

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 95 No. 16

TODAYSCATHOLIC.org

Statue, plaza dedicated to St. Katharina Kasper — 'woman of the beatitudes'

BY DENISE FEDOROW



Denise Fedorow

A new statue of St. Katharina Kasper was unveiled at the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ motherhouse in Donaldson April 9. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades offered a blessing and remembered the example of the humble saint, and declared the plaza to be a "a holy place of prayer and reflection."

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades presided over the dedication and blessing of a bronze statue of St. Katharina Kasper, foundress of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ congregation, on the grounds of the motherhouse at Donaldson April 9.

Prior to the unveiling and blessing, Sister Joetta Huelsmann, PHJC provincial, welcomed everyone. "As we bless St. Katharina's statue, I pray that hopefully this will be the beginning of many people coming to pray with her and also model her life and spirit," she said. "We have much to be grateful for."

Led by Geoff Williams, director of ecological services, several people offered hopes for the dedication, including "that when we look at the statue of St. Katharina Kasper who has followed Christ faithfully, we will be motivated to do the same," Williams said.

The Gospel from Matthew 5:1-12a — the beatitudes — was proclaimed by Father Michael Okoro. Sister Margaret Anne Henss introduced the committee for the statue, comprised of herself, Sister Marlene Ann Lama and Sister Connie Bach. She thanked

BLESSING, page 2

"God wants me to work for Him"

Down syndrome speaker advocates for "real jobs," equal pay

Page 3

"We've had a year"

Catholic educators learned flexibility, best practices during pandemic

Page 4

Voucher program expansion

Proposed legislation would raise financial eligibility requirements

Page 5

Working through grief

Family leans on faith, parish after loss

Page 10

Foster Hope

During trying moments, giving children comfort

Page 11

Faith central at Knights of Columbus convention

BY NICK HANKOFF

For the first time in 120 years, the Knights of Columbus moved its state convention out of Indianapolis this year. A Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend chapter took home a faith award, and Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades raised up in faith the hearts of those in attendance during a memorial Mass celebrated Saturday at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

Bishop Robert J. McClory of the Diocese of Gary concelebrated the Mass.

Moderate wind and rain marked the three days of the 120th Annual Meeting of the

Indiana State Council of the Knights of Columbus at Grand Wayne Center in downtown Fort Wayne, April 9-11. The atmosphere inside the convention, however, was warm. From registration to dinner events, the Knights, along with family and friends, were visibly proud and appreciative to be gathering together, many donning Knights of Columbus-themed masks.

Bishop Rhoades shared his gratitude to be able to be with the attendees at the cathedral, just a short walk away, during the eucharistic liturgy.

The bishop spoke in his homily about what inspired Knights of Columbus founder Father Michael J. McGivney and what inspires the

Knights of Columbus to live the charity that is at the heart of the Christian life.

"The answer is 'our faith,'" he declared. "The charitable works of the Knights and of the Church are inspired by our faith in Jesus and His Resurrection."

He turned to the Gospel reading on Thomas the Apostle initially doubting Christ's resurrection before proclaiming his faith boldly.

"Our Lord in His mercy invited Thomas to put his finger in the wounds in His hands and to put his hand in the wound in His side. After he did so, St. Thomas made what is probably the greatest statement of faith in the whole New Testament. He

said: 'My Lord and my God.'

"Since I was a child, I was taught by my mother to say those words silently in my heart at every Mass when the priest holds up the Sacred Host at the consecration. I still do."

Proclamation of the faith was not only central to the bishop's homily but also to an award presented to a local council of the Knights during the convention.

The Warsaw Knights Council No. 4511 won a state service award for best faith program of the year. The award was in recognition of four separate prayer rallies that took place at the parish from October through January.

KNIGHTS, page 16

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

(ISSN 0891-1533)
(USPS 403630)

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

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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:
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BLESSING, from page 1

J.R. Daves, Majority Builders, sculptor David Layman and architect Michael Bultinck.

The sculptor shared a few words. He said he was "blessed with the opportunity to create this sculpture. It was my privilege to create this bronze sculpture of St. Katharina."

During the process, he had met several times with the sisters. "As an artist, I always ask the clients to tell me insights of what the sculpture represents." Those ideas become part of the sculpture.

"Most important to the sisters were special shoes, strength, cobblestones, pears in a basket (representing the pears and bread she'd give to the poor as a child), compassion and an inviting spirit," he said. "My favorite of all was one sister who said, 'Please make her 50 years old, at least, because none of us have figured anything out before 50.'"

The sisters prayed for him and for the project. "I can tell you the Holy Spirit is alive and well at Donaldson," Layman said.

A bishop's blessing

The statue was unveiled, and Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades offered a blessing.

"Lord God, today we praise you for the gifts of the Spirit bestowed on St. Katharina Kasper, in whose honor we dedicate this statue and declare this plaza to be a holy place of prayer and reflection," he said. "May we follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, keeping before us the example of St. Katharina. May we proclaim Christ's Gospel by word and deed like St. Katharina and shouldering our crosses daily, expend ourselves in joyful service. May we, as followers of the charisms of St. Katharina, also profess to listen prayerfully, live simply and serve joyfully. May we always strive to the values of dignity and respect of all, openness to the Spirit, community and simplicity in our lives."

He also asked for a blessing on the plaza created for the statue, "nestled in this forest as holy ground upon which our Potawatomi sisters and brothers originally walked and where St. Katharina's image now rests. Grant that all who walk on this holy ground who in the presence of this statue offer devotion to St. Katharina, may by her merits and intercession obtain your grace in this life and everlasting glory in the life to come."

"I love this statue. This will be a great place for people to pray," he later said. He thanked the artist and architect for the holy work they had done.

"All saints were men and women of the Beatitudes" and the beatitudes were a "self-portrait of Jesus," the bishop said. Those who live the beatitudes are putting on the heart and mind of Jesus. "That's what Mother Mary Katharina Kasper did and that's why she's now St.



Denise Fedorow

With the assistance of Sister Joetta Huelsmann, PHJC provincial, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades blesses a statue of St. Katharina Kasper, foundress of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ congregation, in Donaldson April 9.

Katharina Kasper."

He said St. Katharina always carried the book, "Imitation of Christ" by Thomas a Kempis, meditating on the passages and absorbing the teaching and that it helped her to imitate Christ. He said while all the beatitudes could apply to St. Katharina, "Three of the Beatitudes particularly come to mind when I think of Mother Mary Katharina." Those are the blessings of the poor in spirit, the meek and the pure of heart. "She was incredibly humble and appropriately took the name for the congregation the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ."

He said even though she was the leader of the congregation, she mopped floors, made beds and bandaged wounds. "That humble poverty of spirit stayed with her even as the congregation grew, and despite their material poverty being very real."

Bishop Rhoades said the pure of heart were those who "loved God with undivided allegiance and single-handed pursuit of God's will — this was St. Katharina's inner life."

He concluded, "She was a woman of the Beatitudes. I pray that everyone who passes by this statue or who prays in this plaza will be inspired by her example. May she intercede for all of us and help us live the Beatitudes in imitation of Jesus and one day be with her and all the saints in peace and joy in heaven."

Libby Riggs, director of PHJC associates, and Loretta Peters, Fiat Spiritus Community, offered intercessory prayers asking the Lord for the graces of St. Katharina Kasper including her attentive, listening heart, her openness to be moved by the Spirit, her constant seeking of God's will, her sensitivity and compassion in ministry, her boldness to stand against mistreatment and injustice and her bold living of humility.

The closing song, "Poor Handmaid's Anthem," was written by Sister Colleen Bach and accompanied by handbells.

Afterward, Sister Connie was asked what the day meant to her. "It's thrilling. We started working on this right after her canonization. It's an opportunity to show our gratitude to Sister Katharina from all of us who follow in her footsteps and her charisms," she said. "It feels like an extension of her canonization in Rome."

A saint's life: Germany and the U.S.

Katharina Kasper was born on May 26, 1820, in Dernbach, Germany, the eighth child of a peasant farmer and his wife. The domestic conditions in which she grew up gave her empathy for the plight of the poor, especially the rural poor. Because of these experiences she felt inspired by God to help them and awakened in her the decision to devote herself entirely to serving them.

On Aug. 15, 1851, Katharina and four companions received the religious habit and professed their first vows. This was the birth of the Congregation of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ. Katharina, who was to lead the congregation, was given the name Mary.

The congregation grew quickly and expanded its ministries and activities to other countries and regions. On June 1, 1870, the Vatican endorsed and confirmed the congregation and Katharina became superior general. Pope Leo XIII gave the final approval of its constitution May 21, 1890.

Katharina Kasper died Feb. 2, 1898, and at the time of her death, 1,725 sisters belonged to the congregation, ministering in Germany, the Netherlands, the United States, England and the Czech Republic. The work that the sisters do includes pastoral care, health care, education and care of the elderly, children, disabled and refugees.

The beatification of Katharina took place in Rome. Pope Paul VI gave her the title of "Blessed"

on April 16, 1978. The community received the support of the Bishop of Limburg, Bishop Franz-Peter Tebartzvan Elst, for the cause of canonization and paved the way via a private audience with Pope Benedict XVI in February 2012. On March 6, 2018, Pope Francis recognized the healing miracle caused by the intercession of Blessed Katharina and on Oct. 14, 2018, canonized her in Rome. The name Pope Francis bestowed on her at the canonization is St. Katharina Kasper, foundress of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ.

In 1868, Bishop John H. Luers requested the help of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ to help minister to the German immigrants in the area. Eight Poor Handmaids came to Fort Wayne, and their service in the Fort Wayne-South Bend diocese grew. Current areas of ministry include Ancilla Beef and Grain Farm, Ancilla College, MoonTree Studios, Catherine Kasper Life Center and Lindenwood Retreat & Conference Center — all in Donaldson, along with the Motherhouse. St. Michael School, Plymouth; PHJC Volunteers Homeless Outreach; Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center, Plymouth; St. Pius X School, Granger; St. Aldbert School, South Bend; Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center, Mishawaka; and St. Joseph Community Health Foundation and HealthVisions Midwest, Fort Wayne.

In November, the Vatican gave permission for the official inscription of St. Katharina's feast day on Feb. 1 to be included in the Proper Calendar of the diocese as an optional memorial.

St. Katharina is the third saint with a connection to the Fort Wayne-South Bend diocese to be inscribed into the proper calendar. Previously St. Mother Theodore Guerin, who founded the first Catholic schools in the diocese, and Blessed Solanus Casey were also inscribed.

Down syndrome advocate promotes employment for 'friends like me'

BY NATALIE HOEFER

NEW ALBANY, Ind. (CNS) — Mark Hublar is a people person. The fact radiates in his greeting — the friendly smile, the extended hand, the confident eye contact and the chatter.

"There are two things you should know about me," said Hublar, 56. "I love people and I love to talk."

The member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany combined those traits to develop a career he is passionate about: as a motivational speaker advocating for employment of those with disabilities.

Which leads to a third fact about him that people should know: Hublar has Down syndrome.

