon Jim Tighe assisted the bishop during the Fort Wayne rite, presenting each parish's Book of the Elect for the bishop's signature. In South Bend, Deacon Frederick Everett filled this role. Now known as the elect, those seeking baptism can joyfully anticipate their entrance into the Catholic Church throughout the final few weeks of their preparation.

Kayla Wilhelm, who will be joining the Church at St. John the Baptist Parish in Fort Wayne, attended the Rite of Election with her godmother, Mimi Dietrick. She expressed her eagerness to become Catholic at Eastertime.

Wilhelm came to experience the fullness of the Catholic faith while doing observational training for her teaching degree at St. John the Baptist School. She stated that she enjoyed the atmosphere at the school and experiencing the faith life of those around her. She chose Dietrick as her godmother, for whom she had worked as a nanny and who is "like family now." Wilhelm remains close to Dietrick's children, while Dietrick expressed her own love for Wilhelm's child.

"If I have to be tied to anyone as a Catholic role model for the rest of my life, I want it to be her," Wilhelm said.

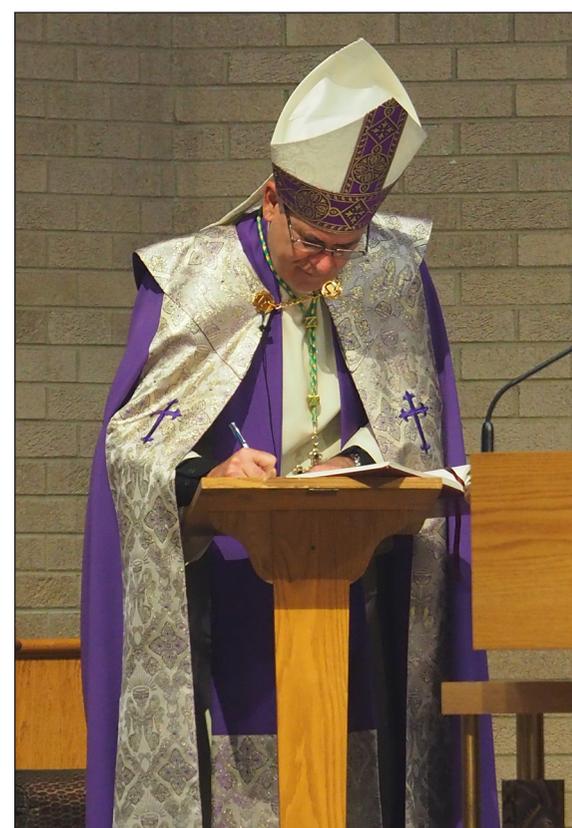
Raymond Gichohi proudly anticipates the moment his son and daughter, Kylan and Sian Gitahi, will be baptized and receive first Communion and confirmation in the Catholic Church at Easter. Both of the children are very excited. Baptism, Gichohi stated, is "the building block" of faith and family life. He brought his family to America from Kenya five years ago to seek a better life and they are now members of St. Pius X Parish in Granger.



Photos by Jennifer Barton

Catechumen Alison Juarez, center, stands with other members of St. John the Evangelist Parish, Goshen, when her name is called during the Rite of Election at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne Feb. 21. She is flanked by her godparents, Jazmin Garcia and Emmanuel Reyes.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades signs the Book of the Elect at St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend during the Rite of Election Feb. 28.



Mimi Dietrick, above left, affirms goddaughter Kayla Wilhelm as she prepares to enter the Catholic Church at St. John the Baptist Parish in Fort Wayne at the Easter Vigil.

During his homily Bishop Rhoades spoke of the love of God as Father to His children, welcoming the elect into the family of God.



Brandon Ballentine professes his intention to accept and practice the Catholic faith at the Rite of Election in Fort Wayne. His wife, Anna, serves as his sponsor.

After the Rite of Election in South Bend, Bishop Rhoades is greeted by a young catechumen from St. Monica Parish, Mishawaka.

