

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 95 No. 14

TODAYSCATHOLIC.org

Fulfillment of the salvific promise

Bishop celebrates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem

Page 2

Divine Mercy Sunday

Plenary indulgence offered April 11

Page 3

Respecting the dignity of life

State legislation clarifies advance directives process

Page 5

Poetry and social justice

Prose reflects Black Catholic's faith experience

Page 9

Armor of God

Encouraging men to embrace God's plan for their lives

Page 10



Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

The Lamb of God is depicted in a stained-glass window in Ancilla Domini Chapel at Lindenwood Retreat & Conference Center. Easter, the feast of the Lamb of God, who by His resurrection conquered sin, is observed Sunday, April 4.

Father Phillip Widmann, 'the good Lord's disciple'

BY JENNIFER BARTON

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has bid farewell to one of its beloved priests. Father Phillip Widmann passed from this life on March 16.

Father Widmann served as a diocesan priest for over 40 years, since his ordination by Bishop William McManus Jan. 15, 1977. An avid scholar of history, he was the driving force behind establishing Diocesan Museum and was instrumental in helping bring about a written history of the diocese, "Worthy of the



FATHER PHILLIP WIDMANN

Gospel of Christ," by Joseph M. White, published in 2007.

According to that work, Father Widmann was inspired to begin collecting artifacts for a museum by Msgr. Thomas Durkin, rector of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception from 1956 until his death in 1977. Pictures, priestly vestments, works of art and numerous other objects formed the collection for the earliest museum, which opened May 17, 1981, in a classroom of the old Cathedral School. The museum is now permanently located in the former chancery building beside the cathedral.

Born in 1941, Father Widmann grew up at St. Peter Parish in Fort Wayne and attended Central Catholic High School, graduating in 1959. Prior to becoming a priest, he was deeply involved in diocesan young adult programs, including Catholic Youth Organization and Catholic Young Adults. He himself said that his vocation came late in life, when he joined the seminary at the age of 30. He graduated from Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, in December 1976 with a master's degree in systematic/

WIDMANN, page 3

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

PUBLISHER: Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Editorial Department

PUBLICATIONS MANAGER: Jodi Marlin
STAFF WRITER: Jennifer Barton
PAGE DESIGNER: Francie Hogan
NEWS SPECIALIST: Mark Weber

Business Department

BUSINESS MANAGER: Jennifer Simerman
BOOKKEEPING/CIRCULATION: Geoff Frank
circulation@diocesefwsb.org
BUSINESS SALES MANAGER: Erika Barron
ebarron@diocesefwsb.org

Website: www.todayscatholic.org
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

MAIN OFFICE: 915 S. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46802. Telephone 260-456-2824. Fax: 260-744-1473.
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:
Today's Catholic,
P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN
46856-1169; or email:
editor@diocesefwsb.org

**Find us on Facebook**

www.facebook.com/todayscatholicFWSB

Follow us on Twitter

@diocesefwsb

Follow us on Instagram

@diocesefwsb

'Hosanna in the highest': Palm Sunday

BY JENNIFER MILLER

"Today, Palm Sunday, we begin Holy Week with our minds and our hearts lifted up to the Lord, focusing on the great event of our salvation: the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus," Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades preached at the Palm Sunday 9 a.m. Mass at St. Matthew Cathedral Parish, South Bend. "I encourage you to take advantage of all the graces of this week, to live these days with special reverence and devotion through prayer and participation in the beautiful liturgies of this week."

With the cathedral's religious art draped in purple, candles lit and incense burning, the high holy days of the liturgical year began.

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord inaugurates the holiest week of the entire year for Roman Catholics. The liturgy itself demonstrates this uniqueness with the proclamation of two Gospel accounts, one of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and another of the Passion narrative. This year, both accounts were from the Gospel of Mark and highlighted an ironic contradiction, as the same crowds that exclaimed "Hosanna" would, in less than a week, shout "Crucify Him!"

Wearing red chasubles as a reminder of Jesus' passion, the entrance procession stopped in the nave of the church, where Bishop Rhoades began the liturgy. The families gathered had numerous children who were delighted at being given something to hold. Palm branches raised and flapping about, the bishop sprinkled them with holy water.

The Liturgy of the Word spoke to the foreshadowing of Christ



Photos by Jennifer Miller

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades sprinkles holy water on the palm branches and faithful, blessing them during the beginning of Palm Sunday Mass of the Passion of the Lord at St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend, March 28.

by the prophet Isaiah, looked ahead to the words of Jesus on the cross on Good Friday and remembered the first Christian hymn as recorded in Philippians. Then the Passion narrative was proclaimed, with various deacons, priests, Bishop Rhoades and the faithful speaking the various voices and parts.

During his homily, Bishop Rhoades opened Scripture and explained how Jesus' actions on the first Palm Sunday fulfilled the salvific promise as foretold in the Old Testament during the time of King David.

"Jesus entering Jerusalem

mounted on a donkey was a bold announcement that He was the Messiah, the new king Jerusalem had been waiting for," he said. "He was the king who entered the city not on a horse or chariot and not carrying any weapons. He entered "meek" and riding on a donkey. This was His kingship. He is the new king who will bring peace, not war. This went against the popular view that the Messiah King would be a warrior who would overthrow the Romans and establish a powerful restoration of David's kingdom. Jesus did, in fact, establish a kingdom, but a kingdom not of this world. He inaugurated the

Kingdom of God, a kingdom of justice, love and peace."

The faithful were encouraged to open their hearts to the King of mercy, who is so different than the kings who have typically ruled the earth.

Bishop Rhoades connected what happened on Palm Sunday 2,000 years ago to the present day.

"At this Mass and at every Mass, we worship Christ our King," he explained. "We sing the same words sung by the people on that first Palm Sunday: 'Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

"And Our Lord comes. Our King, who entered Jerusalem humbly and with meekness, riding on a donkey, comes to us under the humble forms of bread and wine. This is the banquet of our King. It is the sacrifice of our King."

Jesus' kingship is one of humility, one of sacrificial love, one of servant leadership. Following the King requires His disciples to do the same. Everything done to the least of one's brothers and sisters is done to Jesus Himself.

"During this Holy Week, may we give honor and praise to our King, who reigns from the throne of the cross. His royal throne is the wood of the cross," the bishop concluded. "Jesus is our shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep. He is the Son of God who loved us to the end. We are His disciples and we seek to love Him in return. We strive to follow Him along the way of the cross, the path of love. We strive to serve Him in our brothers and sisters, especially in the poor and the needy, the sick and the suffering."

"The Lord says to us: 'Love one another as I have loved you.' This week, I pray we experience anew this love that reached its climax on Mount Calvary."



From the nave, Deacon Michael Ammer proclaims the first Gospel reading while Deacon Keeton Lockwood assists during the liturgy at St. Matthew Cathedral March 28.



Before the close of Mass, Bishop Rhoades imparts his episcopal blessing.

WIDMANN, from page 1

dogmatic theology.

Throughout his years as a priest, Father Widmann served at various parishes in the diocese, including Holy Family in South Bend; St. Mary of the Assumption, Avilla; St. Joseph, Roanoke; and St. Catherine of Alexandria, Nix Settlement, as well as several parishes within Fort Wayne, including his home parish of St. Peter. His last assignment prior to retirement was St. Mary, Mother of God Parish in downtown Fort Wayne.

In addition to his parish assignments, Father Widmann also taught moral theology at Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne, and served as chaplain for its football team and on numerous charitable committees.

History and antiques – particularly those pertaining to the Catholic Church – were his great love. Father Widmann could often be found at the museum he built and whose collection he continued to expand.

Kathy Imler first became acquainted with Father Widmann during his 17 years as pastor at St. Peter. She volunteers as a docent at the museum and spoke of his dedication to preserving and displaying artifacts of the past. She stated that he was in the museum “all the time. He would be here at five in the morning, tacking up vestments or working on displays.”

In addition to his love of history, she said Father Widmann had a great talent for setting up displays of religious artifacts — a much different talent than typical decorating. Imler indicated that he was a man who knew what he wanted and was driven to get things done. He also had a fantastic memory for minute details about each artifact and knew how to separate them by category, she said.

Imler stated, “If there was anything historical, he would

have looked it up; he would have tracked it down. He was insatiable when it comes to getting all that information.”

All of the informational cards in the museum were composed by Father Widmann, and he had a list of people he could call on for the specialized handiwork. He was constantly collecting relics to add to the collections and had recently begun work on two new rooms in the museum. His devotion to Mary will continue to shine through in one of these, which is dedicated to Marian art and artifacts. He frequently said he was grateful to Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades for his support of the museum and for the volunteers who made its continuation possible.

In a letter to the bishop regarding expanding the museum, Father Widmann wrote: “It has been an extra special joy for me because of my love for Holy Mother Church and the saving of her patrimony, but also because of my love of history and antiques. Over the past 43 years, this museum has been the ‘catalyst’ for many to either take a deeper look at Catholicism and convert, or for others to return to the practice of their faith. The number of people who have become Catholic or have returned to the practice of their faith simply because they saw something on display or something gave them good, positive thoughts about the faith or a new or renewed interest in the faith, gave them the necessary push to come home.”

Father Widmann’s funeral Mass, which took place March 11 at St. Peter, was celebrated by Bishop Rhoades. Archbishop William E. Lori of the Diocese of Baltimore, Maryland, a friend and classmate of Father Widmann’s from the seminary, gave the homily. He spoke of the priest as a friend, sharing personal stories of their time

together in the seminary and in the many years thereafter.

Archbishop Lori described their long friendship thus: “Through the years, through thick and thin, we remained friends. We visited one another in the summers, though in hindsight, not nearly often enough. When we spoke on the phone, it was as though the years melted away.”

Of Father Widmann’s priesthood, Archbishop Lori said, “An index of Father Phil’s priestly goodness was his resolve to serve as long as he could.” Even as his health began to decline, “Father Phil kept going, doing all that he could until his physical condition left him no other choice but to retire. Here, I think, he demonstrated a true spousal love for the Church and for his people, loving them ‘for better or for worse, in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health.’”

“Father Phil lived in this passing world with his heart set on the world that is to come. Father Phil expressed this longing for God in his daily prayer, especially the Divine Office, the recitation of the rosary and his devotion to the Eucharist. His prayers, clearly, were not formalistic but rather from the heart. He was not only the Lord’s good priest; he was also the Lord’s good disciple.”

“It was such an honor and a privilege to work with him,” Imler said. She reflected on his sense of humor and dedication, and was humbled by the opportunity to cantor at his funeral Mass. “He had a mission and a purpose that you wanted to be a part of.”

Father Widmann was laid to rest at Catholic Cemetery, but his influence on the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will live on through the work he has done at Diocesan Museum and for the betterment of the diocesan faith community.