"He never let his disability hold him back," said Mark's brother and fellow parishioner, Greg Hublar. "Everything he's accomplished is a miracle."

Accomplishments like graduating from high school, living and supporting himself independently, earning a degree in public speaking and, with the help of his family, creating his own business called Mark Hublar Speaks.

His job has taken him around the country. He has spoken with corporate and nonprofit leaders, employers, and members of a congressional committee in Washington. He has met a long list of politicians, athletes and celebrities.

"I want to see my people go into communities and get real jobs with real pay, equal pay," Mark said.

He also wants people to know that those with and without disabilities "are different, but the same."

Mark does not take his mission lightly. "God wants me to work for him," he said. "God wants me to be a speaker for him."

It's a role made possible through faith, a loving family — and a crucial decision Mark's parents made after his birth.

When Mark was born in 1964, his parents were told he had mongolism — the term then used for Down syndrome. The doctor said their son would live a vegetative life. As most doctors did in such cases then, he advised them to send Mark to an institution.

Al and Linda Hublar's response was immediate. They were not putting him in an institution. They were taking him home.

While they were firm in their decision, Al and Linda, both now 80 and members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, knew they would have to depend on God to make it work.

Al remembered praying: "God, I don't know what's going to



CNS photo/The Marketing Company via The Criterion

Mark Hublar of New Albany, Ind., poses in front of a podium as he would at any of his public speaking events to advocate for employment of those with disabilities and to share the message that "we're all different, but the same."

happen. Please just allow him to have enough intelligence to know and love and serve you."

One day years later, Mark heard his father swear and told him: "You know God can hear every word you say. It's not worth it," Al recalled, saying he knew then that his prayer had been answered.

The Hublars decided to raise Mark no differently than their toddler, Mike, and two other sons, Greg and Todd, born after Mark.

"He had his chores like us, he was expected to behave," said Greg, 52. "There were no special passes because he had a disability."

"And we played as hard with him as we did each other," from tackle football to wrestling to "parachuting" from a window — one of many tales shared by Greg in his recently published book, "A Miracle Named Mark" about his brother's challenges and accomplishments.

"Because of the way we were raised, I didn't even know

he had Down syndrome until I was in fifth grade," Greg told The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Mark wanted to do everything his brothers did. Being "just like my brothers" became a source of motivation that drove him to graduate from high school, find work and live on his own.

In 2016, he earned a three-year degree in public speaking from a community college.

A series of unrelated events that followed led to Mark's true calling.

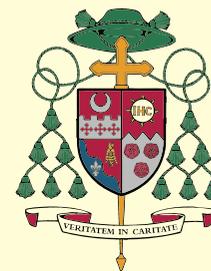
First, he was asked to speak about having Down syndrome with students at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School during Disabilities Awareness Week, and he was a natural.

A few years later, Mark took a job stocking shelves at Walmart. After only three months, Mark's boss called Al to say the job wasn't working out — Mark spent too much time talking.

"I was only kidding when I asked him, 'Well, can you find

"Because of the way we were raised, I didn't even know he had Down syndrome until I was in fifth grade."

GREG HUBLAR



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

- Sunday, April 18: 2 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, St. Pius X Church, Granger
- Sunday, April 18: 5 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, St. Pius X Church, Granger
- Tuesday, April 20: 7 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne
- Wednesday, April 21: 12 p.m. — Redeemer Radio Sharathon, Redeemer Radio, Fort Wayne
- Wednesday, April 21: 1:30 p.m. — Virtual Meeting of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Working Group on Socially Responsible Investment Guidelines
- Wednesday, April 21: 7 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of Hungary Church, South Bend
- Thursday, April 22: 7 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, Queen of Peace Church, Mishawaka
- Friday, April 23: 2 p.m. — Virtual Meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Advisory Group on the Eucharistic Initiative
- Friday, April 23: 7 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, Holy Family Church, South Bend

him a job where he gets paid to talk?" Al recalled asking, and the boss said yes.

Mark became a Walmart greeter and was so good at this job for five years that a local TV news station did a story on him when he had to retire for health reasons.

At one point during this time, his dad asked Mark what he thought his purpose was in life. His son thought about this and about two weeks later said it was "to help friends like me to have a full life and real jobs."

But it would still be years before Mark's gifts of public speaking and love of people would merge into his career as an advocate and public speaker. Once this happened, he was on a mission to share his message that those with disabilities and those without "may be different, but we're the same."

Since 2012, Mark has helped with initiatives led by The Arc of Indiana. The mission on its website aligns with his: to help "all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities realize their goals of living, learning, working and fully participating in the community."

Susan Rinne heard one of Mark's talks and was impressed years before she became co-director of Indianapolis-based group called Work to Include.

When the group launched in 2018 to promote employment for people in Indiana with disabilities, Rinne remembered Mark and hired him.

She supports him as he leads a team helping local people with disabilities identify their strengths. He and his team reach out to employers to share information about the benefits of hir-

ing those with disabilities and to help them find such workers.

He is passionate about his vision for "my friends" who, like him, have some form of disability and wants people to understand that people with disabilities can be anything they want.

Al is a member of his son's Work to Include team. He says after parents of children with Down syndrome hear Mark speak, they are more confident about what their children could do.

Mark's recognition for what he has done is demonstrated in the long list of scholarships, awards and accolades he has received.

His face is on the Work to Include billboards in southern Indiana and was on the big screen in New York City's Time's Square, where his was one of 500 photos chosen from 3,000 worldwide submissions to appear as part of the National Down Syndrome Society's annual video presentation in 2019.

But fame has not gone to Mark's head. For him, it's all part of his work to promote employment for those with disabilities and to spread his message of "different, but the same."

"God is happy with what I'm doing," he said, adding: "He works in heaven and I work down here."

Editor's Note: "A Miracle Named Mark" costs \$20, 10% of which is donated to a disabilities-related charity the purchaser selects from list. To purchase a copy, go to www.markjhublarspeaks.com.

Hoefler is a staff writer at The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Catholic educators share unexpected lessons of teaching in pandemic

BY CAROL ZIMMERMANN

WASHINGTON (CNS) — No one has to tell Catholic school teachers how different this past year has been.

At the start of the pandemic last spring, most Catholic schools adapted to online schooling and continued that way until the end of the school year.

At the start of this school year, many of these schools across the country reopened in person, with multiple safety protocols in place, or they operated under a hybrid model with some students attending classes in person and other students in class virtually.

Pandemic learning impacted Catholic preschools to high schools across the country and its success seemed to hinge primarily on the flexibility of students and teachers alike.

That's why it's not surprising the topic of pandemic learning was a theme of so many of the workshops offered during this year's annual National Catholic Educational Association convention April 6-8. Even the convention, which often draws thousands of participants, was virtual for the second year in a row, due to pandemic restrictions.

At the start of the online convention with participants joining in from all 50 states, retired Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas

of Tucson, Arizona, who is chairman of NCEA's board of directors, thanked Catholic educators in a video message for how they "stepped up in the midst of the pandemic" saying their enthusiasm and creativity enabled many schools to keep going.

Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, similarly thanked Catholic educators in an April 7 message to convention participants where he noted the challenges of the past year and thanked teachers and principals for their response, which he said was a "testimony to your faith."

Workshops focused on best practices in the pandemic, remote assessment of students, plans for students not returning next year and learning gaps during COVID-19.

One April 6 workshop highlighted what schools might keep from their virtual learning experiences and what they might not.

"We've had a year," said presenter Michelle Lia, co-director of the Greeley Center for Catholic Education at Loyola University Chicago, reminding educators they likely had some "some amazing Hail Mary saves" and many opportunities to think on their feet.

When she invited the online participants to respond in the chat section with a few words to describe what they learned in

the past year, responses included "flexibility" (several times), "patience," "grace," "humor" and "adaptability."

One educator said they had been stretched this year, another said they were tired.

Lia said she has heard a fair amount of criticism from students and parents about busywork homework during the pandemic and said that going forward, "Google-able" homework, where students can find the answers online, should be eliminated.

But she also noted: "Technology is here to stay and it can be our friend," noting students might be able to attend school virtually if they have a long illness and that parent-teacher conferences, which seemed to work better on Zoom, also might continue.

Teaching students who are virtually learning requires teachers to be very clear about their expectations, which of course should also continue, Lia said.

Another April 6 workshop on pandemic learning was led by a panel of teachers and principals from the Chicago Archdiocese and Julie Ramski, director of early childhood education for the Archdiocese of Chicago's Office of Catholic Schools.

Ramski said when Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich announced last summer that Catholic schools would reopen in person in the fall, this initially caused a lot of anxiety.

She said she spent a lot of time doing her own research and talking to teachers to reassure them they could do this.

"I kept saying, 'if you're all right, the kids will be all right,'" she said, adding she was convinced the best place for these students was to be in the classroom, with schools following numerous safety protocols.

The preschool teachers and elementary school principals told their online audience, many of whom went through much of the same experience, about keeping young students socially distanced and masked.

For preschoolers, it was important that they had more personal space and weren't sharing crayons or other supplies, something that will continue in the future, these teachers said.

They also said they will likely continue Zoom parent-teacher conferences as these were convenient for both groups and they would absolutely continue with the safety protocols already in place, especially the daily cleaning of classroom surfaces.

"We are going to keep up (these practices) for the coming school year," said Denise Spells, principal of St. Ethelreda School in Chicago, noting that if you



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School Choice Scholarship Program: 'Still more work to do'

Exactly 10 years after the passage of groundbreaking legislation that made Indiana a national leader in school choice, the Statehouse is in the spotlight again as lawmakers weigh the first major expansion to the program since 2013.

More than a quarter million Hoosier students have benefited from Indiana's Choice Scholarship Program, more commonly known as the voucher program, since it was signed into law by then-Gov. Mitch Daniels in the spring of 2011. The current legislation under review would expand eligibility to allow even more parents to select the school they believe is best for their children — a move that advocates say is critical to extend educational



MITCH DANIELS

As Indiana marks a decade of school choice and increased opportunities, legislation would expand the innovative program to more families.

opportunities to as many Hoosier families as possible.

As he was a decade ago, the lawmaker behind the current effort is Rep. Bob Behning, R-Indianapolis, chairman of the House Education Committee.

"The whole focus on what we did in 2011 was to put kids first," Behning said. "That is not a condemnation of our traditional educational model. It's just an acknowledgement that people are different, and as with everything else in life, choices are important. We have excellent schools across the state, but it is nearly impossible for them to meet every unique need of every child."

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE



BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

"While many Hoosier families already enjoy the flexibilities of Indiana's school choice program, there is still a large group shut out of these opportunities," Behning added. "When we started looking at the current eligibility requirements, we found a lot of hardworking families still could not send their child to the school of their choice."

Behning's proposed legislation, House Bill 1005, would help middle and upper-middle-class families still struggling to pay for private school tuition by raising the financial eligibility requirements for vouchers. Among other provisions, it also would increase the scholarship amount that a voucher student receives in a school year and create the Indiana Education Scholarship Account, which would provide eligible families funding to directly pay for tuition or other education-related expenses.

