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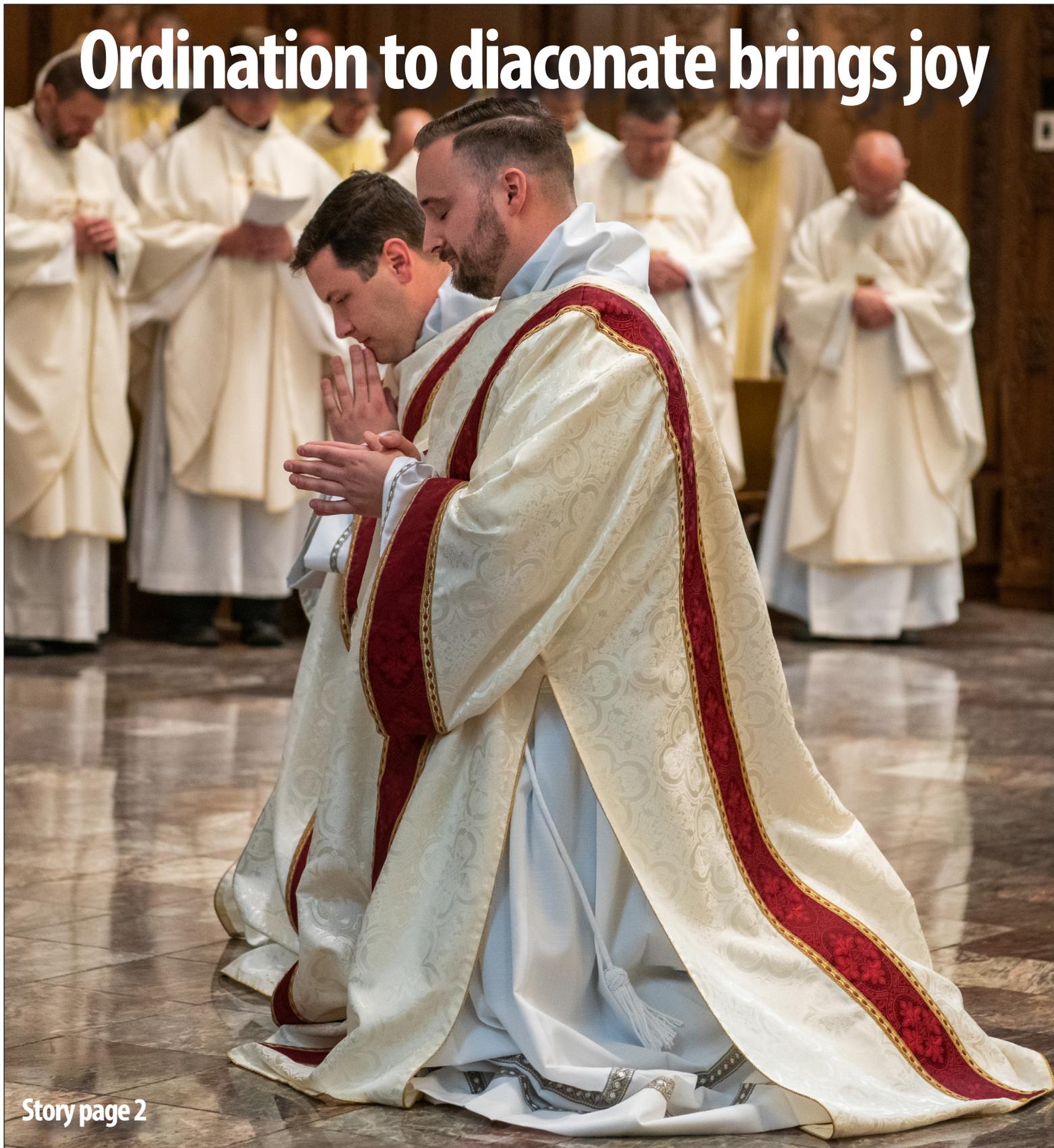
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# TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 95 No.22

TODAYSCATHOLIC.org

## Ordination to diaconate brings joy



Story page 2

John Martin



### Roman Catholic Province of Indianapolis Lifting of the Dispensation from the Obligation of Mass

11 June 2021

The celebration of the Eucharist at Mass is the source and summit of our life and mission as Catholics.