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

- Monday, April 5: 7 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, St. Mary of the Assumption Church, Decatur
- Tuesday, April 6: 7 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, St. Joseph Church, Bluffton
- Wednesday, April 7: 7 p.m. — Confirmation Mass of St. Michael Parish, Plymouth, at St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend
- Thursday, April 8: 10 a.m. — Meeting of Seminarian Admission Committee, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne
- Friday, April 9: 3 p.m. — Blessing of Plaza and Statue of St. Katherina Kasper, Ancilla Domini Motherhouse, Donaldson
- Saturday, April 10: 5 p.m. — Memorial Mass for Knights of Columbus Indiana State Convention, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne

Plenary indulgence offered on Divine Mercy Sunday

FORT WAYNE — Through private revelation to St. Faustina, Jesus revealed, “I want to grant a complete pardon to the souls that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion on the Feast of My Mercy. The soul that will go to confession and receive holy Communion will obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment.”

God’s mercy is for all. Everyone in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is invited to participate in the Divine Mercy Sunday Plenary Indulgence April 11.

Q: What is a plenary indulgence?

A: A plenary Indulgence removes all temporal punishment due to forgiven sin. Temporal punishment is the making up for sin to which sinners are obliged after they are forgiven. A plenary indulgence can be applied to oneself or to anyone who is deceased. It can be gained once per day.

Q: How can a plenary indulgence be obtained this Divine Mercy Sunday?

A. Complete all three of the normal conditions for gaining any plenary indulgence: sacramental confession within 20 days of Divine Mercy Sunday, eucharistic communion and prayers for the pope’s Intention. Also, complete one of two specific works required on Divine Mercy Sunday: In any church or chapel, in a spirit that is completely detached from the affection for a sin, even a venial sin, take part in the prayers and devotions held in honor of Divine Mercy. Or, in the presence of the Eucharist exposed or reserved in the tabernacle, in a spirit that is completely detached from the affection for a sin, even a venial sin, recite the Our Father and the Creed, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus such as “Merciful Jesus, I trust in you!”



Jennifer Barton

Archbishop William E. Lori of the Diocese of Baltimore, a former classmate of Father Phillip Widmann’s in the seminary, delivers the homily at his funeral Mass March 16. Father Widmann’s legacy in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend includes the founding of Diocesan Museum, which stemmed from his love of history.

Divine Mercy Sunday

PLENARY INDULGENCE

I want to grant a complete pardon to the souls that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion on the Feast of My Mercy.

Jesus to St. Faustina Kowalska

diocesefwsb.org/divine-mercy-sunday

After Bloody Saturday, Myanmar Catholics pray for peace, those who died

YANGON, Myanmar (CNS) — While Catholics in Myanmar observed Palm Sunday, many in the Buddhist-majority country were crying at the funerals of more than 100 people killed the previous day.

At least 114 people were killed by security forces March 27, the bloodiest day since the military seized power Feb. 1, reported ucanews.com. The day has been labeled Bloody Saturday.

Dozens of victims were bystanders — including children — who were not taking part in anti-coup demonstrations.

Ucanews.com said local media reported a man from Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city, was shot and burned alive by security forces.

Auxiliary Bishop John Saw Yaw Han of Yangon called on Catholics to pray earnestly to bring peace to Myanmar.

"As Christians, we ourselves need to practice the way of justice, and at the same time we need to fight against injustice," the bishop said in a homily March 28.

At Palm Sunday Masses, priests prayed for those who died during the pro-democracy protests, ucanews.com reported.

Cardinal Charles Bo of Yangon recently demanded a stop to the killings in the streets of Myanmar. Pope Francis also has called for an end to the bloodshed.

The military, known as the Tatmadaw, has killed more than 450 people and detained at least 2,000 since the nationwide anti-coup protests began Feb. 6.



CNS photo/Reuters

The body of 11-year-old Aye Myat Thu is pictured during her funeral March 28 in Mawlamyine, Myanmar. The girl was shot and killed March 27 as riot police and anti-coup protesters clashed in Mawlamyine.

The March 27 crackdown took place on Armed Forces Day, formerly known as Revolution Day and a holiday honoring the Tatmadaw, which was founded by Gen. Aung San, the father of national leader Aung San Suu Kyi. Revolution Day marks the date in 1945 when Aung San began the resistance against the Japanese occupying forces during World War II.

The Tatmadaw showed its

might and weapons during a parade in Naypyitaw, the remote capital. Most Western diplomats boycotted the event, although officials from other countries, including China and Russia, attended, ucanews.com reported.

The Tatmadaw justified its coup by citing voting irregularities in November elections that Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won by a landslide. Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, the coup

leader, said the army was determined to protect people from all danger. He pledged to pave the way for democracy and hold new elections without giving an exact time frame.

Bloody Saturday drew strong condemnation from nations around the world and from 12 military chiefs from democratic countries, including Japan.

"A professional military follows international standards for

conduct and is responsible for protecting — not harming — the people it serves," military chiefs said in a statement.

U.S. President Joe Biden called Myanmar's massacre of pro-democracy protesters "absolutely disgraceful."

The EU mission in Myanmar said "it's a day of terror and dishonor" because the killings of unarmed civilians, including children, are indefensible acts.

Tom Andrews, special U.N. rapporteur on Myanmar, said it was time for the world to take action, if not through the U.N. Security Council then through an international emergency summit. He said the junta should be cut off from funding such as oil and gas revenues and from access to weapons.

Ucanews.com reported politicians, activists, students, journalists and ordinary civilians have been terrorized by the Tatmadaw. Soldiers raid homes late at night, randomly shooting at the houses.

Undeterred, young people continue to march into the streets to show their defiance against military rule.

"I believe we will reach our goal through perseverance, despite the journey being tough and facing more bloodshed," said Sister Ann Rose Nu Tawng from Myitkyina, who knelt on the road to plead with security forces not to harm unarmed civilians in February and March.

He is Risen!

Wishing everyone a blessed Easter season from Saint Anne Communities.

Saint Anne
COMMUNITIES
Faith centered. Family focused.

1900 Randallia Drive • Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805 • sacfw.org

Bill seeks to simplify health care advance planning, ease burden for patients and families

As COVID-19 continues to spotlight the importance of health care and end-of-life decision-making like never before, advance directive legislation moving forward at the Statehouse may make it easier for Hoosiers to navigate the process.

Senate Bill 204, a measure that would update and streamline Indiana law concerning health care advance directives, is the culmination of years of work by legislators as well as an alliance of numerous physicians, attorneys and advocacy groups. The Indiana Patient Preferences Coalition has sought to combine and clarify three related statutes that comprise Indiana's current legal framework for advance directives, which are documents that allow individuals to express their treatment preferences in the event of a serious illness or life-threatening situation.

Advance directives also provide people with the opportunity to designate a representative to make decisions on their behalf if they are incapacitated and cannot articulate their wishes themselves. Although the work leading to Senate Bill 204 has been years in the making, the global pandemic has brought the need for clear advance directives into even sharper focus, according to David Mandelbaum, M.D., the chairman of the coalition.

"We have witnessed heart-breaking scenarios week after week for the past year that are going to be difficult to forget – all due to the inadequacies of existing (advance directive) documents or by the lack of documents altogether, often related to the difficulty encountered by those who should be completing them," said Mandelbaum, medical director of palliative care services for Franciscan Health in Indianapolis and Mooresville. "If this bill becomes law, it will establish a best-practice approach to the completion of advance directives in our state, making it easier, more efficient, and less confusing for all Hoosiers."

Indiana's current advance directive laws are outdated, Mandelbaum told members of the House Public Policy Committee during a March 24 hearing on Senate Bill 204. In his testimony supporting the legislation, he was speaking from his experiences in the field of palliative care, which is dedicated to maximizing quality of life for patients facing serious illness.

"While there have been significant advancements made in treatments available to critically ill patients, and while the methods for documenting one's own treatment preferences and priorities have evolved, statutes

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE



BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

related to these matters haven't been meaningfully updated or revised in nearly 30 years," Mandelbaum said.

Senate Bill 204, authored by Sen. Linda Rogers, R-Granger, passed the House committee 10-0 after earlier passing the Senate unanimously on a 46-0 vote. Among other provisions, the bill would remove vague and conflicting cross references in current statutes, create one agreed-upon mechanism for appointing a legal representative, and establish general standards for advance directives.

The legislation has a broad base of support statewide that includes the Indiana Catholic Conference, which collaborated with interested parties on a similar bill in the 2020 General Assembly.

"Respect for the dignity of life is the basis of Catholic social teaching," said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. "Respecting

the dignity of those who may not be able to care for themselves is crucial. We believe that Senate Bill 204 will eliminate some of the confusion that has existed and allow for the wishes of the individual to be fulfilled. This allows for the dignity of the gravely ill or vulnerable person to be maintained and respected."

Ascension St. Vincent ethicist Elliott Bedford, Ph.D., who calls the legislation "a major advancement," said that a simplified and standardized process for advance directives should encourage "essential conversations" regarding health care choices.

"From the Catholic faith perspective, this is a prudent and positive thing to do and a way of witnessing to our faith," said Bedford, director of Ethics Integration for Ascension Indiana and a member of the Hospice and Palliative Care Initiative, a collaboration among the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Ascension St. Vincent and Franciscan Health.

Bedford said he believes that the extreme challenges of COVID-19 have "opened up space" for many people to begin discussing health care planning with their families.

"COVID has certainly brought us face to face with our mortality, not only as individuals but as a society," said Bedford, a member of Our Lady of Mount

Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind. "And that allows us to focus on nailing down simple questions: Who do you want to speak for you? What would your goals and values and highest priorities be? Our faith is the perfect context for these conversations – and our faith actually calls us to do this."

Ideally, he said those discussions should also occur in places like a primary care provider's office – not in the ICU, when it's often too late.

Bedford recognizes that these are difficult topics, but he says that simply starting the conversation is a way of acknowledging what is a normal part of life.

"Ultimately, we believe that this is not the end, and that we are called to life with God in heaven," Bedford said. "Then this becomes a more contextualized conversation, and a natural part of how we express our faith. This is what you do as a Catholic."

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.




CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
 OF NORTHEAST INDIANA
 It's Simple - It's Stewardship - It's Forever
 260-399-1436
 9025 Coldwater Rd. Ste 200
www.ccfnei.org

TRIDUUM LIVESTREAM SCHEDULE

With Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

 <p>Holy Thursday</p> <p>April 1, 7 p.m.</p> <p>YouTube: @StMatthewCathedral</p>	 <p>Good Friday</p> <p>April 2, 1 p.m.</p> <p>YouTube and Facebook: @diocesefwsb</p>	 <p>Easter Vigil</p> <p>April 3, 8:45 p.m.</p> <p>YouTube and Facebook: @diocesefwsb</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

diocesefwsb.org/holy-week

NEWS BRIEFS

Vatican statistics show continued growth in number of Catholics worldwide

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The number of Catholics and permanent deacons in the world has shown steady growth, while the number of religious men and women continued to decrease, according to Vatican statistics. At the end of 2019, the worldwide Catholic population exceeded 1.34 billion, which continued to be about 17.7% of the world's population, said an article published March 26 in the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*. It marked an increase of 16 million Catholics — a 1.12% increase compared to 2018 while the world's population grew by 1.08%. The article contained a handful of the statistics in the Statistical Yearbook of the Church, which reported worldwide church figures as of Dec. 31, 2019. It also announced the publication of the 2021 "Anuario Pontificio," a volume containing information about every Vatican office, as well as every diocese and religious order in the world. According to the statistical yearbook, the number of Catholics increased in every continent except Europe.