The bill, which passed out of the House, was not heard in committee in the Senate. Instead, efforts to expand school choice are now focused on negotiations over the state budget. The House version of the budget included all of

the choice language found in Behning's bill. Meanwhile, the recently released Senate version of the budget contained a scaled-down version of the expansions.

Choice advocates are hopeful that the final budget, through conference committee negotiations, will more closely resemble the House's version of the choice expansions. Two of the strongest supporters of these efforts are the Indiana Catholic Conference and the Indiana Non-Public Education Association — two organizations that were instrumental in the creation and passage of the original measure 10 years ago.

"Approximately 273,000 Hoosier students have been blessed with the ability to make an educational choice because of the Choice Scholarship legislation enacted in 2011, and I have been privileged to directly hear the life-changing stories shared by many of those families," said John Elcesser, executive director of the INPEA, which represents the state's more than 400 non-public schools, including Indiana's 175 Catholic schools. "It is heartening that both the Indiana House and Senate too see the value of providing more educational opportunities as evidenced in their budget commitments to expand choice in Indiana."

"The question that remains during the final days of the 2021 General Assembly session is how many more families will be provided that same opportunity? We hope our legislators will be bold in that decision by provid-

ing more opportunities for more families — for the betterment of all Hoosier students."

The idea that choice would improve all schools, both public and non-public, and the efforts that culminated in the 2011 legislation, were bold from the beginning. For decades, lawmakers and advocates including the ICC and the INPEA had been working toward making school choice a reality in the state. Those plans finally reached fruition under the leadership of Gov. Daniels, who made education reform one of the cornerstones of his agenda.

"We must begin to honor the parents of Indiana," Daniels had said in his 2011 State of the State address, a few months before passage of the Choice Scholarship legislation. "We must trust them, and respect them enough, to decide when, where and how their children can receive the best education, and therefore the best chance in life. For families who cannot find the right traditional public school, or the right charter public school for their child, and are not wealthy enough to move near one, justice requires that we help. We should let these families apply dollars that the state spends on their child to the non-government school of their choice."

Now, 10 years later, the former governor reflected on the initiative.

"Providing poor and minority families the same choice of schools that their wealthier neighbors enjoy is the purest example of 'social justice' in our society today," said Daniels, who has served as president of Purdue University since completing his second term as governor of Indiana in 2013. "The baseless

VOUCHERS, page 8



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Today's Catholic file photo

Five priests, two nuns, three laypeople kidnapped in Haiti

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The latest victims of rampant kidnappings in Haiti are five priests, two nuns and three laypeople who were abducted together on their way to a parish near the capital of Port-au-Prince early April 11. Kidnapping cases happen almost daily in Haiti, which has been experiencing increasing insecurity, political turmoil and gang violence; it is the poorest country in the Americas. "This new case is a reflection of the collapse of the security apparatus of the state and the country. No one seems to be safe anymore," Redemptorist Father Renold Antoine told Fides, the news agency of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, April 12. "Outlawed groups continue to sow fear and sadness in the hearts of the population," he said. Father Ludger Mazile, secretary of the Haitian bishops' conference, told Agence France Presse April 12 that the kidnapers had demanded a ransom of \$1 million for the group's release. The Conference of Haitian Religious issued a statement expressing its "deep regret" over the latest kidnapping, but also its "anger at the inhumane situation we have been going through for more than a decade," Fides reported. Kidnappings for ransom by armed gangs have increased over the past several months.

Holocaust's 'righteous' need to be remembered, too, survivor's son says

WASHINGTON (CNS) — As the number of Holocaust survivors continues to dwindle, so too are those "righteous Gentiles" who saved Jews who were almost certain to perish, according to the son of one such survivor. "On my father's side, he and his parents and his brother all survived in Italy because of the kindness and bravery and human decency of the people who saved them," said Jonathan Sacerdoti, a London-based writer and broadcast journalist, in an April 9 phone interview with Catholic News Service. Three of those who protected Sacerdoti's father, uncle and grandparents have been recognized by Yad Vashem, Israel's official memorial to Holocaust victims, as Righteous Among the Nations. They include the mother superior of a convent who took in the boys, ages 5 and 3 in 1943, and their mother, as well as two priests who arranged for new hiding places in Italy when the Nazis got too close for comfort. "It was a traumatic experience, but one that saved them," Sacerdoti told CNS. He wrote an essay, "How should we honor the 'angels' of the Holocaust when they're gone?" for Spectator magazine. The article was posted April 8, recognized in Israel

NEWS BRIEFS

Cardinal leads Catholics in mourning death of Prince Philip



CNS/Andrew Boyers, Reuters

Children place flowers outside England's Windsor Castle April 9, after Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, died that day at age 99. Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster led Catholics of England and Wales in mourning the death of the husband of Queen Elizabeth II. The president of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales issued a statement April 9 posted on the website of the English and Welsh bishops' conference. "At this moment of sadness and loss, I pray for the repose of the soul of Prince Philip, Her Majesty the Queen's faithful and loyal husband," he said.

as Yom HaShoah, or Holocaust Remembrance Day. Sacerdoti wrote that the number of surviving Righteous Among the Nations has shrunk to 193, as two died during Holy Week.

Canadian bishops: Assisted suicide law perilous for disabled, mentally ill

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (CNS) — Canada's Catholic bishops said the possible pressures the country's new assisted suicide law will place on Canadians with mental illness or disabilities are "all too real, perilous and potentially destructive." In a statement April 8, the Canadian Conference Catholic Bishops denounced the expansion of "medical assistance in dying" — or MAiD, as it is known — to those who are not near death. They called on people of faith to pray and to lobby elected officials about the issue. The statement, signed by Archbishop Richard Gagnon, CCCB president, said: "Our position remains unequivocal. Euthanasia and assisted suicide constitute the deliberate killing of human life in violation of God's command-

ments; they erode our shared dignity by failing to see, to accept and to accompany those suffering and dying. Furthermore, they undermine the fundamental duty we have to take care of the weakest and most vulnerable members of society." Canada's Senate approved Bill C-7 March 17, days after it was passed by the House of Commons. The new law expands access to assisted suicide to those whose death is not "reasonably foreseeable," including the mentally ill, although that provision will not be enshrined in law for two years to allow a review to establish protocols and safeguards. The new law also allows people to make advance requests for euthanasia if they fear losing the ability to make that decision later in life.

Scholar urges Catholics to have courage to speak out against Equality Act

PHOENIX (CNS) — Catholic scholar and legal expert Ryan T. Anderson warned that if the Equality Act is passed by the Senate and signed into law, it would significantly impact women's privacy and safe-

ty, genuine equality, medical practices and religious liberty. It also would negatively affect Catholic schools, shelters, charities and hospitals, not to mention individual educators, social workers and medical professionals who practice their faith, Anderson said. He made the remarks in the keynote address for the recent annual virtual fundraiser for the Diocese of Phoenix's John Paul II Resource Center for Theology of the Body and Culture. The center focuses on forming youth, equipping adult leaders and evangelizing the culture through St. John Paul II's teaching on human sexuality and the body. The Equality Act 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. On Feb. 25, the U.S. House passed the bill in a 224-206 vote. Now it will be taken up by the Senate. Anderson, who is president of the Washington think tank Ethics and Public Policy Center, said the bill also would force access to women's only locker rooms, restrooms and shelters to anybody who identifies as a woman, regardless of biological difference.

Saints accompany, intercede for Christians in prayer, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christians are never alone in prayer but instead are accompanied by myriad saints who protect them and seek God's intercession, Pope Francis said. Whenever men or women open their hearts to God, they will always be in the "company of anonymous and recognized saints who pray with us and who intercede for us as older brothers and sisters who have preceded us on this same human adventure," the pope said April 7 during his weekly general audience. Continuing his series of talks on prayer, the pope reflected on the connection between prayer and the communion of saints who are "not far from us" and are a reminder of Jesus Christ because they have also "walked the path of life" as Christians. "In the Church, there is no mourning that remains solitary, no tear that is shed in oblivion, because everything breathes and participates in a common grace," he said. The tradition of having graveyards around churches is a sign of that sharing, he said. It is "as if to say that every Eucharist is attended in some way by those who have preceded us. There are our parents and grandparents, our godfathers and godmothers, our catechists and other educators," who have not only transmitted faith but also "the way of praying."

Pope appoints bishop for Duluth, accepts resignation of New York auxiliary

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Pope Francis has appointed Father Daniel J. Felton, a priest of the Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin, and its vicar general, to head the Diocese of Duluth, Minnesota. The pope also has accepted the resignation of Auxiliary Bishop John J. O'Hara of New York. He is 75, the age at which canon law requires a bishop to turn in his resignation to the pope. The changes were announced in Washington March 2 by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio. A native of Virginia, Bishop-designate Felton, 66, also is moderator of the curia for the Green Bay Diocese. He was ordained a priest for the diocese June 13, 1981. His episcopal ordination and installation as Duluth's 10th bishop is scheduled for May 20. "We are grateful to our Holy Father, Pope Francis, for sending us our next bishop in this joyful Easter season," said Father James Bissonette, Duluth's diocesan administrator, in an April 7 statement. The diocese looks forward to getting to know Bishop-designate Felton, he said, "and beginning this new chapter in our walk of faith together under his leadership as our next shepherd."

Knights of Columbus open critical conversation for parents on child sex abuse

Most parents operate under a naive belief their family is 'immune' from sex abuse — but without proper awareness, experts indicate they could actually be the most vulnerable.

BY PETER JESSERER SMITH

Jeff and his wife, Judy, thought they had an invincible circle of protection around their children to keep them safe from sexual abuse. A Knights of Columbus family in New Haven, Connecticut, with a strong Catholic faith, they lived in a secure, upscale neighborhood, had solid relationships with their children, and kept a close eye on their children's friends and told them to be wary of strangers.

But like most parents in the U.S., Jeff and Judy were "naïve." They diligently looked for potential perpetrators of sexual abuse in all the places except the circles where experts say they were most likely to be found: trusted friends and family.

"It was so hard to think that someone we loved so dearly, and trusted so much, would hurt our child and strip his innocence," Judy said in a video published by the Knights of Columbus called "Protecting Our Children: A Family's Response to Sexual Abuse." The video explains this Catholic family's personal and practical account of how they addressed their son's abuse by a close family friend and includes expertise outlining the actual scope and scale of the risks of sexual abuse to children that families face today, as well as practical steps for how to keep children safe or respond if they are harmed.

"This is not a Catholic Church problem," explained Jeff. "This is a societal issue, this is a heart issue, and our hope is that our story can affect change so people will be on guard to protect their children, protect their church and protect their community."

The Knights of Columbus is the largest Catholic fraternal association in the world and is opening a conversation among Catholics about child sex abuse: what it is, how to prevent it, and how to respond. Most parents have a hard time engaging the topic, in no small part due to pervasive stereotypes that offer a false reassurance that their family is immune from child sexual abusers.