Since March 2020, due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, all Roman Catholics throughout the entire

Province of Indianapolis, which comprises all five dioceses of Indiana, have been dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. However, with the decrease of cases in our state, the widespread

availability of vaccines and following the guidance of public health officials, we are now able to safely accommodate more parishioners for Masses. Therefore, effective June 11, the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, the general

dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass is hereby lifted throughout the state of Indiana.

Except for the unique situations as described here, those who are otherwise healthy

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## TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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# Ordered to the life of Christ the Servant

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Smiling faces and hearty hugs abounded at the ordination of Deacons Brian Isenbarger and Mark Hellinger by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades May 22 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne. The faces of family, friends and the many priests and religious sisters in attendance to celebrate the momentous occasion beamed with happiness.

The Mass began in jubilant song. The cathedral choir led the congregation in "All Creatures of Our God and King" while Bishop Rhoades, the two candidates and several seminarians who assisted in the ceremony processed to the altar.

Deacon Paolo Degasperi proclaimed the Gospel and presented the candidates for the diaconate to Bishop Rhoades. The candidates, in turn, professed their readiness to assume the role of service of a deacon.

The readings from Jeremiah, Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel of Matthew shared a collective message of God sending forth disciples to go and do His work in the world.

"God, the master of the harvest, has heard the prayers of the faithful of our diocese for laborers for His harvest," said the bishop. "He has called Mark and Brian to be these laborers in His vineyard, and they have freely and generously answered that call."

He spoke to the deacon candidates, encouraging them in their vocation and urging them to never neglect their prayer life, but to always turn to Jesus and His mother, Mary, both for solace and as models of virtuous lives. The bishop reminded them that the diaconate is a call to service and addressed the challenges they would face in their future priesthood.

"Mark and Brian, you are being called in a particular time and place in the history of the Church and of the world, a time and place with particular needs and challenges. Like in the time of Jesus, there are many who are hurting and troubled. You are called to be close to them and to bring them the loving tenderness of God.

"In the confusion of today's culture, many wander about like sheep in search of grass that can satisfy their hunger and water that can quench their thirst," he continued. "They are hungry and thirsty for meaning and purpose in life. They are hungry and thirsty for truth and for love. Without guidance, many travel along paths where the grass is scorched; paths that do not lead to refreshing streams – paths of relativism, materialism, consumerism and hedonism. These paths really lead nowhere except to emptiness, boredom, sadness and even despair. Mark and Brian, you are called to lead people as good shepherds along the path of Jesus – the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

He concluded with his hope that the two men will rest in the Lord and draw strength from Him.

"I pray the Lord blesses you with joy and that you will joyfully serve Him and His Church. With Mary, may your spirit always rejoice in God our Savior!"

After the homily, the candidates promise their obedience to the bishop and his successors. During one of the most powerful points of the ceremony, they laid prostrate before the altar as a sign of humility and a total giving of themselves while the Litany of Supplication was sung over them. The litany recalls all the saints down through the centuries who have given their own lives, both physically and spiritually, to nourish the Church and her people. The prayers of the congregation called upon those holy men and women to intercede for the candidates



Photos by John Martin

**Brian Isenbarger, left, and Mark Hellinger process at the beginning of a Mass with Rite of Ordination to the Diaconate May 22 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne.**



**Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades prays the prayer of ordination over Hellinger, left, and Isenbarger. Afterward, the new deacons vested with the diaconal stole and dalmatic and began their clerical vocation.**

as they begin their ministry.