Mary comforts all those who die alone, pope says at audience

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Mary, the mother of God, has been present during the COVID-19 pandemic, and she was by the side of all those who died alone, Pope Francis said. "If someone is alone and abandoned, she is the mother and she is there nearby just as she was next to her son when everyone else abandoned him," the pope said March 24 during his weekly general audience. "Mary was and is present in these days of the pandemic, near the people who, unfortunately, concluded their earthly journey in isolation, without the comfort of or the closeness of their loved ones," he said. "Mary is always there, near us, with her maternal tenderness," the pope said. During the audience, which was livestreamed from the library of the Apostolic Palace, Pope Francis continued his series of talks about prayer by looking at prayer in communion with Mary and her role in people's lives.

Ramblers' celebrated chaplain has big fan base in Los Angeles archdiocese

LOS ANGELES (CNS) — By her own admission, "Sister Jean 101" could be the name of an introductory course taught at the Loyola University Chicago these days. The only problem? So many already know the story of Sister

Governor signs death penalty repeal at site of 101 executions since 1991



CNS photo/Victor Pena, Reuters

An arrested criminal is seen in this illustration photo. Outside the prison that housed Virginia's execution chamber, Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam signed legislation March 24 making Virginia the 23rd state to abolish the death penalty. Legislators and anti-death penalty advocates joined the signing ceremony at Greensville Correctional Center in Jarratt, where 101 people have been executed since 1991. Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington and Bishop Barry C. Knestout of Richmond, Virginia, welcomed the new law, as did Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development. "I urge all other states and the federal government to do the same," said Archbishop Coakley.

Jean Dolores Schmidt, who at the ripe age of 101 is still proving to be a force to be reckoned in the NCAA men's basketball tournament. Sister Jean, a member of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, has been the team chaplain of the men's basketball team, the Ramblers, since 1994. A year after March Madness was canceled in the first days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the college basketball tournament resumed in Indianapolis, where the entire tourney is being played. And Sister Jean, who served in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles for more than two decades as a parochial schoolteacher and principal, is back to help write a Hollywood screenplay in the making. In 2018, the San Francisco native became the tournament's national darling as the 98-year-old chaplain who accompanied the Ramblers during their Cinderella run to the Final Four. This time the Ramblers came into the NCAA tournament as the No. 8 seed in the Midwest Regional with a 24-4

record. They beat Georgia Tech 71-60 in the first round March 19. That was followed by an improbable 71-58 win March 21 over the region's top seed, Illinois — earning the right to face another long shot: No. 12 seed Oregon State in the Sweet 16. The Ramblers fell to Oregon March 27.

With Minneapolis trial ahead, Catholics pray for peace, fear unrest

ST. PAUL, Minn. (CNS) — Just before 8 a.m. March 22, nine people gathered outside St. Olaf Parish in downtown Minneapolis in a garden dedicated to St. Francis to pray that saint's famous prayer: "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace." A small, ever-changing group has been gathering to offer the prayer on weekdays since March 8, the day before jury selection began for the trial of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who has been charged with murder in

last year's death of George Floyd. The gathering as well as praying of the Divine Mercy chaplet at 3 p.m. weekdays at the church are small but significant ways parishioners are responding to the rising tension as the March 29 start of Chauvin's trial neared. "We're here in the heart of it," Father Kevin Kenney, pastor, said. The parish is blocks from the Hennepin County Government Center, where the trial will occur. The church is open but prepared to board its windows if necessary. Last summer, riots broke out in sections of Minneapolis and St. Paul — and elsewhere — following Floyd's May 25 death. A widely seen video shows a Black man who had been arrested for trying to pass a counterfeit \$20 bill at a convenience store handcuffed and lying face down on the ground next to a police car, with Chauvin, who is white, kneeling on his neck. Floyd repeatedly said, "Please, I can't breathe" before losing consciousness. Protests surround-

ing Floyd's death focused on the incident as an act of racism and police brutality.

Suicide bomb attack disrupts Palm Sunday Mass at Indonesian cathedral

MAKASSAR, Indonesia (CNS) — A suicide bomb attack on a Catholic cathedral compound shattered the calm of Palm Sunday Mass, leaving two bombers dead and at least 20 people wounded. A destroyed motorbike and the body parts of a man and a woman were found after the bombers attacked the main gate of Sacred Heart of Jesus Cathedral around 10:30 a.m. March 28, reported ucanews.com. "We were suspicious because two perpetrators riding a motorbike tried to get into the churchyard, but our security guard stopped them, and several seconds later the bomb exploded," Father Wilhelmus Tulak, who witnessed the incident, told ucanews.com. Father Tulak, parish priest of the cathedral, said five cathedral security guards and several congregation members suffered burns and injuries from the blast, but no one was killed. South Sulawesi provincial police chief Merdisyam said, "We have coordinated with church leaders in the province to tighten security during Holy Week Masses until Easter, so such an incident doesn't happen again."

Italy sees worst gap between births, deaths since 1918 Spanish flu

ROME (CNS) — With Italy already facing a diminishing population, low birth rates and fewer religious and civil marriages, the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted those numbers for 2020, according to the Italian National Institute of Statistics. In fact, it said, Italy set new records in 2020 with the lowest number of births since its unification in 1871, the highest number of deaths since the end of World War II and the largest gap between the number of deaths and births since the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918. The statistics were released March 26 in a report on Italian demographics during the COVID-19 pandemic for 2020. The first COVID-19 cases in Europe were registered in late January in Italy, and the country's northern regions, especially Lombardy, were hit the hardest by the contagion until nationwide lockdowns and restrictions slowed the surge. According to the Italian National Institute of Statistics, commonly referred to as ISTAT, more than 746,000 deaths were registered in 2020, almost 112,000 more than 2019 — an increase of 17.6% — and the highest number recorded since the end of World War II. There were 7,600 fewer deaths recorded in January and February 2020 — the pre-pandemic phase — than the average for those two months in each of the preceding five years, it said.



CNS photo/Kevin Mohatt, Reuters

People leave flowers at King Soopers grocery store in Boulder, Colo., March 23, the site of a mass shooting that killed 10 people the previous day.

Boulder officer recalled as 'man of character,' 'loving father'

BOULDER, Colo. (CNS) — Officer Eric Talley, an 11-year veteran of the Boulder Police Department, was the first to arrive at the scene of a mass shooting at a King Soopers grocery store the afternoon of March 22 and the first of 10 to be killed.

A Catholic family man who took his faith seriously, Talley often stopped by St. Martin de Porres Church just across the street from the store "and participated in its events, even though he wasn't a parishioner there," Denver Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila said.

"St. Martin de Porres, the patron of the parish, was someone who experienced tragedy and hardship in his life, and so, we ask for his intercession in these difficult circumstances, that God would bring good out of this great evil," he added in a statement issued late March 23.

Archbishop Aquila said he was "deeply saddened by the tragic and sudden deaths" of the 10 shooting victims. "I have been praying for all those impacted by this senseless act of violence and want to express my spiritual closeness to them," he said.

Police arrested 21-year-old Ahmad Al Aliwi Alissa of Arvada, Colorado. He was treated at a local hospital for a gunshot wound to the leg, then booked into the Boulder County Jail. He was charged with 10 counts of first-degree murder and one count of attempted murder. So far his motive for the shooting rampage is not known.

Citing Colorado Judicial Branch online records, CNN reported that Alissa's first court appearance has been scheduled for the morning of March 25. CNN also said the warrant for his

arrest "described Alissa as being armed with either an assault rifle or 'black AR-15' and wearing a 'tactical' or 'armored' vest."

Law enforcement officials identified the nine others who died as: Denny Stong, 20, Neven Stanisic, 23, Rikki Olds, 25, Tralona Bartkowiak, 49, Suzanne Fountain, 59, Teri Leiker, 51, Kevin Mahoney, 61, Lynn Murray, 62, and Jody Waters, 65. Some were customers and some were store employees. Olds was a store manager.

The Denver Post daily newspaper reported the alleged shooter, whom witnesses said was wearing black and shooting "a rifle of some kind," began shooting outside one of the store's entrances and then entered the store shooting. One witness said he didn't say a word.

The New York Post daily newspaper March 24 quoted the alleged shooter's older brother, Ali Aliwi Alissa, 34, as saying the younger Alissa was bullied in high school for being Muslim and in the past few years had grown "increasingly paranoid" and anti-social, but that he had never heard the 21-year-old threaten violence. The family had emigrated from Syria when the alleged shooter was 3.

The Post also quoted Damien Cruz, who said he has known the younger Alissa since fifth grade: "People chose not to mess with him because of his temper, people chose not to really talk to him because of ... how he acted and things like that. So yeah, he was very alone."

"Along with the rest of the community, we are waiting for more details on those who have passed away," Archbishop Aquila said in his statement,

adding that Talley "has been described as a man of character and strong faith, a loving father to seven children, a husband who cared deeply for his family and a soldier for Christ."

"My prayers and those of the faithful of the Archdiocese of Denver are with the Talley family and all who have died."

The archbishop said that while it is still not known what led "to this terrible event, incidents like this have become far too common in our country and our state."

"We must work to promote deeper conversion of hearts so that our lives are characterized by the virtue of charity," he said, "which allows us to love God and our neighbor, strengthening the fabric of society and preventing senseless acts of violence such as this one."

St. Martin de Porres Church announced it would hold an early evening prayer service March 24 for the shooting victims, with adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, a rosary, a Scripture reading and a reflection by Father Emmanuel Osigwe, parochial vicar.

Boulder Police Chief Maris Herold told reporters at a March 22 news conference that Talley "loved this community and he's everything that policing deserves and needs."

"He cared about the Boulder Police Department," she said. "He cared about his family and he was willing to die to protect others."

Herold said Talley went into police work to pursue a "higher calling." Some news reports said he left a good career in information technology to become a police officer. Other reports said

he was training to be part of a drone unit to have a safer job in the department.

"My heart is broken. I cannot explain how beautiful he was and what a devastating loss this is to so many," his sister Kirstin tweeted about her big brother, who was 51. "Fly high my sweet brother. You always wanted to be a pilot (damn color blindness). Soar."

Talley's father, Homer Talley, said in a statement reported by various news outlets that his son "took his job as a police officer very seriously" and "loved his kids and his family more than anything."

Homer Talley also told a local TV station that in a recent conversation the two had, his son said "he would lay down his life for any of the officers that he worked with." Talley and his wife, who has not yet been identified, had seven children ages 5 to 18.

In a statement released March 24 in Washington, the chairman of the U.S. Catholic bishops' domestic policy committee said it was "heartbreaking to hear of yet another mass shooting" in Boulder while "we are still reeling from the loss of life in the mass shootings in Atlanta."

"We pray for the families and friends of those who were lost and for their communities," said Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, who is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development. "We are especially grateful for the efforts of first responders to safeguard the community and treat victims and urge all people of goodwill to offer concrete support to victims of violence wher-

ever possible."