According to 2016 data from a CDC-Kaiser Permanente study, one in five children — 24.7% of women and 16% of men — are sexually abused by the time they turn 18. U.S. Department of Justice information on sexual

offenders states that most victims knew their abuser, and approximately 30-50% of young victims are sexually abused by other youth.

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson told the Register in an interview the Knights were glad to work with Jeff and Judy and their son to share their family's story and banish these stereotypes and false assumptions that misinform families and put them at risk. The reality is that if it can happen to their family, it can happen to any family, he said.

"We just thought [the video] was really a fresh way of entering into the problem, to understand the problem better, what to look for, and what to do when you see it," Anderson said.

"It does away with the stereotype of who do we think is the bad guy and the stereotype of who we think will never be the bad guy," Anderson added. "It moves away from stereotypes (which we should move away from), so we can then look at conduct, at action and be aware of what that can mean."

Monica Applewhite, who has a Ph.D. in clinical social work and is a leading practitioner in the field of abuse prevention, collaborated with the Knights on the video, told the Register that this conversation on child sexual abuse is overdue. She said generating grassroots awareness of the truth about child sexual abuse and the signs to look for is the best route to preventing sexual predation of children.

Applewhite explained that child sexual abuse is underreported because only one out of three children will ever disclose sexual abuse. The dynamics of sexual abuse — including involuntary sexual response to abuse — are confusing for a child to process. One thing a child will do before attempting to disclose, Applewhite explained, is to "test" their parents with a less serious disclosure to see how they'll react.

In the Knights video, the son's "test" at 10 years old was to confide to his father that he had watched pornography. Applewhite explained that the father's loving and compassionate response to his son laid the groundwork for the son to reveal his abuse by one of his parents' closest friends. But had the parents exploded, the abuse might never have come to life, and the victimization would have continued.

Applewhite said that children



Screenshot/video still

A Connecticut couple share their story in a video published by the Knights of Columbus called "Protecting Our Children: A Family's Response to Sexual Abuse."

who confide need to be assured they are safe, that they are believed, that it is not their fault, and that everything will be okay.

"Your children have to trust that they can talk to you," she said.

Applewhite said parents need to be aware of potential abuse symptoms, such as sudden changes in behavior, inexplicable terror and fear in the presence of a particular person, or significant, intense separation anxiety.

She also said parents need to realize that it is "common" for perpetrators to abuse a child right under their nose and in their presence, such as on a couch covered by a blanket, in a dark movie theater or in the pool. It is a common tactic to deceive the child that their parents are somehow okay with the abuse or to convince the parents that the abuse was impossible.

Knowing the perpetrator

In nine out of 10 cases, parents will know the person who sexually abused their child, explained Matthew Hartvigsen, director of outreach at Defending Innocence, a project of the Yunique Foundation, which helps equip parents with prevention tools and graphics to have the right conversation with their children about sex abuse.

"You want to be looking closely at what we call 'the circle of trust,'" he told the Register. He said that is a "hard transi-

tion" for parents to make, but he said parents cannot afford to keep themselves in the dark.

"The risk is still there, whether you're acknowledging or understanding where it comes from," he said.

The dangers are not just coming from trusted adults, but other children, as well. Ric Peeler, Defending Innocence's director of awareness, explained the perpetrator may be within the same family or the older sibling of a child's friend, or another child the same age.

"It's often another minor that's actually the perpetrator," Peeler said.

Unfortunately, how parents respond to these situations has played a major role in why child sex abuse is under-reported. Many parents handle these situations poorly because "they're caught in the middle" between relationships they care about. Some respond with denial, instead of belief, which exacerbates a child's experience of the trauma and allows the abuse to continue.

"You've got to get the child safe, you've got to intervene, and you've got to protect other children," Hartvigsen said.

Because sexual perpetrators come in a variety of forms, Applewhite said parents should contact their local "child advocacy centers" about the next steps. She said they have the expertise to get the child's story on the record once, without having to repeat it multiple times for different agencies. They also have

resources to get abused children the help they need.

Applewhite said parents who discover one of their children or one of someone else's children has committed child sexual abuse need to seek help from a child advocacy center, so the victim child can be safe from repeat victimization and treated and so children who are perpetrators can get the help they need.

"The vast majority of juveniles can be successfully treated to never do that again," Applewhite said. If they do that, parents have every reason to be "optimistic" about the outcomes for their children.

But she said if parents fail to act, it increases the risk a child perpetrator will have a "deviant arousal pattern for life" as an adult. At present, she said, there is no known successful way to cure an adult.

"They have to be prevented from having those opportunities, and they have to get treatment," she said.

Perpetrators and grooming

Experts say parents can make a profound difference for prevention in two ways: teaching healthy sexuality and boundaries and enforcing boundaries, and recognizing the signs of potential grooming.

"Generally, with perpetrators, they thrive in secrecy and on their reputation," Hartvigsen

School choice myths and facts

The same arguments that opponents of school choice leveled against Indiana's voucher program when it was introduced a decade ago are back in the public arena.

Then and now, one of the leading voices countering those attacks is the Indiana Non-Public Education Association, the only organization focused solely on supporting the 400 non-public schools in the state.

"There has been a growing negative narrative in the media from opponents to the proposed school choice expansions under consideration at the Statehouse," said John Elcesser, executive director of the INPEA. "Let's separate fact from fiction. Of course, if you want the full story, take a look beyond the numbers and ask a parent whose children's lives have been impacted by the program."

The INPEA, whose member schools include Indiana's 175 Catholic schools, has compiled a list of common myths about school choice — along with the facts that refute them.

MYTH 1: Choice undermines public school funding and costs taxpayers and public schools.

FACTS: Students who receive a voucher make up 3% of Indiana's entire K-12 student population, but they receive only 2% of the funding allocated for K-12 education.

For the 2019-20 school year, the average voucher amount in Indiana was \$4,707, compared to the average traditional public-school state tuition support amount of \$6,872 (the amount allocated per student from the state). This means that a voucher student receives, on average,

\$2,000 less in state money for his or her education. In addition, voucher students do not receive any federal or local dollars.

In the 2019-20 school year, Indiana awarded approximately \$173 million in school vouchers. If each of the 36,707 voucher students would have attended their district public school instead of a private school, the state would have spent approximately \$239 million in tuition support for those students. That's a savings to the state of about \$66 million.

MYTH 2: Choice does not lead to better academic outcomes for students.

FACTS: Student academic growth scores from the Indiana Department of Education, which measure the amount of assessed learning over a one-year period, found that in 2019 eight out of the top 10 schools were voucher-accepting schools. The top five schools in terms of growth were all voucher-accepting schools.

In terms of student proficiency, which is measured by pass rates on state standardized tests, findings from the 2018 ILEARN/ISTEP tests revealed: Six of the top seven schools in the state on the ISTEP 10 were non-public (voucher) schools. Twenty-five of the top 50 high schools were non-public (voucher) schools. Nineteen of the top 50 grade 3-8 schools were non-public (voucher) schools.

MYTH 3: Choice programs do not have the same accountability as public schools.

FACTS: All voucher-accepting non-public schools must be accredited.

Voucher-accepting non-public schools must administer the



Today's Catholic file photo

ILEARN test and receive A-F grades like all other schools.

Unlike public schools, voucher-accepting non-public schools are subject to consequences if they are low academic performers for two years (D- or F-rated schools).

The truest form of accountability is choice. No one is automatically assigned to a non-public school. Parents have to choose to send their child to one of these schools, and they can also choose to leave that school if it is not working.

MYTH 4: Choice programs allow for discrimination.

FACTS: Nine out of 10 national empirical studies show that choice programs lead to less segregation.

Voucher students are lower-income compared to traditional public school students. Statewide, 70% of voucher students are on free and reduced-price lunch compared to 47% of public school students.

Voucher students in Indiana are more racially diverse compared to traditional public school students. Voucher students: 57% white, 43% minority. Traditional public school students: 68% white, 32% minority.

Established in 1974, the INPEA is a leading advocate for parents' ability to choose the best school setting for their children. The organization has been an important choice coalition partner during the 10 years of the Indiana Choice Scholarship (voucher) Program and is a key resource for schools, education leaders and public officials.

For more information, including access to INPEA podcasts, position papers and research

VOUCHERS, from page 5

and plainly self-interested arguments made against this program by the usual special interests only underscore its validity. I will always be proud that Indiana has established itself as a national leader in expanding opportunity and protecting the interests of its less fortunate citizens in this critical realm of life."

'Every piece is essential'

For Glenn Tebbe, who served as executive director of the ICC during those years, Daniels' support and influence cannot be overstated when looking back on what occurred a decade ago.

"His commitment was critical to enable it to happen," said Tebbe, who retired last May after 16 years at the helm of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. "(School choice) will always be one of his greatest legacies in state government."

Tebbe recalled strategy sessions at the governor's residence with other key players, including



Today's Catholic file photo

Elcesser, who took over Tebbe's former role at the INPEA in 2008.

"Gov. Daniels was very engaged throughout the process," Tebbe said. "He put several questions directly at me, making sure we were going to do our part if he was doing his part."

The issue of providing support for families to help them direct their children's education had been a matter of long-standing importance to the Catholic Church, according to Tebbe. In fact, it was one of the priorities that the ICC took on after its for-

mation in 1966.

An early success came 50 years ago, when the ICC, working in partnership with other stakeholders including Lutherans in the state, built a strong case that non-public schools provided a vital public service and saved Indiana taxpayers at least \$78 million annually. History was made on March 12, 1971, when the Indiana House passed the first bill that would have provided state aid to non-public schools.

Although the bill was later voted down by the Senate, this effort laid the groundwork for future efforts by the ICC and its allies, who would see major success in decades to come. In 2009, also during the Daniels administration, the state legislature passed the Scholarship Tax Credit program, which built momentum for the school choice legislation that would follow two years later.

From the beginning of the ICC's efforts, and now continuing under the leadership of Tebbe's successor, Angela Espada, partnering with allies has been key.

"Working collaboratively with

others was the model from the beginning, and this is how the school choice legislation eventually passed," Tebbe said. "It's like a mosaic. There are a lot of different pieces, and every piece is essential. It's not a complete picture until that last piece is in place, and that's what happened 10 years ago."

'Still the gold standard'

Another key player — and one who brought experience in both private and public school education to the table — was Dr. Tony Bennett, who was elected state superintendent of public instruction during the Daniels administration.

A product of Catholic schools, the graduate of Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville, Ind., ran for the office in 2008 and won, playing a critical role in shepherding the governor's ambitious education reform agenda. In doing so, he and others in state government at the time faced fierce opposition

VOUCHERS, from page 8

from teachers' unions and other organizations — many of the same critics opposing the expansion legislation at the Statehouse today.

Legal challenges also followed the 2011 legislation, but in 2013, the Indiana Supreme Court unanimously ruled the program constitutional, arguing that it is the families — not the schools — that mainly benefit from it.