Through the imposition of his hands and the prayer of ordination, Bishop Rhoades ordained Hellinger and Isenbarger. Then the deacons were vested with the diaconal stole and dalmatic, with the assistance of a person each had chosen. Deacon Hellinger chose Deacon Jim Kitchens to vest him, stating that through his service to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Fort Wayne, he has "been a really good witness to me of what a deacon

is." Deacon Isenbarger was vested by Deacon Logan Parrish, a friend and soon-to-be priest.

The new deacons were presented with the Book of the Gospels, symbolizing one of their tasks of service: proclaiming the Gospel during Mass, a privilege reserved for them and for priests. After this, the bishop bestowed the kiss of peace upon them, welcoming Deacon Isenbarger and Deacon Hellinger into the ministry of the diaconate. They assisted the bishop in preparing the altar for holy



Jennifer Barton

Hellinger and Isenbarger lay prostrate before the altar as the Litany of Supplication is sung.

Communion, remaining at the bishop's side during consecration.

Bishop Rhoades thanked all attendees, both those who attended in person and those communing via livestream, for their prayers for the new deacons. He also expressed his gratitude for those whose efforts made the day successful and memorable.

With the ceremony concluded, the jubilant congregation filed outside to congratulate the new deacons and share heartfelt sentiments of goodwill and embraces.

Deacon Hellinger conveyed extreme pleasure at the occasion of his ordination. "I'm very excited to get into ministry down in Decatur especially. It's just pure joy." He thanked his home parish of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton for the abundance of prayers and support he has received from them through the years of his formation.

Overjoyed and a bit overwhelmed, Deacon Isenbarger said of the day, "I feel surrounded by so many people who love me. The love of the Lord, I felt, was just poured out today. It probably won't hit me until next

week that 'Wow, this just happened.' I'm just trying to process everything."

The men will complete summer assignments at parishes named for Mary: Deacon Hellinger will serve at St. Mary of the Assumption in Decatur and Deacon Isenbarger will assist at St. Mary of the Annunciation Parish in Bristol. In the fall they will return to seminary for another year of education prior to ordination to the priesthood.



The two new deacons, Deacon Mark Hellinger, left, and Deacon Brian Isenbarger celebrate with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and several of their brother deacons and priests following the Mass of ordination.

More photos are available at [www.todayscatholic.org](http://www.todayscatholic.org)



## Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

- Sunday, May 30: 11:30 a.m. — Adult Confirmation Mass, St. Peter Church, Fort Wayne
- Monday, May 31: 9 a.m. — Mass, St. Vincent de Paul Church, Fort Wayne
- Tuesday, June 1: 5:30 p.m. — Meeting of Diocesan Review Board, Wyndham Garden Hotel, Warsaw
- Wednesday, June 2: 10:30 a.m. — Meeting with Catholic Leadership Institute for Next Generation Pastors, Archbishop Noll Catholic Center, Fort Wayne
- Friday, June 4: 11 a.m. — Virtual Meeting of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Institute on the Catechism
- Friday, June 4: 3 p.m. — Baccalaureate Mass for Northeast Indiana Catholic Educators, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne
- Saturday, June 5: 11 a.m. — Priesthood Ordination, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne



## Deacon Assignments

The Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has made the following assignments of transitional deacons for the summer of 2021:

- Deacon Mark Hellinger** to St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Decatur
- Deacon Brian Isenbarger** to St. Mary of the Annunciation Parish, Bristol



## Deacon Appointment

The Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has made the following appointment:

- Deacon Jerome Kohrman**, from Diaconal Ministry at St. Mary, Mother of God Parish, Fort Wayne, to Diaconal Ministry at Saint Mary of the Assumption Parish, Avilla, effective June 28, 2021.

### DISPENSATION, from page 1

are obliged to return to Sunday Mass by the weekend of June 12-13, 2021:

- Those who are seriously ill, exhibit flu-like symptoms and/or may have a contagious disease (including quarantine due to exposure).
- Those who are unable to attend Mass through no fault of their own (e.g. transportation issue).
- Those who are homebound and/or incapacitated due to age, infirmity and/or medical restrictions.
- Those who have compromised health conditions and/or at high risk of contracting the virus.
- Those who are caretakers of person who are sick or of persons at high risk of serious illness if they contract the Covid virus.