He said the bishops "have long promoted prudent measures of gun control to limit mass shootings and other gun homicides and suicides, and we stand by those positions."

"We must always remember that each of us is a brother or sister in Christ, created in the image and likeness of a loving God," Archbishop Coakley said. "As we approach Holy Week, let us continue to reflect on God's love and mercy for each one of us and renew the call for conversion of heart."

Colorado is no stranger to mass shootings. On April 20, 1999, students Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris at Columbine High school in the Denver suburb of Littleton went on a shooting rampage, killing 12 students and one teacher and injuring 21 others before taking their own lives.

On July 20, 2012, at a theater in the Denver suburb of Aurora, mass shooter James Holmes, now 33, he killed 12 people and injured 70 others.

He was tried nearly three years later. He confessed to the shooting but pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity. On Aug. 7, 2015, he was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. On Aug. 26, he was given 12 life sentences, one for every person he killed; he also received 3,318 years for the attempted murders of those he wounded and for rigging his apartment with explosives, which, according to news reports, he hoped would kill police when they went searched the place.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Baby shower for Mary, mother of the Lord



Photos by Denise Fedorov

A few mothers and grandmothers from the Moms Group at St. John the Evangelist Parish, Goshen, gathered to pray the rosary before a March 27 baby shower in honor of the Blessed Mother and the feast of the Annunciation. The program included a talk by Father José Arroyo Acevedo, guided Scripture meditation, refreshments and games. One of the games played at the baby shower was to identify the different titles of Mary as depicted on a collection of holy cards. Items collected for the baby shower will be donated to the Women's Care Center and Hannah's House.

Speakers say Equality Act 'overly broad,' will harm religious liberty

BY KURT JENSEN

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A March 22 online webinar on the Equality Act focused on criticism that the legislation is so vaguely worded it would harm religious liberty and obscure biological reality.

The measure would amend 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.

The webinar was sponsored by the archdioceses of Los Angeles and New York, the dioceses of Arlington, Virginia and Green Bay, Wisconsin, and the Catholic conferences of Colorado and Virginia.

On Feb. 25, the House of Representatives passed the Equality Act, also known as H.R. 5, in a 224-206 vote. Now it will be taken up by the Senate; the first hearing was March 17 by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The webinar's moderator, Ryan T. Anderson, who is currently president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, said of the bill: "It's overly broad and doesn't define all kinds of actions that are truly discriminatory."

Many of the webinar's speak-

ers cited Pope Francis' 2016 apostolic exhortation, "Amoris Laetitia," in which he said, "Biological sex and the sociocultural role of sex can be distinguished but not separated."

Anderson said the Equality Act would take a "just law," the Civil Rights Act and add protections for sexual orientation and gender identity and also expand the number of institutions now classified as public accommodations.

The 1964 law banned discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

In addition, Anderson said, the Equality Act exempts itself from the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, known as RFRA, which protects religions against government intrusion.

"If you get the nature of the human person wrong in law, then you're going to see the consequences of privacy and safety in single-sex facilities," he added. "We should not be using people who suffer from gender dysphoria as political pawns. Authentic compassion needs to be grounded in truth."

Robert Vega, a policy adviser for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, noted: "Importantly, it does not limit its reach to those with gender dysphoria," but also includes those who identify "any way at any time."

Because Catholic schools, under the act, could be prohibited from receiving federal aid for needy students, he said, "single-sex schools might be completely out of the question."

Jeanne Mancini, president of the March for Life Education and Defense Fund, said in a recent statement that the act would "set the tone for the Biden administration's abortion extremism if passed."

"Hidden behind a clever misnomer," she said, "are policy changes that would require employers to provide abortion coverage in their health care packages, override conscience rights protections for religious institutions, and consequently undo many pro-life protections currently written into law."

The act "compromises women's identity, our safety and our opportunities," said Mary Rice Hasson, director of the Catholic Women's Forum in Washington, and "goes where no federal law has gone before. It erases sex."

And "sex matters," she added. "Only females go through puberty, get pregnant, give birth, breastfeed and go through menopause. That's biology. No one can self-define into or out of biological reality."

The law would be "the biggest and most aggressive action so far to push religious believers out of the public square," said Gabrielle Girgis, a postdoctoral

fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington.

Susan Muskett, a congressional liaison for the National Right to Life Committee, said under the proposed law, public school teachers would be required to address a child "by their new name and chosen pronoun even if it violates a teacher's religious beliefs."

"That means that Christian public school teachers could be fired for refusing to lie about a child's sex," she concluded.

Muskett also warned about public school curricula promoting "gender ideology with no opportunity for parental opt-out. The Judeo-Christian belief that God created us as male and female will be undermined throughout the entire public school system."

"Just think of those innocent children being bombarded at their school with gender theory," she said. "Many more children may become confused about their own gender identity."

In written testimony for the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty discussed the U.S. Supreme Court's June 15 ruling in *Bostock*, dealing with three LGBTQ employment cases. The court said employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity is unlawful.

However, the court in *Bostock* "expressly relied" on RFRA "to

balance the interests of religious believers and the LGBTQ community," Becket said. "Congress has never before exempted a bill from RFRA, but the Equality Act would do just that."

A couple days ahead of House passage of the Equality Act, 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."

In a Feb. 23 letter to all members of Congress, they said the measure discriminates "against individuals and religious organizations based on their different beliefs by partially repealing" the bipartisan RFRA, which they called "an unprecedented departure from that law and one of America's founding principles."

On Feb. 26, House Republicans introduced a compromise measure called the Fairness for All Act. Supporters call it a commonsense bill that differs from H.R. 5 in that it would establish "much-needed civil rights for LGBTQ persons" and at the same time provide "robust protections for religious freedom."

Also, unlike the Equality Act, the compromise bill says RFRA can be used "as a defense in court against allegations of illegal anti-LGBTQ discrimination."

Black Catholic poet shares experience in verse

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Poetry is often a personal expression of one's life – his or her emotions, experiences and worldview. For a South Bend man, poetry has become an expression of his faith as a Black Catholic.

Jenario Morgan has been writing poetry for roughly 10 years, but last year's quarantine accelerated his writing and motivated him to self-publishing a poetry book.

"I've always loved poetry," Morgan stated. "I started to develop my own as the years and life experiences went by."

Originally from Detroit, Morgan and his wife, Leslie, moved to South Bend many years ago when Leslie had the opportunity to pursue a career as an academic librarian at the University of Notre Dame. Their two children, Gabrielle and Gelasius, both attend school there. He works as a paraprofessional at Riley High School.

For Morgan, the Catholic Church "came into my life at a critical time. My father was passing away and a lady down the street offered to take me to church with her, and I really settled in."

That was nearly 40 years ago. Morgan was confirmed on his 21st birthday.

"I was very, very impressed with the pageantry and I was very impressed with the fullness of the Church, the life of the Church, the sacraments, the Scriptures, the celebration of the Church. To me, it brought God to a totality I could really feel and see."

Morgan formerly served as a theology teacher in Detroit and as the first diversity director of the Archdiocese of Detroit. He has been a part of the Knights of Columbus for nearly 38 years and has a great appreciation for the organization's mission of charity and family.

He might be a convert, but he feels that a part of him was born into Catholicism. "I was always meant to be Catholic, and that's why I came into it the way I came into it."

Many of his poems relate to his Catholic faith. "The Church is really an integral part of who I am, and a lot of my poetry has to do with the Church and the life of the Church."

This is reflected in his poems, such as one titled "Black Catholics." It illuminates the tremendous contributions of Blacks to the Catholic faith, including the saints Martin de Porres, Benedict the Moor and Josephine Bakhita. The poem anticipates the growth of the Black Catholic demographic within the Church community and greater recognition of the gifts they bring to it.

But saints are not the only Black Catholics Morgan wants

to highlight in his work. He has one poem dedicated to Kobe Bryant, whose Catholic faith was often overlooked until his passing in 2020.

Morgan refers to many other Blacks "who hold dear to their faith," but whose Catholicism is also unknown to society, such as Simone Biles, the most decorated gymnast in the U.S.

Two of Morgan's poems have been published in Black Catholic Messenger, and he hopes publication of his book will open discussions throughout the diocese and beyond about the immense role that Black Catholics have played in the life of the Church throughout the centuries.

In his own lifetime, he has been blessed to meet Sister Thea Bowman, FSPA, whose cause for canonization is now open and who was elevated to Servant of God in 2018.

"What an honor that was. She was so outspoken and very much an advocate," he said.

Twice Morgan met future-Cardinal Wilton Gregory, once telling him he could be the first Black cardinal from the U.S. Morgan was thrilled by Archbishop Gregory's elevation to cardinal, even writing a poem commemorating the significance of the occasion.

Though there is much more work to be done toward inclusiveness and social justice in the life of the Church, Morgan commends Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades on the steps that the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has made toward being inclusive of all people within the Catholic community.

He believes the Black Catholic community at Notre Dame still has strides to make. He said, "You'd think there'd be more of a foothold into inclusiveness, although since I've been here it has grown immensely. I think they're doing a good job, but then, again Black Catholics have to participate more."

A sense of ownership and belonging would go a long way toward bringing more Black Catholics to the forefront of Church life, Morgan postulated. He would like to see more schools teach young people about Black Catholicism, "because our contribution is so large and yet hidden under a barrel."

For his own part, Morgan lives his faith daily. "I'm a very spiritual person. I see God as the commandment, as the Person; so He's always here," Morgan shared. "Even though I wasn't a cradle Catholic, I feel more at home with the Church than anywhere. I love the Church and its pronouncement. It's efficacious."

His upcoming book will be titled "Black Nouns." He is hoping to complete the work by June, in time for his birthday.

His family has been an incredible source of support for



Jennifer Barton

Poetry is the medium in which Jenario Morgan expresses his Catholic faith. At the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Notre Dame, Morgan shows off a rosary that his wife, Leslie, gave him.

his work, he said. His parents, William and Feblene, have been encouraging and he describes his children as "very creative," assisting in the editing process. His wife plays a large part as well by critiquing his work.

What he loves most about the Church is its openness to all people. "Whether you are a small farmer in Australia or in

the backwoods of Harlem, it's a place for you. It's like God's house here on earth. ... It will prevail against the gates of hell and it will stand.

"But" he added, "it's so important, at this time, that we really become who we need to become."

Black Catholics

Holy

Lonely

That is to be or not to be?

Jesus is the answer, you see

Joyous jamming living life to its highest level, knowing Jesus has the gavel

Mother Church towering from her African genesis, treasures flowing like gold down the Nile

Black saints waiting to be canonized

While on trial, centuries to belong

Brother de Porres, Benedict the Moor, Bakhita holding open the door

Prayers of the faithful

Ringin' their rosaries on bended knee

Beautiful black babies being baptized

At God's speed, we will win the race to be free!