Bennett says he is heartened by the fact that since Indiana led the way in 2011 with the most comprehensive school choice program in the nation, so many states have passed or are currently considering school choice legislation.

"I believe that what we did has withstood the test of time," said Bennett, who now serves as senior vice president of K12 Inc., the nation's leading provider of online school curricula. "Indiana's school choice program is still considered the gold standard."

He and others credit key members of the coalition like Robert Enlow, currently president and chief executive officer of education reform organization EdChoice, with helping to craft the robust public policy case behind the Choice Scholarship legislation.

In recent months, The Wall Street Journal has covered school choice extensively, including research from the University of Arkansas that reveals better test results and student growth in states offering more school options.

Betsy Wiley, who served as deputy chief of staff in the Daniels administration and remains heavily involved in the school choice movement, points to this and other evidence to support the case for school choice. And like other advocates, she is a staunch supporter of the expansion legislation under review at the Statehouse.

"Mitch was always a true believer in education being the great equalizer," said Wiley, now president and chief executive officer of the Institute for Quality Education and Hoosiers for Quality Education. "Having that support at the very top, combined with the support that our coalition was able to put together at the grassroots level is what drove success 10 years ago."

"But not every family in Indiana has every option available to them yet," Wiley continued. "Until that happens, we still have more work to do."

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.

CHILDREN, from page 7

said. "They're going to do everything they can to make sure their reputation is squeaky clean and that they are thought of in high regard."

Parents need to observe potential grooming patterns, and the first place is to look closely at "who is forming really close relationships with my kids." Hartvigsen explained perpetrators are methodical and will often use touch to slowly test boundaries.

"Touch can be very appropriate at the beginning, but [the perpetrator] is methodical, and what happens over time is it escalates into inappropriate touch," he said.

Other boundary violations involve "inappropriate jokes" to see how a child reacts or communicating and sharing materials directly in a way that bypasses their parents, such as through texts, calls or email.

A later point of escalation is to get the child to test a boundary that the perpetrator knows the parents won't be happy about and "use that as an intimidation factor."

"They'll threaten [the child]: If you don't do this or that, I'll let your parents know about [what they did wrong]," Hartvigsen said.

Signs of grooming, by their nature, are far more difficult to discern. But Applewhite said parents should confidently enforce boundaries and not try to figure out first whether a potential boundary violation was intentional or accidental. She said when a parent intervenes, a person who accidentally crossed a boundary will understand, apologize and make sure never

to do it again; on the other hand, a person who responds to the parent's intervention by becoming angry should not be around one's children.

Applewhite said this correction of another person should be done, ideally, in front of the child, or, if not, the child should be immediately informed that the person was corrected.

Healthy sexuality and boundaries

Both Hartvigsen and Peeler recommended parents have regular age-appropriate conversations with their kids about appropriate signs of affection, consent, safe and unsafe touch, developmental changes in their body, puberty and the appropriate names for body parts.

Peeler said the most vulnerable children are those who cannot communicate effectively. He said parents need to establish with their children an "open and honest dialogue about what they're experiencing and the situations they're in, so the risk goes down."

"The ideas of boundaries, consent, actually having a conversation about what is safe or appropriate or inappropriate touch are all really critical conversations to have with your children," he said. Peeler added that these conversations are also critical to help prevent one's child from becoming a perpetrator.

Many times child-perpetrators are "acting out what they've seen," and, unfortunately, the average age of a child's first exposure to pornography is 11 years old.

Applewhite agreed that parents need to make sure they edu-

cate their children about healthy sexuality first, so they can talk with their children about sexual abuse and sexual boundaries. If parents are silent about sex, their children won't have any reference point to be able to identify the abuse. Because victimization happens at tender ages, waiting until a child is 18 is "too late."

Applewhite said prevention starts with teaching the sacredness of the human body.

"Everyone should be able to get these resources through their dioceses," she said. "Every diocese since 2002 has been required to have that."

Although these discussions are difficult for parents, experts believe that large-scale awareness is key to depriving perpetrators of the secretive environment they need to abuse children.

Applewhite said she is exploring with the Knights the development of a guide for parents to discuss the video with their children, particularly in the age range of 8 to 12 years old. A spokesperson for the Knights said they would be looking at further steps following the group's general convention.

"We can make a significant impact," Peeler said. He pointed out that the ubiquity of home fire alarms and car seats has shown how society can successfully reduce serious harm to children. "Those statistics have all declined — we can make an improvement as a society if we want to make this an issue. Part of our job is to say: 'This can't continue.'"

Peter Jesserer Smith is a Register staff writer. © 2021 EWTN News, Inc. Reprinted with permission from the National Catholic Register — www.ncregister.com.

Catholic Kid's Corner
 "Let the little children come to me." Mt. 9:14

This week, I will follow Jesus by:

Monday
 Tuesday
 Wednesday
 Thursday
 Friday
 Saturday

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

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Faith in the storm: navigating loss

BY JENNIFER BARTON

In life, there is a habit of storms occurring in the paths of ordinary people.

There is little argument that the last year brought fierce storms to many. The measure of a person's faith is how they choose to handle being tossed about during unforeseen situations.

When they lost their husband and father, Lillian and Autumn Leap faced a challenging time with incredible faith in God's providence and will.

In the weeks prior to Christmas, John Leap came down with symptoms of COVID-19 and was admitted into the hospital. On Christmas Eve, he was placed on a ventilator and by Jan. 16 had succumbed to the virus.

During the long weeks while he fought the illness, his wife, Lillian, stated how she and their daughter would talk to him daily, hoping he could hear them even though he never regained consciousness.

"I can't put it into words exactly what he represented to us and how much we miss him. We miss him a great deal and it's just a massive void," Lillian said.

And yet, one does not get a sense of sadness or loss in Lillian's presence, but a completely different feeling – a feeling of peace and even joy. Lillian explained.

"I think we couldn't have done it without God's help and without God's strength. Every day we were praying and every day, in the middle of not knowing what was happening, He brought us peace."



Provided by Lillian Leap

Mother and daughter Lillian and Autumn Leap have been each other's strength through the loss of their husband and father, John, in January. During the same time period Lillian was recognized as a superior performer in her job as an interpreter for Saint Joseph Health System in Mishawaka.

"I believe that we put our trust in Him and we knew that at the end of the day, He would make the decision. If it was for God to take him, obviously we have no say in the matter and we understood that that was His decision and we would be OK with that," Lillian stated.

On the day John died, Autumn felt God working in her heart. She shared, "We had gone to Mass and I remember just being so filled with thoughts like 'this could happen' or 'that could happen.' And it was almost jarring for me at the Mass because everything felt like it was happening in slow motion. But right in the middle of the homily, the Holy Spirit was so powerful. It turned all of that restless energy into a

determination, like a readiness that no matter what happens – and something very real could happen today – I was so ready for it because the Spirit was right there and moving."

Immediately after Mass they received a call from the hospital to come and visit John, and later that day learned that he was gone.

Lillian remembers John as a kind man, a good provider and someone who loved to share new experiences with her and their daughter. The two met in Indianapolis and celebrated 20 years of marriage last year. The three used to volunteer at Our Lady of the Road, serving breakfast to the homeless.

The Leap family has also been involved at their parish, Queen

of Peace in Mishawaka, for over a decade since they moved to the area from California. Autumn attended grade school and received her sacraments there. The parish family has provided a tremendous support for the Leaps throughout this tragedy, particularly Father John Eze, pastor of Queen of Peace.

"It's a very special church for us," Lillian said. "The community has been praying for us. Even if we don't know who they are sometimes, we get little notes or Mass intentions. They have been so superb."

The parish has not been the only source of comfort for Lillian and Autumn. Lillian is a Third-Order Franciscan, an organization of lay people who dedicate them-

selves to following the teachings of St. Francis of Assisi. She explained that her group meets once a month to continue growing in faith together. Participation in the Franciscan order has greatly strengthened her faith life and blessed her during this time, she said.

Oftentimes, even when the rain falls, God seems to send a rainbow. For Autumn, this came in the form of the same pandemic that took her father's life. She should have spent her first year of college away from home, studying at Yale University in Connecticut, which did begin in-person. Since Thanksgiving break, however, she has been studying online at home, which is certainly not her preference. But the misfortune turned into a blessing, as she was able to be physically present with her mother throughout the last weeks of John's life. It also gave her the opportunity to fully process the changes and prepare for the eventual outcome.

"I was really glad to have been here while everything was happening because it would have been a totally different game if I'd been away at college and just receiving phone calls."

Lillian concurred, leaning on her daughter for encouragement. "I'm so touched by her faith as well. She's been a good supporter and I know she doesn't like it — I don't think any student likes to study virtually ... but I'm glad she is here at this difficult time with me."

In her work as a medical interpreter for Saint Joseph Health System in Mishawaka, Lillian was recently recognized as an outstanding employee by David Hofstra, administrative director of imaging and therapy services. Even though her husband had passed away barely more than a week prior, Lillian was able to set aside her grief to aid a Spanish-speaking family with a complicated medical question via telephone. Hofstra was impressed by Lillian's ability to help with "competence, incredible patience, and with tenderness in her voice."

For Lillian, it was not a matter of hiding her grief, but putting herself second to perform a job that she loves. "I always ask the Lord every day to make sure that my journey with Him and my work is always what He would like me to do so He can always be proud of me in my job. So when I do my job, I do it with love and with respect."

Lillian recognizes the hand of God working in her life in other amazing ways. The recognition she has received in the past couple of months has touched her deeply, bolstering her faith and her spirit.

"It was like something lifted. I'm not sure what it is, but something beautiful lifted inside me then. It made me realize that life is still beautiful, and that people and the community care. That love you don't see is truly there, and it feels beautiful."

	Wednesday, April 21	Thursday, April 22	Friday, April 23
7a	Founders Hour	Seminarian Hour	St. John the Evangelist Goshen
8a	Womens Care Center	Our Lady of Good Hope Fort Wayne	Queen of Peace Mishawaka
9a	Bishop Luers High School	Bishop Dwenger High School	Saint Matthew Cathedral South Bend
10a	Saint Anthony South Bend	Double your Dollar Tippmann Hour	Saint Therese Little Flower South Bend
11a	Saint Charles Borromeo Fort Wayne	Saint Joseph Hessen Cassel	Saint Thomas the Apostle Elkhart
12p	Bishop Rhoades	Saint John the Baptist Fort Wayne	Saint Vincent Fort Wayne
1p	Saint Jude Fort Wayne	Most Precious Blood Fort Wayne	Saint Elizabeth Fort Wayne
2p	Saint Joseph Hill Street, South Bend	Saint Pius X Granger	Sacred Heart Warsaw
3p	Saint Monica Mishawaka	Saint John the Baptist New Haven	Huntington Catholic Fort Wayne Studio
4p	Saint Michael Plymouth	Queen of Angels Fort Wayne	Saint Anthony, Angola Fort Wayne Studio
5p	Corpus Christi South Bend	Redeemer Radio Interns	St. Louis Besancon Fort Wayne Studio
6p	University of Saint Francis	Doctor, Doctor Fort Wayne Studio	Rekindle the Fire





Christ Child Society of South Bend — Fostering comfort for children

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

“There are no words for how grateful we are. When these amazing ladies brought the first bags of gifts for the foster children in our care, all I could do was cry,” said Yesenia Wilkinson, program manager with the National Youth Advocate Program.