If you have any questions about any specific needs, concerns or protocols, you are advised to contact your parish directly. Your pastor, who has the authority to dispense in individual cases, may be helpful in addressing individual fears and concerns.

The obligation to attend Mass is a joyful one, reflecting the very character of who we are as Catholics.

# MEMORIAL DAY ORIGINS DEEPLY ROOTED IN CHRISTIANITY

BY JENNIFER BARTON

*"The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."*

— Abraham Lincoln, first inaugural address

The inception of Memorial Day goes back to the bloodiest conflict in U.S. history, when Americans slaughtered their countrymen by the thousands in single-day battles – the Civil War. Even prior to the end of the war, civilians – particularly women – in both the north and the south began decorating gravesites in honor of those lost in the deadliest days the nation has ever seen.

In the years following, numerous cities on both sides



Photos by Jennifer Barton

of the conflict began holding "Decoration Day" services at various times throughout the year, honoring military servicemen from any war. This gradually came to be called Memorial Day. These celebrations eventually merged into a nationally recognized holiday falling on May 30, before being codified into law in

1968 to fall on the last Monday of May.

People still uphold this practice of remembering and praying for loved ones who have passed away.

"Most people visit the cemetery one time a year and that's Memorial Day," stated Casey Miller, executive director of Divine Mercy Funeral Home and Catholic Cemetery in Fort Wayne.

Miller and his staff are dedicated to presenting beautiful, immaculate grounds when families come out to honor their departed loved ones. They provide flags at both entrances to the cemetery for families to place at the gravesites of veterans, but Miller stated that "Memorial Day – it's for everyone who's departed – military, nonmilitary, moms, dads, children."

## Military funerals

Typically, Memorial Day is intended as a time to honor those soldiers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for their country, though any veteran who served in a military branch for at least two years is eligible for military burial.

When a veteran's family makes funeral arrangements for their loved one at Divine Mercy, Miller's team provides military honors for that person. "We've arranged all that; that's a burden we take off the family. ... The whole experience is to make it as comforting and easy for the family as possible, given the circumstances they're going through."

The honor guard he usually contacts is the American Legion Post 241 in Fort Wayne. John Smeltzer is the honor guard director for the post, and it is his

duty to set up the veteran-comprised guard for each military funeral that they are called to serve. "I love what I do. We feel it's our duty to do that for fallen veterans."

Some honor guards will only serve certain branches of the service, but Smeltzer is proud that his post will honor any veteran with the proper respect and formality due to them. "We are there for the veteran."

He explained the different aspects of the somber ceremony. The honor guard itself is "a team of eight people: the commander, chaplain, bugler, rifle commander and four riflemen" who carry M1-A1 carbines, the weapon typically used by soldiers in World War II and the Korean War.

After the commander gives a dissertation on the veteran's time in service and the chaplain recites a prayer over him or her, the commander issues the call for the riflemen to render a three-volley salute. Then the flag that has draped the servicemember's coffin is folded and presented to the closest family member with the words: "On behalf of the President of the United States, (service branch), and a grateful nation, please accept this flag as a symbol of our appreciation for your loved one's honorable and faithful service." The family is presented with a ceremonial brass shell casing.

This is probably the most emotional part for families. Smeltzer remarked, "Some people break down, others are pretty stoic."

Miller has also witnessed many such military funerals and the reactions of families. He said, "What I find is it's different for older people versus younger people. For older people that have

lived through wars ... there's a certain respect when it comes to the honor guard or the military service that you recognize the sacrifice that that individual made of their early life to serve and protect our freedoms.

"Younger people, however, I find that it's a learning experience – and a good one, at that." He described that younger generations "see the folding of the flag and hear taps being played and it drives home the sacrifices that they haven't experienced or seen firsthand ... and it brings home that that person gave up two years plus of their life for our freedoms and we better protect it, and we better show respect for that individual."