— Jenario Morgan 2020

Armor of God retreats inspire men to be mission-focused spiritual warriors

BY CHRISTOPHER LUSHIS

Although the current pandemic has brought many spiritual and social challenges, God's grace remains deeply present and accessible for those searching after Him. In the face of countless events that have been canceled or "gone virtual," a local group of committed Catholic men is making the intentional decision to provide an in-person retreat to rekindle hope, strength Christian identity and encourage masculine spiritual leadership.

The retreats are led by Armor of God, an apostolate founded by laity at St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Fort Wayne. Their mission is to arm men to be the spiritual leaders that God designed them to be in their homes, workplaces and churches.

Armor of God members meet for monthly spiritual briefings, which provide fresh and relevant content for getting fortified in faith, as well as biannual retreats where men can come together, learn from one another and gain the tools, knowledge and direct experience necessary to live as the "priests" of their domestic church. The last retreat, which occurred Feb. 19-21 at St. Felix Catholic Center in Huntington, provided such training in tangible, stimulating and interactive ways.

Rob Gregory began the retreat by emphasizing a fundamental component of Armor of God: developing a core mission. Meant to be a short, personal identity statement, a core mission is born from honest prayer that is unique, easily repeatable and holds one accountable for achieving ultimate purpose and fulfillment. He exclaimed, "if you don't have a core mission and a clear sense of who you



are striving to be, you're like a ship without a rudder, floating through life defenseless against the obstacles and situations which threaten to shipwreck you and your loved ones."

Tommy Lapsley further elaborated on the importance of forming habits and friendships centered on God. He pushed them to honestly answer the questions: "How are you living? What 'virtues' do you prize most? Are you striving after resume virtues, like your bank account, house, car or the latest technology? Or do you pursue legacy virtues: honesty, integrity, loyalty, etc.?" He exclaimed, "To be holy men, we need to be thinking about and running after joy that is true, lasting and eternal."

Darrian Franzen, a youth minister at St. Vincent who is expecting the birth of her first child, was invited as a guest speaker to emphasize what women are looking for from their men. She emphasized, "Women do not want passive men! We want someone who will be strong, pro-

protective, mature, reliable and sacrificial. We want leaders who are confident and compassionate." She shared the tremendous value of her dad's consoling words to her before she would go to sleep each night, which she still values to this day. He would tell her: "I am here, you are safe and protected, you are wanted, you are loved."

Scott Druhot then alerted the men to the importance of being aware of the dangers of technology, social media and excessive screen time. Sharing sobering statistics regarding marital satisfaction, family unity and addictive tendencies influenced by internet usage, he encouraged building habits of consistent prayer time — especially the rosary — to defend and protect spouses and families from temptations, distractions and isolation.

Nick Gray further cautioned the men about the temptations of living a dualistic "shadow" life that threatens to tear them away from being the faithful husband

and father God is calling them to be. Such deception can leave the family in grave peril, unless it is exposed to the light and truth of God's grace.

Father Jay Horning and Father Benjamin Muhlenkamp addressed additional ways to become armed for spiritual battle and open to spiritual healing. They began by highlighting the necessity of going to confession regularly, rooting out evil habits and acknowledging that mortal sin is a personal catastrophe — something that cuts a man off from life in God, jeopardizes his eternal salvation and that needs to be addressed immediately, before he is led further away from the Lord.

They reminded that God has a plan for each man's life. But Satan has a plan for the same life. This is a spiritual battle every man needs to be aware of, to see where the devil is trying to gain access into his life. He has to take personal responsibility for the salvation of his soul and the souls of his wife and family,

they said.

They continued by addressing a vital component often overlooked when speaking on reconciliation: woundedness. As a team, they explained that when a person sins, or when others sin against them, there can remain significant pain and emotional scarring that is carried long after going to confession.

God wants to heal His children of this suffering, they continued. Jesus died for all men, that they might have life and have it abundantly, He wants them to give Him everything negative they are holding on to.

The priests then instructed the men to renounce whatever might be ailing them from their past, including old wounds, grudges, vices, tendencies toward sin, or other spiritual afflictions.

The key element is to speak this renunciation in the name of Jesus. Through the power of baptism, the Lord has given the ability to call on His name to remove the burdens that oppress and gain freedom in Christ. This action does not eliminate or overshadow the power of the sacraments, but rather works in tandem with them, allowing for a greater activation of their sacramental power in one's life to avoid evil and choose virtue.

After hearing confessions on Saturday evening, the priests offered to pray individually with those who desired guided personal prayers of renunciation. From the visible effects and responses, it was evident that many were deeply moved by this exercise and came to experience the healing hands of the Lord touch their lives in a new way.

Mary Jo Parrish, founder of Kingdom Builder's women's ministry, also came as a guest speaker to encourage the men to pray over their wives and children and to take the lead in spiritual warfare. She exclaimed, "Your job is not to heal your families. There is only one Savior, and you are not Him! Your job is to lead them to the Savior. Remember that you will eventually die, and when you face God, He will ask you whether you brought the souls He brought before you back to Him. So, get used to asking your children about their favorite ways to pray, about what Bible verses are most powerful to them, what their prayer intentions are, their favorite saints, and about their role models in faith. Leading others to holiness does not mean leading them to be bored. Be creative and go deep. The closer we come to God, the more our joy and our gifts will unfold."

To learn more about Armor of God, view specialized prayers and resources, connect with a small group for holy fraternity or sign up for the next retreat Aug. 20-22, visit armingmen.com.

Providing personal care for the whole family

Dr. David J. Moran, MD
Nicholas M. Lesch, PA-C

Dr. Andrew J. Mullally, MD
Cassie A. Herber, FNP-C

CREDO
FAMILY MEDICINE

(260) 4- FAMILY
credofamilymedicine.com

PRIVATE • INDEPENDENT • PRO-LIFE

Est. 1969

\$4 Off Any Large Pizza
Offer good Monday thru Thursday from 2-5 p.m.

Please mention Today's Catholic to receive this discount!

Original location across from Howard Park!
713 E Jefferson Blvd, South Bend, IN, 46617
www.barnabys-pizza.com | 574-288-4981

2020 Readers' Choice
South Bend TRIBUNE
The voice of our community

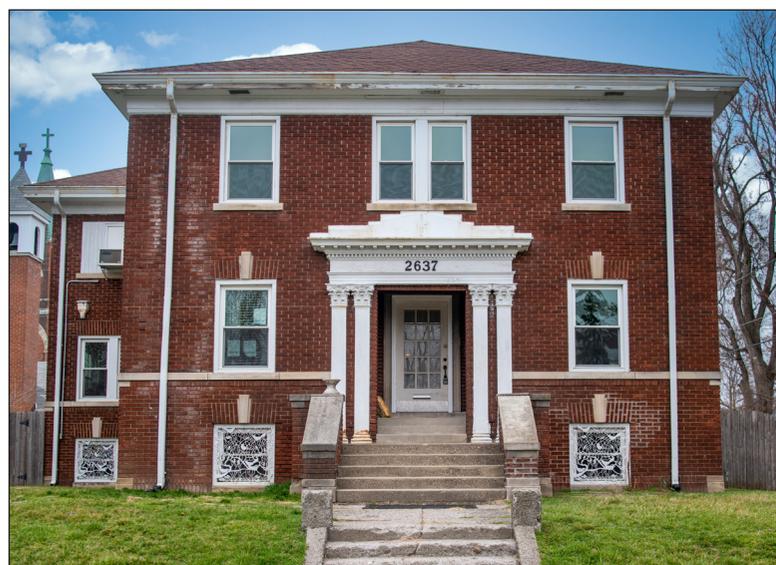
Annunciation Women's Discernment House blessed



Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades blesses the Annunciation Women's Discernment House in Fort Wayne March 25. The house is a ministry of the Confraternity of Penitents.



Attendees pray during the blessing. The Annunciation Women's Discernment House will serve as home to young women who are trying to discern God's will as it pertains to their vocation in life.



Photos by John Martin

Diocese of Evansville Director of Catechesis

The Diocese of Evansville seeks an energetic and inspiring Director of Catechesis.

The Director of the Office of Catechesis is responsible for continuing the mission of Jesus Christ through catechesis and evangelization throughout the diocese. This includes supporting a vision that encourages parishes to provide quality catechetical programs for all parishioners in keeping with the latest church documents, norms and directives.

Qualifications include, but are not limited to:

- Fully participating and practicing Catholic
- Advanced degree in theology, religious education or related field
- Five years of successful experience in Parish Catechetical Ministry and an awareness of diocesan needs and objectives
- Strong organizational, managerial and interpersonal skills that inspire confidence among Ordained, Religious, Catechetical Leaders, and other diocesan groups.

A complete position description can be found in the Employment Opportunities tab on the diocese's website <http://www.evdio.org>

Those interested should send a cover letter and resume to hr-catechesis@evdio.org
The deadline for priority consideration is March 26, 2021.

TODAY'S CATHOLIC
YOUR NEWS. WHEREVER YOU ARE.

GET THE FREE DIGITAL EDITION
TodaysCatholic.org/Subscribe



Seeks a Director of Church Music Ministries

The music director of St. Jude Parish is responsible for the planning and implementation of all liturgies, including: weekend Masses, student weekday Masses, sacraments, holy day of obligation and special Masses (such as 8th grade graduation, grief workshop Mass, etc.). Full time position with full benefits offered. Should be able to work as a member of the parish staff in a collaborative manner, as well as teach and guide cantors and an adult choir. Would also lead a children's liturgical choir made up of St. Jude School children. Experience with Catholic Church liturgical music and/or an academic degree in music required.

Interested parties should send resume to
Msgr. Robert Schulte at rschulte@stjudefw.org.

How the School Choice initiative positively affects families, students

Choice expansion language in a number of state bills, most notably HB 1005, has been widely talked about in the media lately. These bills seek to expand educational options for all Hoosiers, and they further empowers parents to find the best educational opportunity that fits the needs of their student through the Choice scholarship program (voucher). Teachers unions and public school proponents have been vocal about their opposition to the bill.

The opportunity to raise the voucher income limit to 300% of free and reduced lunch will not be helping the rich. Wealthy families don't need the voucher, and low-income families already have access. What about the middle class?

Some have been painting a picture that this voucher expansion would help only the rich, and that's simply not true. It's going to help the families that have multiple children and work several jobs just so their children can attend a school that teaches their faith, offers smaller class sizes and where their child is known and loved. It will help the families that make just barely too much money now to qualify for a voucher, but don't make enough to afford tuition at the school they want to send their child to. For example, in one of the hard-working middle class families at Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne, the mom is a nurse and dad is a firefighter. They have six children to support and truly struggle

to afford tuition at the private school, a school that is able to provide the type of discipline and educational opportunities they were unable to receive in a public school.

It is known that traditional public school students make up about 90% of school-age students in the state. However, students who receive a voucher make up 3% of the entire K-12 student population, but they receive only 2% of the funding. At most, voucher students receive 90% of the amount they would have received if they attended their local public school. They can take that amount and choose the Choice school that best fits their needs. The rest stays with the public school system, on top of any local or federal funding, without the responsibility of educating that child. The money should follow the student, at the school of his/her choice.