Since mid-November, the Christ Child Society of South Bend’s new program, Foster Hope, has put together totes with personalized name tags for over 160 local children ages newborn-17 who are served by NYAP and Benchmark Family Services.

In addition to accessing a free supply of new shoes, boots, winter coats, books and clothing, as every child is welcome to receive from the Christ Child Society, children in foster care with the agencies are now being given duffel bags stuffed with toiletries, pajamas, slippers, fleece blankets and age-appropriate comfort items like stuffed animals.

The new outreach is the brainchild of Susan Coulter, who became involved with Christ Child Society about five years ago when her youngest son became a student at Marian High School, Mishawaka. Trained as a speech pathologist, she had been able to stay home while her three boys were younger. As they grew older, she began looking for a service opportunity. It quickly became a passion.

Coulter said she loves that the ladies of the Christ Child Society provide high-quality clothing to the neediest children and that their work is appreciated in the community. For example, when a principal learned students in her school were being bullied because of their shabby clothes, the administrator sat down and wrote them a referral to the Christ Child Society. The next day, she reported, the students’ classmates were asking, “Where did you get those cool shoes?”

In her role as receptionist at the new Christ Child Society location in Town & Country Shopping Centre, Coulter fielded a request from the NYAP to become a referring agency. Instead of having them fill out the necessary paperwork, Coulter took the director on a tour so she could see the shoes selected by the “sole sisters,” the books every young Christ Child Society child receives as well as the full scope of what the Christ Child Society provides. Expecting a cluttered thrift-store setup, the director said she was overwhelmed by the quality and organization of the clothing.

As Coulter learned more about NYAP’s work with vulnerable children, she began to envision Foster Hope — a program through which every child coming into therapeutic foster care



Photos provided by Beth Barrett

Bags of gifts, clothes and toiletries prepared by Christ Child Society of South Bend volunteers stand ready to be given out to local children who have entered therapeutic foster care. The organization entered last fall into a relationship with National Youth Advocate Program and Benchmark Family Services to form Foster Hope, a Christ Child Society initiative to support and show God’s love to foster care children.



From left, Jane Reed, Betsie Pendarvis and Susan Wendowski, volunteers with the Christ Child Society of South Bend, prepare a tote bag for a young girl entering foster care.

could swiftly receive a few special items to call their own.

“These children are the neediest of the needy,” she said. “They’ve already been traumatized so much. I wanted better for them than a few items stuffed into a garbage bag.” At Ikea she found large, colorful totes, which she fluffs to look even more beautiful before the gifts are added.

Although the new program significantly expands the annual budget of the Christ Child

Society, which is funded entirely by donations, the organization’s board of directors unanimously approved Coulter’s proposal to enter into a charitable relationship with NYAP. That meant expanding the age of children the society usually serves to include teenagers and procuring age-appropriate gifts and toiletries. At the suggestion of caseworkers, those items include a shower caddy to keep each child’s personal items separate.

For a child who has abruptly had to leave home, Coulter learned, it is very reassuring to have things specially selected for him or her, guided by what the caseworker is able to find out regarding sizes and favorite colors.

Foster children are often incredulous when they receive their duffel bags, she said. One who happened to be in the office for an appointment when some totes were dropped off asked, “What’s this for? It can’t be for

me. You’ve got to be kidding!” Another foster child refused to let go of her Build-A-Bear cat that was dressed in office attire; it went everywhere with her.

Children often put on their brand-new shoes right away. If something doesn’t fit, they bring it back to exchange it and so the too-small shoes can bless another child.

Because of the pandemic, the Christ Child Society had to modify several processes. Usually, the University of Notre Dame women’s basketball team sponsors a Teddy Bear Toss during one of its games each year, to which fans bring stuffed animals for the organization to give away. When that didn’t happen, Coulter searched and found a request for donations on the Build-A-Bear website. Filling out the form was so time-consuming that she modified her initial plan and instead asked for the maximum 1,000 Build-A-Bears to donate to the foster children. She got them: three pallets’ worth.

Coulter and Foster Hope co-chairman Patty Banet have set up a table at the Christ Child Society location. There, they assemble the duffels. Other volunteers often leave special donations on that table. Coulter put one such item, a Spider-Man toy, into a 5-year-old boy’s duffel bag recently. When she dropped it off, the caseworker exclaimed, “How did you know he loves Spider-Man?!”

Like the entire Foster Hope program, “It was a godwink,” said Coulter.

Numbers down and 'nones' up, where to now?

As if the bishops needed anything more to worry about these days, Gallup released a poll just before Easter documenting a sharp decline in religious membership among Americans over the past two decades.

Unfortunately, the percentage decline for Americans belonging to the Catholic Church was one of the steepest. What this means for the future is a subject of growing concern in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the drop-off in Mass attendance that the pandemic forced.

Gallup, which has been monitoring Americans' affiliation with churches, synagogues and mosques for more than 80 years, says that last year was the first time that the membership number has dropped below 50%.

According to the polling company, 47% of Americans belong to some house of worship, down from 50% in 2018 and 70% in 1999. The third millennium, far from inspiring a religious revival, has seen a rapid shrinkage in religious practice in what has been one of the most religious countries in the developed world.

A growing number of Americans are not expressing any religious preference, and in all age groups, the number that are explicitly saying they are unaffiliated with any church is growing. This includes 31% of millennials and 33% of Generation Z — that is, the future.

When looked at in terms of religious groups, the largest decline is for Catholics. From 1999 until today, the percentage

of Catholics has declined from 76% to 58%, double the percentage decline for Protestants. Other studies have noted a decline in sacramental marriages and baptisms among Catholics as well, also boding ill for the future.

For Catholics, the past two decades span the peak of the sexual abuse crisis. The corresponding lack of faith in the institution may be mirroring broader trends in society, however, including a decline across religious faiths and demographic groups that suggests strong cultural forces at work.

While the United States remains a religious country compared to Europe, for example, the pace of decline in the past 20 years suggests no quick turnaround in the trend line. Should the decline pick up speed in the wake of the pandemic, business as usual for many churches will not be an option.

One consequence of this decline may be an intensifying of political divisions. That is the conclusion of Shadi Hamid, writing in *The Atlantic*. He notes the sharp decline in church membership and the growth in "nones." But contrary to what secularists may hope, he says society may be becoming more divided, not less.

"As Christianity's hold, in particular, has weakened," he writes, "ideological intensity and fragmentation have risen. American faith, it turns out, is as fervent as ever; it's just that what was once religious belief has now been channeled into political belief. Political debates



AMID THE FRAY

GREG ERLANDSON

over what America is supposed to mean have taken on the character of theological disputations. This is what religion without religion looks like."

This has impacted the Catholic Church as well, where the melding of political ideology with ostensibly religious belief has meant that the fault lines in the Church increasingly mirror political fault lines.

The polarization of the faithful has been accompanied by an apocalyptic retreat to "a smaller and purer church," on the one hand, and a willingness to embrace unhesitatingly the trends and values of a larger culture increasingly unmoored from Christian teaching on the other.

How Church leaders will steer their dioceses between these twin temptations, what the Church of the future will look like and how Christians will bear witness in an increasingly fractious secular culture are the stark challenges of this millennium's first century.

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

Confusions about blessings

"The Catholic Church has dealt a blow to LGBTQ worshippers hoping for a more liberal, progressive church." So says NBC News about a recent statement by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

What was this terrible blow? The congregation, with Pope Francis' approval, reaffirmed that the Church does not "have the power" to bless same-sex unions — or any relationship involving sexual activity outside of marriage, "the indissoluble union of a man and a woman open in itself to the transmission of life."

The Church cannot change its teaching for self-styled "liberals" or "conservatives," as it must serve the designs of God found in Scripture and fully revealed by Christ.

The statement also recognized that same-sex relationships may have "positive elements" to be valued, although they exist "within the context of a union not ordered to the Creator's plan." It said the Church should welcome with respect and compassion people who have same-sex attraction, opposing all unjust discrimination.

Priests may even bless "individual persons with homosexual inclinations, who manifest the will to live in fidelity to the revealed plans of God proposed by Church teaching." In fact, "God himself never ceases to bless each of his pilgrim people in this world," because "we are more important to God than all of the sins that we can commit."

In other words, God rejects sin but loves the sinner, and the Church must do likewise. Or as



A MORE HUMAN SOCIETY

RICHARD DOERFLINGER

an accompanying commentary says, "the negative judgment on the blessing of unions of persons of the same sex does not imply a judgment on persons."

All this was lost on NBC News — and on its guest Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry. He had said in October that comments by Pope Francis on gay people would be a "tidal wave" sweeping away the Church's past teaching and practice. He now says that Francis has only approved the new statement under "pressure" from the Vatican, apparently ignoring who runs the Vatican.

What Francis had said, in a documentary, was: "Homosexual people have the right to be in a family. They are children of God. ... Nobody should be thrown out or made miserable over it." Some decided to interpret him as saying that same-sex unions create families, but he was recognizing people's need to keep receiving love and understanding from their own families.

That documentary also took out of context a position Francis has held since he was archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina, when lawmakers were moving

DOERFLINGER, page 13

The risen Lord is our offering for sin



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Third Sunday of Easter Luke 24:35-48

The Acts of the Apostles again furnishes the first biblical reading. Almost every Sunday in the Easter season features a reading from this book of the New Testament. In this reading, Peter preaches to the crowd in Jerusalem.

Americans are very accustomed to impassioned preaching. They hear it in their own churches. They hear it on the radio. They hear it on television. Preaching about salvation and God's mercy is common.

Actually, to preach is to assume a mighty role and a great responsibility. Preaching,

after all, by definition, is not simply lecturing or speaking aloud. It is speaking in the very name of God.

Those who preached, by ancient Jewish standards, were privileged people in this sense. None chose to be a preacher. Rather, God selected each preacher. Peter stood before this Jerusalem crowd after having been called to preach, but most importantly, he spoke in the place of Jesus.

He preached the words of Jesus, on behalf of Jesus. This reading makes three points. First, it establishes the identity of Peter. He is an Apostle. Second, clearly, he is the chief of the Apostles. He speaks in the names of them all.

Finally, through Peter and the other Apostles, the salvation given by Jesus still reaches humankind. They continue the Lord's work.

The First Letter of John provides the second reading. The letter of John are alike in their eloquence and splendid language. They are alike in the depth of

their theology and revelation.

This reading proclaims the majesty of Jesus, the Savior. It cautions, however, that accepting Jesus as Lord is more than lip service. It is the actual living of the Commandments, by which and through which humans realize the perfection, love, order and peace of life in God.

St. Luke's Gospel provides the last reading.