Mae Leedy, parishioner at SS. Peter and Paul in Huntington, reminisced on the funeral of her husband, James, 20 years ago. He had served stateside in the Air Force from World War II until his retirement from the 122<sup>nd</sup> Air National Guard in 1984.

"I think military funerals are very, very special," Leedy stated. "Those people in the military are very dedicated, even if they're drafted. And just for myself, I'm a very military person."

Indeed, the nonagenarian's many years have been shaped by the military lifestyle. Her father served during World War I and all four of her sons joined the Air Force, so she understands the commitment and sacrifices of service members and their families. She even remembers seeing Civil War veterans at church in her younger years. Due to her husband's long military career, Leedy and her family have coped with moves, living out of suitcases and separations from loved ones.

She remembers with great poignancy the military elements of James' funeral, particularly the flag presentation. "I felt honored ... just the ceremony part of it was very meaningful, you'd say."

## The 13 folds

There is much fanfare over the folding of the American flag at a military funeral. Everything about it has meaning, from its triangular shape to the crisp, solemn way it is folded.

As Smeltzer said, there are always 13 folds, which naturally symbolize the original 13 colonies, but the significance does not end there. Laurie Pearson of Military.com gave a thorough explanation of what each fold means. The Christian principles held so deeply in the country's founding permeate each of them.

The first fold means life. Number two symbolizes the belief in eternal life, which is particularly significant at a Catholic funeral, as Catholics profess this belief every time the Apostles' Creed or Nicene Creed is professed. The third fold honors the departing member and the sacrifice of time that he or she



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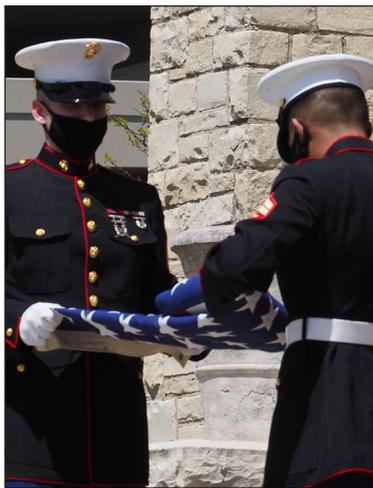
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The result of the folded flag is a triangle, with only the blue field of stars showing, and the shape represents the tricorne hats worn in the American Revolution.

### Taps

It may be the most hauntingly beautiful melody known to most Americans. The 24-note salute calls to mind the sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of service members killed in military combat through the nation's 245-year history.

There are several legends as to where the mournful tune originated, but its actual history is a bit less moving than the myths. During the Civil War, Union Gen. Dan Butterfield, known for creating distinctive bugle calls for his brigade, arranged taps as a "lights out" signal. It was first used as a dirge for a military funeral in 1862 and the practice quickly spread across both sides of the conflict and continues to this day.

In Arlington National Cemetery, taps is played at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier yearly during the military wreath ceremony on Memorial Day. It is still played for lights out at military basic training and sometimes on military bases that retain the practice of playing reveille, retreat/to the colors and taps at specified times of day. Protocol calls for all who are on base to follow for the playing of the first two: They coincide with the raising and lowering of the American flag at sunrise and sunset. Taps is played at night.

Vince LaBarbera, former director of communications for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, is a member of a group called Buglers Across America. Founded in 2000, Buglers Across

America's purpose is to honor every fallen veteran with the proper ceremony due to him or her by having an in-person bugler at funerals.

In an article for the Waynedale News, LaBarbera explained how he began playing military bugle calls. He was a student at Central Catholic High School in Fort Wayne in the 1950s when he began playing taps for funerals. As a member of the school band, the school's principal at the time, Msgr. William Lester, requested that LaBarbera play reveille over the morning announcements.

"As part of the privilege of sitting first chair in the trumpet section, it was my honor to often play taps at the burial of a military service veteran." He told of how an American Legion honor guard would drive him to various cemeteries, where he would play the melody, then return him to school. "Not only was it an honor, of course, but I was thrilled to get out of classes for a couple of hours," he joked.