In 2019-20, the state awarded \$172,776,489.99 in school vouchers to families to choose the best school for their child. If each of those 36,707 voucher students would have attended their district public school instead of a private school, the state would have spent \$239,239,229.73 in tuition support for those students. That's a savings of \$66,462,739.74.

Currently, 350 students who attend Bishop Luers High School receive a Choice Scholarship; that is 74% of the student body. Bishop Luers is a diverse student body from all backgrounds and



GUEST COMMENTARY

JENNY ANDORFER

proud to have diversity in faith, race, economics and culture. All are students who have parents looking for a different and better educational environment for their children. Why should the cost of private school education prohibit low and middle income families from enrolling their kids in the school of their choice?

Indiana residents need to shift their focus from what Choice is taking away from corporations and instead focus on how it might positively impact Hoosier families and students. The Choice students from Bishop Luers are graduating successfully, and many have enrolled in universities to pursue their goals because their parents could afford the choice of sending them to a private school — a private school that provides each student with the individual tools needed for success. We support all efforts to expand a program that continues to give parents choice, the opportunity to choose the best school for their children, without the economic barrier of cost.

Jenny Andorfer is the director of admissions at Bishop Luers High School.

A good job — with Jesus

Right above my desk, hanging on the wall with a crumpled piece of Scotch tape, is a card someone gave me last March.

"You are doing a freaking great job," the card says, in bright colorful letters.

On the back is a quick note, scribbled by my friend, Hope. She'd brought the card over to our house just a few weeks into the COVID-19 lockdowns, along with some cookies and milk for my daughter, Easter tea towels for me and a six-pack of Guinness for my husband.

The whole day, Hope had been driving around town dropping off little care packages to friends and family, just simple gift baskets with treats and a pick-me-up, to encourage folks during what was proving to be a very scary, uncertain and lonely time.

I loved the font on the card so much, I hung it on my office wall, and nearly every day I see it, these bright red and yellow bubble letters shout at me that I'm doing a good job. A great job, in fact. A freaking great job.

If only I believed it.

I, along with probably the rest of the world, have not felt like I have done a particularly good job these past few months.

My patience has worn thin. My temper has flared. My attitude has been bad. My optimism gone.

I've grown weary of the "we're living in unprecedented times" language, longing for the day when we never have to again hear the words "when things go back to normal," usually spoken on a Zoom call



WINDOW SEAT WISDOM

KATIE PREJEAN MCGRADY

where we'll tell someone no less than three times, "You're on mute."

I've missed friends I would normally see during usual summer travel. I've missed family we'd visit at holidays. I've missed date nights at our favorite restaurants and play dates with our daughter's best friends.

I've missed wandering the aisles of Target, casually sipping a chai tea latte, throwing random housewares into my cart. I've missed Mass, with a church filled to the brim. I've missed feeling like I have everything under control, and I've missed feeling OK when I know I don't.

I see the words "You are doing a freaking great job," and I roll my eyes, and mutter to myself, "No. I'm not."

But maybe it's a good thing that I know I'm not doing a good job. Maybe it's perfectly fine that I am struggling. Maybe there's some good to be had in feeling like I am drowning, floundering, even sometimes failing. Because it's in recognizing that things have been (and are) really hard that I can cry out for help, beg assistance and lean on Jesus.

I find that when I "have it all under control," I am tempted to

MCGRADY, page 13

The Savior, risen from the dead, is with us today



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Feast of the Resurrection of the Lord John 20:1-9

This weekend the Church celebrates the greatest of its feasts, the feast of the Resurrection of the Lord, or Easter. It is the greatest of feasts because it rejoices in the fulfillment of human salvation, completed when the Lord Jesus rose from death to new earthly life after having been crucified.

On Holy Saturday, after dusk, the Church presents its splendid liturgy of the Easter Vigil. Quite vividly in the Vigil's readings, the Church recalls the long history of God's unflinching love for us.

For Easter itself, the first reading is from the Acts of the Apostles. Speaking on behalf of all the Apostles, Peter capsulizes the life and mission of Jesus. More than a biography, it is a testament of God's love for humankind, given in Jesus and in His sacrifice. It is an invitation to people to follow the Lord, a reassurance that God is with us; still alive and well in Jesus, the risen.

For the second reading, the Church offers a passage from the Letter to the Colossians. This reading tells us, as it told its first audience, that we have been raised with Christ. We usually associate resurrection with death, because resurrection is re-vivification after physical death. In the Pauline writings, resurrection also meant an event on earth while physical life is present. It is a resurrection over sin, voluntarily chosen by each disciple.

St. John's Gospel supplies the last reading. It is the familiar story of Mary Magdalene's early morning visit to the tomb where Jesus had been buried after being

crucified. She found the tomb empty. Immediately, she hurried to Peter and the other disciples to give them the news.

Peter and the others took her word. At once, they went to the tomb and saw for themselves that it was empty. "The disciple whom Jesus loved," long thought to be John, saw the empty tomb. Strong in faith, he knew that Jesus had risen.

Reflection

The readings for this feast, as well as the feast of Easter itself, are overpowering in the richness and depth and breadth of their message. Jesus is the Savior! He lives forever!

Belief in the resurrection and trust in the everlastingly living Jesus have uplifted, guided and inspired human hearts for 20 centuries. Awareness of, and commitment to, the Lord have brightened lives regardless of the darkness and cold surrounding them.

An old legend says the edge of the garden that contained the

tomb of Jesus were large, tall plants, considered to be eyesores, weeds. They were ugly. Blossoms rose at the top of each stalk, but it was dingy and colorless.

These humble, detested plants witnessed the Resurrection. The blinding, brilliant, divine light of the Lord's victory over death bathed them. For all time thereafter, their blossoms are wonderfully yellow, transformed by the light of Christ, all the ugliness bleached from them.

The legend continues. Since that miraculous Easter morning, these plants, their blossoms ablaze with the golden reflection of the Lord's power, follow the light from dawn to dusk. Is it the bright noonday sun? Or is it Jesus, returning in glory? Is Jesus near? The plant was the sunflower.

After Lent, purified and recommitted, Easter is our moment to absorb the light of the risen Lord. Do we allow it to change us as it changed the sunflower? Do we intently search for the Lord, seeing the mercy of Jesus in every sunbeam of grace

and goodness that falls upon us?

Peter and the Apostles eventually gave their very lives for Christ, radiant in their faith.

We cannot predict or control everything. The ultimate fact is that we need Jesus, and Jesus is with us. He lives.

READINGS

Sunday: Acts 10:34a, 37-43 Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23 Col 3:1-4 Jn 20:1-9

Monday: Acts 2:14, 22-33 Ps 16:1-2a, 5, 7-11 Mt 28:8-15

Tuesday: Acts 2:36—41 Ps 33:4-5, 18-20, 22 Jn 20:11-18

Wednesday: Acts 3:1-10 Ps 105:1-4, 6-9 Lk 24:13-35

Thursday: Acts 3:11-26 Ps 8:2ab, 5-9 Lk 24:35-48

Friday: Acts 4:1-12 Ps 118:1-2, 4, 22-27a Jn 21:1-14

Saturday: Acts 4:13-21 Ps 118:1, 14-15ab, 16-21 Mk 16:9-15

St. Joseph, migrant spouse and father

Pope Francis has invited Catholics to focus our attention this year on St. Joseph, patron of the universal Church. I commend him for this invitation.

I have always been fascinated about how much Christians have said throughout the centuries about someone for whom we have no record of having said anything. Our Catholic imagination is creative. I have been reading some books and articles about St. Joseph and have arrived at two conclusions.

On the one hand, we must not assume that the silence of the Scriptures about his words means that Joseph did not say anything. As I meditate upon the few scenes in the Bible that mention Joseph, I bet he said a lot in prayer, his interactions with his beloved Mary and their discernment about building a life together.

I am sure he had much to say when anxious to find shelter as his wife was about to give birth, when he had to flee to Egypt to protect his family and in the everyday interactions at home raising the Child Jesus.

On the other hand, most of what we know and can infer about Joseph comes from what we extrapolate from his relationships with Mary and Jesus, as well as his actions toward them.

In my own reflection about Joseph, I want to be cautious about not idealizing him to a point at which one cannot relate to him at all. There are so many reflections about Joseph, all written with the best intentions, that tend to downplay his humanity.

Projecting Joseph as an almost angelic being or nearly perfect human takes the inspiration away.

His relationships and actions reveal a man in love with his wife and child, ready to do anything possible to ensure their well-being. Life throws us curveballs all the time, and Joseph had to handle quite a few in the handful of scriptural passages where he appears.

I am particularly drawn to the events associated with the flight to Egypt (Mt 2:13-23). There Joseph, spouse and father, becomes an immigrant, a refugee. As an immigrant myself and as someone regularly working with immigrants in ministry, the story hits home.

In his December apostolic letter "Patris Corde" ("With a Father's Heart"), Pope Francis wisely brings our attention to this moment in the life of Joseph as he risks everything in order to protect what he loves most, his family:

"The Holy Family had to face concrete problems like every other family, like so many of our migrant brothers and sisters who, today too, risk their lives to escape misfortune and hunger. In this regard, I consider St. Joseph the special patron of all those forced to leave their native lands because of war, hatred, persecution and poverty" (No. 5).

Contemplating the lives of many immigrant men who are part of my life, fathers and husbands, I grow in my appreciation of St. Joseph and what he could have said.



HOSFFMAN OSPINO

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

He must have said goodbye to friends and relatives. He must have worried how he was going to support his family. He most likely learned a few words to get by in the language of the new land. He surely must have lost sleep thinking about the safety of his family in a society that treated them as foreigners.

As an immigrant, I am sure that Joseph prayed aloud and in silence. He must have cried while expressing his frustrations. I can imagine having to explain himself to others many times; bless and curse; defend and justify. How do I know this? Because I have. I have also seen many immigrant fathers and husbands do likewise.

Hosffman Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College.

MCGRADY, from page 12

think very highly of myself. And while confidence and recognition of one's gifts is not a bad thing, there's a danger in assuming I've done it all on my own. It's easy to believe I don't need Jesus.

But in the midst of the storm and these "unprecedented times," when things seem to be falling apart all around me, I find myself turning to the Lord much more quickly.

Perhaps I need to see that card even more often, then.

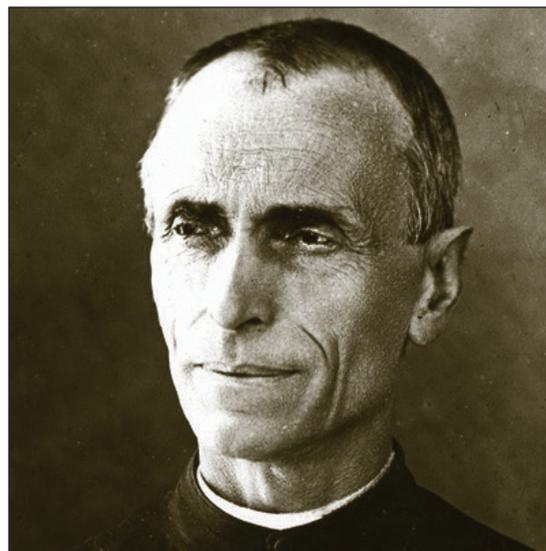
"You are doing a freaking great job" in bright letters forces me to think, "No I'm not. I need Jesus to do that." And then I turn to Him.