It is another Resurrection narrative, and it looks back to the Emmaus story. The Emmaus story reports the walk to a small town outside Jerusalem by two disciples and by the risen Lord, and the disciples' recognition of Jesus in the "breaking of the bread," or Eucharist.

As this group of disciples was talking, Jesus stood in their midst. He was no longer bound by location or time. Risen from earthly life, victorious over sin, Jesus now lived in the fullness of eternity — still in the Incarnation, true God and true man.

He showed them His pierced hands and feet. Indeed, these

disciples were encountering the Crucified, but the Crucified had overcome death and lived!

Reflection

The Church continues to summon us to the joy of Easter celebration. He lives! This week, the readings once more exclaim the Church's great trust in and excitement about the Resurrection. As Paul said, the Resurrection is the bedrock of our belief.

In these readings, the Church calls us to the fact that our redemption is in Jesus. He rescues us from death, from the living death of sin and hopelessness, and from eternal death.

As did the Lord, all people, even all believers, must die. As Jesus rose, they too will rise if they do not relent in their love of and obedience to God. Thus, all believers can anticipate and provide for eternal life in God.

Christians further can rejoice in the fact that salvation did not pass away when Jesus, who lived for a time on earth, ascended

into heaven. His mercy and power remain. His words endure. God has provided for us, so that we too may have salvation. We may encounter Jesus. We may hear the Lord's words.

We reach the risen Jesus, and we learn of Jesus, from the Apostles. The Church carefully protects and echoes the words of Jesus as repeated by the Apostles. He lives for each of us.

READINGS

Sunday: Acts 3:13-15, 17-19 Ps 4:2, 7-9
1 Jn 2:1-5a Lk 24:35-48

Monday: Acts 6:8-15 Ps 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30 Jn 6:22-29

Tuesday: Acts 7:51—8:1a Ps 31:3cd-4m 6, 7b, 8a, 17, 21ab Jn 6:30-35

Wednesday: Acts 8:1b-8 Ps 66:1-3a, 4-7a Jn 6:35-40

Thursday: Acts 8:26-40 Ps 66:8-9, 16-17, 20 Jn 6:44-51

Friday: Acts 9:1-20 Ps 117:1bc, 2 Jn 6:52-59

Saturday: Acts 9:31-42 Ps 116:12-17 Jn 6:60-69

'I have not yet ascended'

What does Jesus mean when he tells Mary Magdalene not to cling to Him because he has not yet ascended?

As the Easter Octave unfolds, we have in the Gospel this enigmatic statement of Our Lord Jesus to Mary Magdalene: Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God." (John 20:17)

There is much to ponder and distinguish here.

First, we should set aside certain previous translations that rendered "Do not cling to me" as "Do not touch me." The latter sounds almost rude. The Greek expression "Μή μου ἅπτου" ("Me mou haptou") is best rendered, "Do not go on clinging to me," because "haptou" is a verb in the middle voice.

The middle voice is one that English lacks. It is midway between the active and passive voices and indicates that the subject of the verb — in this case, Mary — both acts and is acted upon. Mary lays hold of the Lord but needs to do so because something is different. Something deeper is being shown to her and she is missing that. Mary actively sees Jesus but passively needs to receive something new about Him. This is the middle voice, containing elements of both the active and the passive.

Further, as Strong's Greek dictionary sets forth, "ἅπτω" ("haptou") means "to fasten to," "to adhere to," or "to cling to." What the Lord asks of Mary is that she not merely cling to what is familiar, but step back and see what is new. Jesus is no longer a mere rabbi or teacher. He is not merely the Jesus she knew; He is Lord and He is risen.

Second, St. Thomas Aquinas summarizes St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom on the meaning of the Lord's ascending.

Augustine says in Summa Theologiae III: "... Jesus would have us to believe in Him, i.e., to touch Him spiritually, as being Himself one with the Father. For to that man's innermost perceptions He is, in some sort, ascended unto the Father, who has become so far proficient in Him, as to recognize in Him the equal with the Father ... whereas she as yet believed in Him but carnally, since she wept

for Him as for a man." Or as Chrysostom says: "This woman wanted to converse with Christ just as before the Passion, and out of joy was thinking of nothing great, although Christ's flesh had become much nobler by rising again." And therefore He said: "I have not yet ascended to My Father"; as if to say: "Do not suppose I am leading an earthly life; for if you see Me upon earth, it is because I have not yet ascended to My Father, but I am going to ascend shortly." Hence He goes on to say: "I ascend to My Father, and to your Father."

In other words, Jesus' ascent must take place in Mary, as it must in every other follower. He is far more than a man resuming mortal nature. He is more; He is Lord. We must come to see Him as Lord and God. He must ascend in our sight. We must see Him at a higher level and in a higher way. He is no mere sage or rabbi; He is Lord and God! He must ascend in this way, in our understanding.

In Jesus' public ministry, Mary had rightly revered Jesus as teacher and rabbi, but Jesus the Lord is doing more now than merely leading an earthly life and fitting into earthly categories.

In effect, Jesus is saying to Mary, "Don't go on clinging to what in Me is familiar to you. Step back, take a good look, and then go tell my brothers what you see."

When Mary Magdalene has done this, she runs to the apostles and says, "I have seen the LORD." (Jn 20:18) I show the word "LORD" in uppercase in this quote because up until this point, Mary used the word "Lord" as a title of human respect. She said, "They have taken my Lord and I don't know where they have put Him." Of course, one doesn't take Him and put Him anywhere. He is LORD, and He does as He pleases. No longer clinging to Him in merely a familiar way, Mary now says, "I have seen the LORD," meaning it in a plenary and divine sense.

For Mary, the Lord is ascending. She is seeing Him in a higher way. The Lord has ascended for Mary Magdalene. Has He ascended for you?

Finally, what of the Lord's expression that He is ascending to "My Father and your Father, to My God and your God"?

In English, we can use the word "and" in either an equivalent



COMMUNITY IN MISSION

MSGR. CHARLES POPE

or a comparative sense. I could say to someone, "You are my brother and my friend." This uses the "and of equivalence" because it indicates that you are both a brother and a friend to me in the same or in an equivalent way.

Other uses of the word "and" indicate a more comparative sense. When we say that Jesus is Son of God and Son of Mary, we mean that He is the Son of His Father in a different way than He is Son of Mary. He is the Son of both but in very different ways. In the liturgy, when the priest says, "Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the almighty Father," he indicates that while his sacrifice and the sacrifice of the people are both sacrifices, they are sacrifices in different ways. The priest acts in "persona Christi capitis" — in the person of Christ the head — while the faithful act as members of the body. Both are rightly called sacrifices, but they are so in different ways.

Thus, when Jesus says that He is ascending to "My Father and your Father," He does not use the "and of equivalence" but the "and of comparison." As a man, Jesus can speak of God as His Father, but His human nature is hypostatically united to His divine nature as God, the Second Person of the Trinity. So, although God is our Father and Christ's Father, He is Christ's Father in a far richer and more profound way.

Jesus says, "My God and your God" not by way of equivalence, but by way of comparison.

In all these ways, the Lord Jesus must ascend in our understanding. He will do that provided we do not go on clinging to Him in a merely human and familiar way.

Let the Lord ascend in your life.

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

DOERFLINGER, from page 12

forward with same-sex marriage legislation: A law allowing "civil unions," recognizing certain legal rights for people in nonmarital relationships, is preferable to a law confusing those relationships with marriage.

Then-Archbishop William J. Levada of San Francisco had taken a similar position shortly before Pope Benedict XVI named him to lead the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and made him a cardinal.

But Francis has also written that "there are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God's plan for marriage and family" ("Amoris Laetitia," No. 251) — perhaps the least pastoral-sounding quote in the new Vatican statement.

Some say LGBTQ people and those who love them will leave the Church over its teaching. That would be a tragedy, especially if it arises from a false and cynical narrative by activists try-

ing to divide the Church. Catholics would be leaving a sanctuary of God's mercy and forgiveness to face a secular culture with its own strict orthodoxy and punishments — including the blacklisting of books, careers and reputations, and no mercy at all.

Richard Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He writes from Washington state.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for April 18, 2021

Luke 24:35-48

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Third Sunday of Easter, Cycle B: the risen Jesus appears to the disciples. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| BREAKING
STARTLED
YOUR HEARTS
FLESH
A PIECE
MY WORDS
PSALMS | BREAD
A GHOST
LACK OF
BONES
FISH
I SPOKE
SUFFER | PEACE
ARISE
TOUCH ME
TO EAT
ATE IT
LAW OF MOSES
WITNESSES |
|---|---|---|

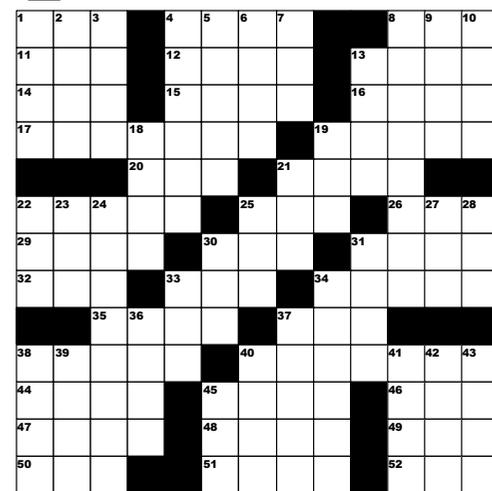
A PIECE OF FISH

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

April 18, and 25, 2021



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Readings: Acts 3:13-15, 17-19; Lk 24:35-48 and Acts 4:8-12; Jn 10:11-18

ACROSS

- 1 Duet
- 4 Falls over
- 8 Pace
- 11 Sign language
- 12 ___ of the Apostles
- 13 Discount
- 14 Employ
- 15 "___ from the dead"
- 16 "The ___ vine"
- 17 Grazed
- 19 Bethlehem was not ___
- 20 ___ Father
- 21 Explosive device
- 22 Dales
- 25 Wooden leg
- 26 Inlet

- 29 Barber's call
- 30 Her
- 31 India dress
- 32 Luau dish
- 33 What a cow chews
- 34 Jesus Christ is ___"
- 35 Store
- 37 Egg layer
- 38 Ditto (2 wds.)
- 40 Very aware of trends
- 44 Cain's brother
- 45 Drill a hole
- 46 Manger bedding
- 47 St. Anthony nickname
- 48 Golf tournament
- 49 North American nation
- 50 Trinitrotoluene

- 51 Nearly horizontal entrance
- 52 Foxes have, according to Jesus

DOWN

- 1 Smear
- 2 Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
- 3 Margarine
- 4 Saul came from here
- 5 Colder
- 6 Post-traumatic stress disorder
- 7 Compass point
- 8 Released in Jesus' place
- 9 Positive
- 10 Contest
- 13 Body of a plant
- 18 Accustomed
- 19 Lumber
- 21 Honey maker
- 22 Gross national product (abbr.)
- 23 Pope name
- 24 Extant
- 25 Doctoral degree
- 27 "Blessed ___ you"
- 28 Yang's partner
- 30 Eat
- 31 Breaks commandments
- 33 Dove sound
- 34 "___ and be converted"
- 36 "The ___ and righteous one"
- 37 "___ man" (worker)
- 38 Matthew's Gospel (abbr.)
- 39 Dark in hue
- 40 N.A. Indian of Arizona
- 41 Fall heavily
- 42 Alleviate
- 43 Irish name for "little king"
- 45 Constrictor

Answer key can be found on page 15

NCEA, from page 4

change policies and then have to go back to them, it is confusing.