Speaking to Today's Catholic, LaBarbera stated that, "A new tradition was begun last year on Memorial Day – and I hope it continues this year – for buglers to play taps at 3 p.m. nationwide. I plan to do that in front of our house."

*"With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan – to do all which may achieve and cherish, a just and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations."*

— Abraham Lincoln, second inaugural address

served in the U.S. military.

The fourth fold speaks deeply to Christians in that it "represents our weaker nature; as American citizens trusting in God, it is Him we turn to in times of peace, as well as in times of war, for His divine guidance," according to Pearson.

Number five represents the country. The sixth represents the allegiance to the country that rests in the hearts of loyal Americans. The seventh fold honors the armed forces.

The eighth fold serves two purposes: as a tribute to the deceased person, that he or she will inherit eternal life, and to honor the person's mother. Nine symbolizes womanhood and how women have molded those who serve the nation. Similarly, the 10th fold is a tribute to fathers who also give their children for the country's defense.

"The 11th fold," Pearson states, "represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." The 12th fold is an emblem of eternity, glorifying the Holy Trinity. And the 13th fold calls to mind the nation's motto: "In God We Trust."



Memorial Day is a time to remember and pray for the servicemen and women who died in the line of duty. The holiday has deep roots in Christianity. Above, the honor guard from American Legion Post 241 in Fort Wayne renders military honors for a veteran at a funeral at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

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## Migration, climate, debt crises must not be ignored, pope tells diplomats

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Nations of the world must work together to solve the key global crises of migration and climate change, which are questions of justice that can no longer be ignored, Pope Francis told diplomats. “In the development of a global consensus capable of responding to these ethical challenges facing our human family, your work as diplomats is of paramount importance,” he said. The pope’s comments came May 21 in a speech to new ambassadors to the Vatican from Singapore, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Algeria, Sri Lanka, Barbados, Sweden, Finland and Nepal. Speaking to the group of diplomats, the pope recognized the difficulties involved in traveling during the ongoing pandemic and thanked them for being able to attend the meeting in person. The COVID-19 pandemic has made people more aware of how interdependent everyone is and of “our need to be attentive to the poor and the vulnerable in our midst,” the pope said.

## Cease-fire helps, but peace requires equality, Palestine official says

ROME (CNS) — While the current cease-fire between Israel and Hamas brings a much-needed halt to violence in the Holy Land, true peace can only be achieved if both sides are recognized as equals, said the Palestinian ambassador to the Holy See. Ambassador Issa Kassissieh, speaking to Catholic News Service May 21 from his home in Jerusalem, said the road to peace begins with returning to a two-state solution within the borders established before 1967. However, the establishment of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territories and the “Israeli occupation” must end, he said. “We need a road map to reengage, with the support of the international community and through the Quartet (the United Nations, United States, European Union and Russia) for real and substantive talks between both sides, to reach — within a timeframe — the endgame. And the endgame here is carrying out the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions as well as U.N. General Assembly resolutions with regard to the Palestinian question,” he said. The issue of Israel establishing settlements in Palestinian territories has long been an impediment to the peace process. The West Bank, which along with the Gaza Strip was captured by Israel in 1967, forms part of the area offered to Palestine by the U.N. for the establishment of a prospective state.

# NEWS BRIEFS

## Say ‘yes’ to the Holy Spirit, ‘no’ to divisive ideologies



CNS photo/Paul Haring

Pope Francis burns incense as he celebrates Pentecost Mass at the main altar in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican May 23. The Holy Spirit’s gift of comfort and solace is meant to unite all men and women and not take sides with any ideology, he said during the Mass. Those who listen to the Holy Spirit are not “concerned with conservatives and progressives, traditionalists and innovators, right and left.” If adherence to an ideology becomes “our criteria, then the Church has forgotten the Spirit,” he added. The Holy Spirit “impels us to unity, to harmony, to the harmony of diversity.”