As we approach Easter, I can't help but think back to the beginning of all this pandemic-driven uncertainty last year, and I am clinging to the idea that the good job any of us can do — even if it's a good job we're worn out by, exhausted from and wish we didn't have to do — is done best when we are in friendship with the Lord, who does the work with us.

Katie Prejean McGrady is an international Catholic speaker and author.

BLESSED MICHAEL RUA

FEAST: APRIL 6
1837-1910



As a youth in Turin, Italy, Michael was drawn to the work and vision of St. John Bosco, his school's chaplain. In 1854 he helped Don Bosco found the Salesian Congregation, dedicated to practical charity and inspired by St. Francis de Sales. After his ordination in 1860, Michael personally assisted Don Bosco, becoming his vicar in 1865. Following Don Bosco's death in 1888, Michael led the congregation, sending missionaries to 23 countries. By the time he died in 1910, the congregation had grown to 341 houses and 4,000 members. He was beatified in 1972.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for April 4, 2021

Mark 16:1-7

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Easter Vigil Mass about the women coming to the tomb of Jesus. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

SABBATH	MAGDELENE	MARY
SALOME	SPICES	ANOINT HIM
EARLY	SAYING	ROLL
STONE	ENTRANCE	BACK
YOUNG MAN	ROBE	JESUS
NAZARETH	NOT HERE	DISCIPLES
PETER	GALILEE	TOLD YOU