"Let's just keep working with what's working for right now," she said.

"There are so many things you can do, so just drop the negative of what you can't do and your whole experience will be much, much better," Lisa Abner, a preschool teacher at St. Benedict's School just outside Chicago, told the online workshop participants.

And amid all the challenges and new ways of doing things for teachers and principals, there have also been lessons for students that likely won't come up on any assessment tests.

Martha Holladay, who teaches Advanced Placement English literature and composition at Padua Academy, a girls Catholic school in Wilmington, Delaware, said her students are learning what they need to and also are "learning intangibles."

"They're learning gifts of the Holy Spirit. They're practicing

wisdom, fortitude, self-control, other-centeredness, resilience. These are all things that we want our children to learn, and they are learning it," she told Catholic News Service March 30.

Holladay, like other teachers at Padua Academy, has been teaching a hybrid format since the fall. Some students are there in person while others are attending virtually, often by FaceTime on other students' phones, which are moved around the classroom so the virtual students are included in every discussion and activity.

She said if someone told her decades ago she would be teaching this way, she wouldn't have believed it, but the experience has taught her "that these girls are flexible, they're resilient. They want to learn, and they really want to be good people."

"That encourages me," she added. "It gives me hope."

Contributing to this story was Chaz Muth in Wilmington.



CNS photo/Chaz Muth

Catholic high school student Chelsea Venters sits next to a stand holding smartphones with two fellow students joining the class through FaceTime at Padua Academy in Wilmington, Del., March 30. The students participating virtually from home could participate in this particular lesson through smartphone technology.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

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 freewill 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 offer a musical evening of familiar songs and beautiful hymns of hope to help bring Christ's healing from the many challenges of the past year Thursday, April 22, at 7 p.m. Robert Rogers at the piano will be joined by his children in song. This event will also be streamed at www.saintv.org, Facebook and YouTube. Contact Dorothy Schuerman 260-489-3537.

The Way of St. Joseph Pilgrimage
MISHAWAKA — Celebrate the Year of St. Joseph by participating in a family-friendly walking pilgrimage from St. Joseph Church, Mishawaka, to St. Joseph Church, South Bend,

on Saturday, May 1, the feast of St. Joseph the Worker. The Way of St. Joseph will begin at 9 a.m. at St. Joseph Church, Mishawaka, wind its way along the River Walk, and eventually end up at St. Joseph Church, South Bend. There will be three other on-ramps along the way. The event will end with a prayer service, food and fellowship in the fenced-in parking lot and playground at St. Joseph Parish. The event is free, but registration is strongly recommended. For more information and to register, visit: diocesefwsb.org/joseph-pilgrimage.

REST IN PEACE

Fort Wayne
 James R. Glaza, 63,
 St. Vincent de Paul

Sandra Palmersheim,
 81, St. Charles
 Borromeo

Granger
 Paul Wasulko, 93,
 St. Pius X

Huntington
 Brian D. McCoy, 48,
 SS. Peter and Paul

New Haven
 Virgil Huguenard, 98,
 St. Louis, Besancon

South Bend
 Janice C. Blazi, 86,
 Christ the King

Craig Hartzell, 73,
 Sacred Heart

William Mack, 83,
 Christ the King

Slate Sulentic, 26,
 St. Adalbert

Springs of Hope: Virtual Mother's Day retreat

FORT WAYNE — This retreat is for all who long for motherhood. Whether you are experiencing primary or secondary infertility, miscarriage or loss, a diagnosis or unexplained and everything in between, this retreat is for you. Live and pre-recorded talks will explore "Belonging: To Christ in Marriage and in our communities." If you are carrying the cross of infertility, you are not alone. Free registration opened April 11. Visit www.springsinthedesert.org.

The Crossword

April 18 and 25, 2021

D	U	O	T	I	P	S	B	P	M		
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Building Manager

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is looking for a full time Building Manager. This management position is responsible for the overall appearance and successful operation of the Archbishop Noll Center (located in Fort Wayne) and its components including but not limited to: office set-up, moving furnishings for meetings, ensuring the good working order and maintenance of boilers, air conditioning, ventilation, elevators, lighting, generator, plumbing, maintenance supplies and equipment.

The Building Manager is also responsible for the purchasing of building equipment, making sure the Archbishop Noll Center is in compliance with all applicable regulations, and maintaining proper vehicle registration/title work for all diocesan-owned vehicles.

Apply at www.diocesefwsb.org/careers.



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Queen of Angels Catholic Church in Fort Wayne is looking for a full-time Pastoral Associate. The Pastoral Associate functions as an integral member of the parish staff, assisting the pastor with religious education as well as the planning and implementation of his vision for parish ministries and operations.

The Pastoral Associate:

Works independently or part of a pastoral team; is flexible; professional and confidential; communicates effectively with stakeholders through verbal, written and digital means; multi-tasks to handle varied workload and demonstrates a high level of technology proficiency.

The Pastoral Associate must have a deep understanding of the Catholic faith and be an active practicing member of a Roman Catholic faith community. Three years' experience in parish work or related field is desired. A bachelor's degree in religious education or theology is preferred.

Apply at <https://diocesefwsb.org/careers>
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www.queenofangelsfw.org

ST. THEODORE GUERIN HIGH SCHOOL PRESIDENT SEARCH

St. Theodore Guerin High School is a diocesan, college preparatory high school serving approximately 750 students in grades 9-12. The school is dedicated to its mission of educating students from diverse backgrounds and preparing them to be servant leaders through faith formation, academic excellence and student life. Nationally recognized as one of the Top 50 Catholic High Schools in the country, Guerin Catholic is located in the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana, and serves several communities in and around Noblesville, IN.



Essential Duties

- Ensures the Catholic mission of the school is developed and promoted among all stakeholders; embodies the expression of Catholic identity
- Serves as the CEO, overseeing all fiscal, advancement and supervisory operations
- Articulates the mission of the school to alumni, parents, faculty, staff and the wider community
- Inspires collaboration from all internal and external constituent groups, using exceptional relationship-building, interpersonal, and communication skills
- Develops and updates the strategic plan for the future of the school
- Serves as an administrative officer of both the Hamilton County Catholic High School Corporation Board and the School Governing Board

Qualifications

- Practicing Roman Catholic in good standing with the Catholic Church
- Proven success in advancing the mission of a business, nonprofit, or school
- Strong Advancement experience and financial acumen
- Transformational leader with innovative vision
- Leads with humility, serves with love, trusts in Providence

The anticipated start date of the President position is July 1, 2021. The President Profile and further information for this position can be found at www.guerincatholic.org

Guerin Catholic High School

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St. Theodore Guerin High School is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

KNIGHTS, from page 1

On Oct. 4, along a state highway, the Warsaw Knights prayed the rosary and individual prayers for the protection of all babies and their mothers. Less than a week later, at the Kosciusko County Courthouse, they prayed for the safety of the unborn, for families, and for the institution of marriage.

In December, returning to the courthouse, they prayed and sang Christmas carols for the protection of families, the institution of marriage and in celebration of the birth of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In January, for the sake of all life, they prayed another rosary and heard from four ministers, including Father Jonathan Norton of the Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw.

Addressing the Knights later Saturday evening, at the convention, Bishop Rhoades began by thanking the Knights on behalf of all the bishops of Indiana for all they do throughout the state to serve the Church and to assist the bishops in their mission to live and spread the faith, to serve parishes and to build up the body of Christ in the five dioceses of the state. "Your service of the Gospel in this portion of the vineyard of the Lord is a great blessing to us bishops," he told them.

Recounting some of the vast charitable organization's history, he noted that the Knights of Columbus spread to Indiana in 1899, just 17 years after it began in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1882. Its holy founder, Blessed



Nick Hankoff

Knights of Columbus members process during Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, April 10. The Mass was part of the 120th annual Indiana State Council Knights of Columbus meeting.

Father McGivney, who died at the young age of 38 in 1890, would not have imagined that the order he founded would have expanded to the Midwest so quickly, he said, let alone throughout the United States and the world in succeeding years.

"I often think of how the Knights of Columbus are like the mustard seed in the Gospel. Our Order, now with over 2 million members, continues to be a force for good in countless ways, a fraternity animated by Christ's love, that continues to respond to new challenges with the faith, love and creativity of Blessed Michael McGivney and the thousands of Knights that have gone before us. ... I pray his beatification inspires us all to be re-energized with his vision and motivated by his

example of holiness."

The Knights began in Indiana in 1899, he continued. There were other Catholic fraternal orders in Indiana and around the country before the Knights, but within a few decades, the Knights of Columbus far outpaced the others.

"The Knights of Columbus began because of the pastoral concern of a holy priest," said the bishop. "He saw the suffering of his people. He saw young men hurting and straying from the Church. He saw the ill effects on their families."

The roots of the organization Father Givney founded were strong, he said.

"We must stay connected to those roots, to the principles and ideals of the Order and to

the vision and holy example of Father McGivney. The roots are the Gospel of Jesus, faith in Jesus, active membership in His Church, active charity, care for the poor and needy, spiritual and material solidarity, and real and deep fraternity as Catholic brothers in Christ."

Speaking for himself, as one of the bishops of Indiana, Bishop Rhoades shared his hopes for the Knights of Columbus in the midst of the challenges the Church faces today. The first, "in the midst of division and polarization in the Church and society," was their unity in fidelity to the Church and her teachings.

"I am so grateful for the loyalty of the Knights: your solidarity with us bishops and with your priests: your commitment

to the Gospel of life – all you do protect human life and dignity; your solid defense of life in the womb, your service to the poor, the disabled, and the elderly. I so admire the Knights' solidarity with our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters in the Middle East and around the world, your dedication to religious freedom, and your concern for, and solidarity with, our immigrant brothers and sisters."

He challenged the Knights present to provide strong outreach to the newest group of immigrant Catholic men, mostly from Latin America, and their sons and grandsons.

"There is an urgent need, in my opinion, to significantly grow and increase K of C Hispanic membership. As you know, Latinos are our fastest-growing Catholic population in Indiana and in our nation. Let's remember our roots: immigrants, particularly Irish immigrants. Father McGivney was a son of Irish immigrants. The first Knights were immigrants or sons of immigrants."

In closing, he expressed gratitude to the Knights of Columbus in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend for their strong support of seminarians and priests and of priestly and religious vocations.

"Let's move forward strongly connected to our roots and to the vision of Father McGivney! May we strive to imitate his virtues, his faith, his love, his hard and energetic work, and his fidelity to Jesus and the Church!"

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