SABBATH DAWN

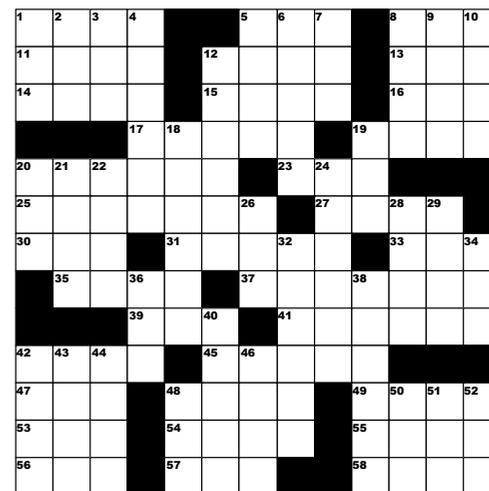
```

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

© 2021 TRILECA Publications: tri-ca-publications.com

The Cross Word

April 4
and 11, 2021



© 2021 tri-ca-publications.com

Readings: Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Col 3:1-4; Jn 20:1-9 and Acts 4:32-35; 1Jn 5:1-6; Jn 20:19-31

ACROSS

- 1 Heroic tale
- 5 Scientist's office
- 8 Not downs
- 11 Capital of Ukraine
- 12 Trickery
- 13 ___ Lanka
- 14 Bright thought
- 15 Healing plant
- 16 Uproar
- 17 Capital of Japan
- 19 Not jellies
- 20 An armor clasp
- 23 Food & Agriculture Org. (abbr.)
- 25 Weepy

- 27 Tinted
- 30 Sin
- 31 Caught sight of
- 33 Chief executive officer
- 35 Allot (___ "out")
- 37 Our ___ Lamb
- 39 Planned arrival time
- 41 Walked quickly
- 42 Couch
- 45 Ditto (2 wds.)
- 47 Kimono sash
- 48 Saint of desperate
- 49 Mormon state
- 53 Directory (abbr.)
- 54 Computer worker

- 55 Soda pop
- 56 Bishop's area
- 57 ___ Commandments
- 58 The ___ Spirit

DOWN

- 1 Slide on snow
- 2 Give help
- 3 "To the right!"
- 4 One's computerized icon image
- 5 Easter flower
- 6 Standoffish
- 7 Bumbling insect
- 8 Dept. of Agriculture
- 9 Proper
- 10 "Whose ___ you forgive"
- 12 Arouse (2 wds.)
- 18 Place out of line
- 19 Risen Christ filled \ apostle with
- 20 "Who ___ and drank with him"
- 21 Virus
- 22 Uncommon
- 24 Update (2 wds.)
- 26 Cup rim
- 28 Reverberate
- 29 "After he rose from the ___"
- 32 Paschal feast
- 34 Bullfight cheer
- 36 Oolong
- 38 Get ready to spring
- 40 Entertain
- 42 Turfs
- 43 Off-Broadway award
- 44 Candles lit from Easter ___
- 46 Eve's garden
- 48 Stick out
- 50 Also
- 51 Entire
- 52 Cow food

Answer key can be found on page 15

Son of Man, son of Krypton: DC trilogy takes cues from Christ's passion

BY JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Many Catholics rely on passion plays or films to aid in their reflection on Christ's passion and death.

One of the unlikeliest of places to find echoes of this pivotal moment in Christian history is director Zack Snyder's trilogy based on the beloved DC Comics superheroes.

Snyder's version of Superman's journey, which culminated March 18 with the release of his four-hour cut of "Justice League," mirrors the defining moments in Jesus' life that Christians commemorate each year.

In "Man of Steel," actor Henry Cavill's Superman goes to a church and seeks counsel from a priest before facing the villainous General Zod. Behind him is a stained-glass window of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Snyder's follow-up movie "Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice" depicts Superman's death by sacrificing his life to save the world from the genetically altered monster known as Doomsday.

Snyder himself revealed the connection to Christ's passion and death in a 2018 post on his Vero social media account in which he explained that Batman's use of a kryptonite spear was inspired by the lance used by the Roman soldier Longinus to pierce the crucified Christ.

Finally, "Justice League," brings the paschal similarities full circle with Superman's resurrection and his defeat of an evil villain that threatened to turn Earth into a wasteland of fire and ash.

While the parallels between the fictional "son of Krypton" and the factual "Son of Man" are widely known, Snyder's trilogy uses visual cues, plot points and even dialogue that further highlight those parallels with Christ's passion.

Bishop Paul Tighe, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Culture, told Catholic News Service he was moved by Snyder's Feb. 22 interview with Vanity Fair, in which the director spoke candidly about his late daughter Autumn, her struggle with depression and her "questions concerning the worth and value of her life."

"I am convinced that many filmmakers and writers attempt to confront these questions about what it is that gives worth and value to life," Bishop Tighe said. "And the stories they tell inevitably go deeper and ask, 'Why do the good suffer?'"

"I believe that believing Christians have a story to tell that address precisely those issues, a story that is rich in images and parables," he added.

Dan W. Clanton Jr., an associate professor of philosophy and religious studies at Doane University and an avid comic book fan, told CNS March 26 that Snyder's use of religious imagery in Superman recalls "the trope of the 'suffering servant.'"

Christian tradition holds that the figure of the suffering servant in the Book of Isaiah is a messianic prophecy foretelling Christ's suffering and death.

"This idea in Isaiah 52 and 53 — that the servant of God must, in fact, suffer and suffer vicariously on behalf of the nations and then he will become a light to the nations — what Snyder does that is so innovative is to link that early Christian understanding of Jesus with all of this other religious imagery that we've seen with Superman in a very tightly connected narrative web," he said.

While Snyder's Superman draws heavily from religious imagery that connects with believers, on a larger scale, Clanton said, it appeals to a wider audience of people who, although not adhering to a traditional religion, "need to feel connected to something larger than themselves."

"By using this religious imagery, by telling a story that resonates with prior stories but by couching it in what I think we could claim is the 20th-century American mythology of superheroes, what Snyder is doing is responding to a deep-seated need on the part of moviegoers and on the part of cultural consumers for meaning, for relationship, for story."

Much like the Hebrew midrash or Jesus' parables in the Gospels, Clanton said, comic book stories and films are "stories that help explain ourselves to ourselves, that help us understand who we are, where we come from, who we want to be."

SERVICE DIRECTORY

Advertise in Today's Catholic

With a variety of options for web and print advertising, let us help you reach YOUR demographic.

Call 260-399-1449



RE/MAX RESULTS

Andrea "Andy" Hall
260-417-5093
AHallResults@gmail.com

Caitlin Berghoff
260-403-9898
CaitlinBerghoff@remax.net

Each Office Independently Owned and Operated

Katie Brown
REALTOR® | Broker

260.437.5025
www.katiebrown.net
katie@katiebrown.net

@KatieBrownFortWayne
@Katie45Brown

Call me when you're thinking of making a move!

Expertise you can rely on.

Mike Kendzicky
Michael Kendzicky
Samantha Hengen, CFP®

Private Wealth Management
4220 Edison Lakes Parkway, Suite 100
Mishawaka, IN 46545
574-247-6830 • 800-866-9022
rwbaird.com

BAIRD

©2018 Robert W. Baird & Co. Incorporated. MC260563.

PNC Bank Building

LEONARD J. Andorfer
& Co., LLP

110 W. Berry Street, STE 2202
Fort Wayne 46802
(260) 423-9405
Fax: (260) 422-9206

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

- Tax Planning and Preparation
- Corporations, Individuals and Partnerships
- Estates and Trusts • Auditing Services

Visit us at www.ljandorfer.com



LINDA RILEY
Senior Loan Officer
NMLS: 234665

C: 574.551.9330
O: 574.268.9033
F: 574.268.2955

310 Enterprise Drive
Warsaw, IN 46580

lriley@ruoff.com
ruoff.com/lindariley

NOTRE DAME
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Matt Kaiser
Director of Business Services
NMLS# 1087744

Business Development Direct (574) 400-4919
P.O. Box 7878 Fax (574) 575-4538
Notre Dame, IN 46556 mkaiser@NotreDameFCU.com

800/522-6611 • NotreDameFCU.com



MICHAEL F. BARILE
DC, PT

3030 LAKE AVE SUITE 26
FORT WAYNE, IN 46805

PHONE: 260.420.4400
FAX: 260.420.4448

www.hoosierpt.com

Peerless CLEANERS

Ft. Wayne, Auburn, Angola & Warsaw

4121 Hillegas Rd.
Ft. Wayne, IN 46808
260.422.9374

JUST FILL THE BAG, WE'LL DO THE REST!

*FREE Pick-Up & Delivery
*Select areas of Ft. Wayne Only

www.peerless-cleaners.com

Member FDIC LENDER

USB UNION SAVINGS BANK

David Egts

Low Closing Costs & Great Rates
"MORTGAGE CLOSING COST CRUSHER"

260-418-6191
CERTIFIED RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE PROFESSIONAL

MORKEN, inc.
Commercial & Industrial
ROOFING

3303 Freeman Street • Fort Wayne
432-2885

1 FULL SERVICE PRINTING
CREATIVE ARTWORK
EDDM/STANDARD MAILING

OFFSET ONE, INC.
www.offset1.com

260-456-8828 | 1609 S. Calhoun St | Fort Wayne, IN 46802

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.

Knights of Columbus fish fry
ELKHART — The Elkhart Knights of Columbus council 1043 will host a fish dinner Friday, April 2, from 5-7 p.m. in the Knights hall, 112 E. Lexington Ave. Dinner includes scalloped potatoes, coleslaw and bread. The cost is \$10 adults, \$5 kids 5-12, under 5 free. Contact Tom Sibal at 574-520-9711 or thomas.f.sibal@gmail.com.

Knights of Columbus Dyngus Day meal
ELKHART — The Elkhart Knights of Columbus council 1043 will host a Dyngus Day meal at Knights of Columbus Hall, 112 E. Lexington Ave., Monday, April 5, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The meal includes polish sausage, pierogis, noodles, cabbage and boiled eggs. Meals are \$10 and will be served until the food runs out. Contact Tom Sibal at 574-520-9711 or thomas.f.sibal@gmail.com.

Little Flower Holy Hour
FORT WAYNE — Little Flower Holy Hour for Vocations will be Tuesday, April 6, from 7-8 p.m. at the St. Mother Theodore Guerin Chapel, 1102 S. Clinton St. The April holy hour will be led by Father Patrick Hake. Contact Christine Nix at 260-422-4611.

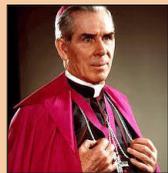
Organ concert planned for St. Charles Borromeo Parish
FORT WAYNE — Vincent Carr, associate professor of organ at Indiana University will present an organ concert Friday, April 16, at 7:30 p.m., at St. Charles Borromeo Church, 4916 Trier Rd. There is no admission fee however, a free-will offering will be received. A socially distanced ice cream "meet and greet" will take place following the program. Contact Tim Robison 260-446-3118 or trobison@scbfw.org for information.

Easter hope, healing and hymns
FORT WAYNE — St. Vincent de Paul Parish, 1502 E Wallen Rd., will host a musical evening of hymns of hope to help bring Christ's healing from the many

challenges of the past year Thursday, April 22, at 7 p.m. This event will also be streamed at www.saintv.org, Facebook and YouTube.

The CrossWord

April 4 and 11, 2021



Pilgrimage to Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Shrine

Thursday, June 10 — Cost is \$85

Join Father Daniel Wheelan and the Father Solanus Guild Huntington to visit the Tomb of Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen in Peoria, IL.

Contact Jan Scher at 260-450-3045 or e-mail her at jansch8@gmail.com. Reserve space by May 1, 2021.

A trusted local team that treats you like an individual.

At D.O. McComb & Sons, we offer personalized funeral and memorial services arranged by our compassionate staff. We believe every final tribute should be as unique as the life it represents.

Serving Fort Wayne families since 1925.



260-426-9494 McCombCares.com

REST IN PEACE

Fort Wayne
Robert L. Deck, 82, St. Vincent de Paul

Arlin Filler, 91, St. Charles Borromeo

John D. Gomez, 74, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Diane Hostetler, 71, St. Charles Borromeo

Lynda Pontenberg, 80, St. Vincent de Paul

James P. Renner, 83, St. Charles Borromeo

William J. White, 96, St. Charles Borromeo

Granger
Shirley Fassler, 91, St. Pius X

Huntington
Robert M. Rzasa, 78, SS. Peter and Paul

Mishawaka
Michael Thornton, 72, St. Monica

New Carlisle
Victor Doms, 85, St. Stanislaus Kostka

New Haven
Paul J. Wilker, 78, St. John the Baptist

South Bend
Charles Baumgartner, 90, St. John the Baptist

Ryan Hurlbutt, 73, Holy Family

Richard Isban, 85, Cathedral of Saint Matthew

Gladys Keller, 93, Holy Family

Carl Whitaker, 69, Holy Family

Waterloo
Ann M. Roberts, 80, St. Michael the Archangel

Submit your event at www.TodaysCatholic.org/event



EMPOWERING
ENGAGING
SERVING CHILDREN
in our area with your donation!



CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY
OF FORT WAYNE
WHERE LOVE LEADS TO ACTION

BABY BOTTLE FUNDRAISER

Thanks to all the parishes who helped raise **OVER \$47,000**

for at-risk children in our community.

Additional donations may be made online or by mailing a donation to Christ Child Society of Fort Wayne, PO Box 12708, Fort Wayne IN 46864

www.christchildsoctyfw.org



Indiana's Premier Butcher Shop and Deli

CATERING, MEAT BUNDLES, PREPARED FOOD, AND MORE!

Make This Weekend Memorable

Visit us and avoid the long lines at the big box stores.

We have a full stock of beef, pork and chicken in this time of uncertainty.

4924 S. Calhoun St., Ft. Wayne | 260-456-9009
2820 Maplecrest Rd., Ft. Wayne | 260-485-0003
Mon-Sat 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. | Sun 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

CUSTOM PROCESSING, WILD GAME, HOG ROASTS
16619 Lima Rd, Huntertown | 260-338-0022



Provided by Father Robert Garrow

Father Robert Garrow, Father Sunday Akuh and Father Glenn Kohrman, from left, gather at Holy Family Parish, South Bend, wearing authentic Nigerian shirts. The three priests often have dinner together, which prompted Father Garrow to invite Father Akuh to speak about the Catholic faith in Nigeria at his parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka in New Carlisle Tuesday, March 16. Father Akuh emphasized the vibrancy of the Catholic faith life in his home country, despite widespread poverty and violence.

Priest's witness enhances understanding of worldwide Church

BY JENNIFER BARTON

The universality of the Church unites Catholics all over the world, be they in the U.S., Africa or elsewhere. Forms of worship may appear slightly different throughout the world, but the sacrifice of the Mass is the same.

To shed light on the universal nature of the Church, Father Robert Garrow, pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka, New Carlisle, invited Father Sunday Akuh, parochial vicar of Holy Family Parish and St. John the Baptist Parish in South Bend, to his parish to speak about Catholicism in Nigeria on March 16.

When Father Garrow took over as pastor of St. Stanislaus last year, he began sharing meals with Father Glenn Kohrman, pastor of Holy Family and St. John the Baptist, and Father Akuh. "During our meals, we discuss the universal Church and Father Sunday was telling us about his parish back home. I have also had an interest in the universality of the Church and felt our parish needed to hear the story of how faith is practiced around the world."

Father Akuh agreed to speak about the faith life in his home country of Nigeria, which, sadly, has been the site of unspeakable violence against Christians, particularly Catholic priests and seminarians, for many years. In his talk, Father Akuh explained the political and economic situation in Nigeria.

Nigeria is a highly populous nation – the highest-populated country in Africa – with numerous natural resources, but it is the "home of good people and a great nation," Father Akuh said.

In Nigeria, a typical Mass can last over three hours. "Worship in Africa is often intense, with profound joyful singing and dancing, voiced prayer and fellowship with one another sharing the Gospel of Jesus."

— Father Sunday Akuh

The government, however, has not been able to effectively run the country nor stop the violence against its people, much of it inflicted by the terrorist group Boko Haram.

"Even as the country battles with institutional corruption, frequent kidnapping, civil unrest and of course Islamic radicalism, as seen with Boko Haram insurgency, there is still a ray of hope because Jesus and the faith are alive in Nigeria," Father Akuh stated.

He went on to describe the faith of Nigeria. "The northern half of the country is predominantly Muslim and the south is primarily Christian," he said. Most of the Christians are of Protestant denominations, but Catholicism is also strong in Nigeria. "The faith is exceptionally vibrant and vital to the daily life of the people, though not without its unique tensions and challenges."

Vocations to the priesthood are high yet funding sometimes leads to young men being turned away from the seminary.

"This is evident in the very many priests produced annually and even in the huge numbers of them on mission around the world as 'fidei donum' – gift of faith," said Father Akuh. The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has received several of these missionary priests: They are serving within the diocese today, Father Akuh among them.

Family life is central to the Nigerian people. Families are often large, with many children.

In Nigerian Catholic families, the faith is lived out joyfully. Daily life revolves around family prayer. The rosary, adoration and visits to the Mary grotto are all common devotions within the family.

The Church in Nigeria is also considered family, Father Akuh continued. "Preparation for the faith and catechism is very thorough and intense in Africa, this accounts for the deepening of the lived sacramental life in Nigeria. Both the parents and the entire faith community share in this pastoral and faith formation from conception through birth, baptism and until burial. "Parish life is very engaging and the faith is a shared experience in Nigeria."

Father Akuh pointed to numerous parish groups and sodalities that engage the faithful of all ages. These carry out multiple functions within the parish and involvement in one of these groups is required, ensuring "that no one is expected nor permitted to be an anonymous parishioner."

In Nigeria, a typical Mass can last over three hours. "Worship in Africa is often intense, with profound joyful singing and dancing, voiced prayer and fellowship with one another sharing the Gospel of Jesus," said Father Akuh. Worship might look a little different, but the same readings are read, the same Eucharist celebrated.

Father Akuh noted that

Catholicism in Nigeria extends beyond the church doors and into civil life.

"The daily lived faith extends to the workplace and the public sphere, for as the Mass is ended in church, the Mass continues in the lived experiences in the communities." The Angelus is often recited publicly, and priests are invited to say Mass in workplaces.

According to Father Garrow, the presentation was "excellent and well-received." Not only did Father Akuh's talk give parishioners of St. Stanislaus an opportunity to learn about the vibrant faith life of Nigerian Catholics, but it also gave them a chance to assist them financially. Despite the economic growth that Nigeria has seen in recent years, 40% of the population still lives in poverty. Father Akuh admits that individual resources are scarce, but the faithful are generous and give much to build and fund churches and financially support their priests.

Father Garrow had wanted to find a way to support Father Akuh's parish in Nigeria, St. Michael Catholic Church located in Kogi State, Diocese of Idah.

He explained, "During the Lenten season, I always have my parish take up a collection for agencies or organizations that are helping spread God's love." He was proud to report that "This year, we helped the Christ Child Society, the Women's Care Center, the St. Vincent de Paul

Society, the Share Foundation, the New Carlisle Food Bank, along with Father Sunday's parish."

Through a collection taken up over the weekend following Father Akuh's talk, the parish raised over \$3,500 for St. Michael. This money will be used to purchase seven new stained-glass windows, one of which will feature St. Stanislaus Kostka in honor of the donor. Signs will be placed within the windows asking members of St. Michael to pray for the parish of St. Stanislaus.

St. Stanislaus parishioner Angela Schroeder has previously attended Masses said by Father Akuh at Holy Family Parish and enjoyed his joyful and vibrant homilies, particularly his singing. She was enthused about his witness at her church.

"The event prompted many conversations in our family and with co-workers about Catholic life in Nigeria," she said. "It's not often we have a first-hand account of how our 'one Catholic' faith is celebrated halfway around the world."

She continued, "The talk helped us recognize our blessings, explained the impact our generosity can make to our brothers and sisters in Christ and offered constructive ideas for growing closeness in our parish family."

Schroeder is hopeful that Father Akuh will hold similar talks in the future.

"Father Sunday has an inherent joy that represents the energy of his home congregation and his faith in God. His description of African culture and how the Catholic faith is celebrated in Nigeria was simply fascinating."