## World Youth Day guidelines emphasize importance of diocesan celebrations

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The annual diocesan celebration of World Youth Day is an important event that emphasizes the role young people play in the Catholic Church, the Vatican said. In a document published by the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life May 18, the Vatican issued a set of pastoral guidelines for local WYD celebrations “to ensure that younger generations feel that they are at the center of the church’s attention and pastoral concern. The celebration of these youth days at a local level is therefore extremely useful in keeping the church mindful of the importance of walking with young people and of welcoming them and listening to them with patience while proclaiming the word of God to them with affection and power,” it stated. The document was signed by Cardinal Kevin Farrell, dicastery prefect,

and Schonstatt Father Alexandre Awi Mello, dicastery secretary. Divided into six chapters, it said local celebrations offer young people “a personal experience of a ‘festival of faith,’” which is especially important for those who cannot attend the international event “because of studies, work or financial difficulties.” World Youth Day is celebrated annually on a local level and every two or three years with an international gathering with the pope. In November, Pope Francis moved the local celebrations of World Youth Day from Palm Sunday to the feast of Christ the King.

## Pro-life leaders say HHS should not do away with Title X rule

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The same day the U.S. Supreme Court announced it will hear a Mississippi appeal of a lower court’s decision to strike down the state’s 15-week abortion ban, it dismissed suits against a Trump administration Title X policy. That policy enforced an

existing Title X ban on family planning funds being used for abortion or abortion referrals. May 17 also was the final day for public comment on the Biden administration’s proposed rule to end the Trump policy known as the “Protect Life Rule.” Under the Biden proposal, Title X funds could again be used by health care services for low-income patients to perform abortions or to refer patients to abortion providers. A May 3 letter to the court from the Office of the Solicitor General said the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services expects to announce the final Title X rule in December. According to representatives of pro-life groups, this revision process has been rushed and the new rule as proposed would obliterate conscience rights. They made the comments at a May 17 online news conference hosted by the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington. “From the start, Congress was very clear that none of these funds be used to fund abortion,” said Valerie Huber, a former acting deputy assistant secretary in the HHS Office of Population Affairs. “When Congress mandates

something, HHS has neither the authority or freedom to choose what to ignore.”

## Washington cardinal leads worldwide rosary for end to COVID-19 pandemic

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Washington Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory led a recitation of rosary May 17, imploring Mary to “entrust to her Son” all those affected by the pandemic. The rosary took place at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington as part of a worldwide prayer effort to end the COVID-19 pandemic. “In communion with the Holy Father following the example of the first Christian communities in this time of great trial, we lift up to the Lord through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, unceasing supplications for the end of the pandemic,” Cardinal Gregory prayed at the start of the rosary. Recitation of the rosary at the national shrine was part of a worldwide marathon of rosaries for an end to the COVID-19 pandemic that was requested by Pope Francis. Each day during May at noon Washington time (6 p.m. at the Vatican) the rosary is prayed from a different Marian shrine around the world. Pope Francis began the rosary marathon May 1 at the Vatican and will conclude it there May 31. The recitation of the rosary was livestreamed from the national shrine on various Vatican social media platforms.

## Catholic Palestinian gets kidney transplant from slain Jewish Israeli

JERUSALEM (CNS) — For nine years, Randa Aweis battled kidney disease, urgently in need of a transplant. In mid-May, a donor was found for the 58-year-old mother of six, a Catholic Palestinian who lives in Jerusalem. The circumstances were unusually painful because the donor — Yigal Yehoshua — a 56-year-old Jewish Israeli man from the mixed city of Lod who worked for tolerance and coexistence, was stoned to death by an Arab mob during violence by both Jews and Arabs in the city in mid-May. Arab and Jewish gangs rioted in mixed cities throughout Israel following the May 10 outbreak of violence between Israel Hamas May 10. “Yigal will go straight to heaven, to a better place, and he will always be with me,” Aweis said from her hospital bed at Hadassah Medical Center, where the transplant was performed by Dr. Abed Khalailah, director of Hadassah’s Kidney Transplantation Service, who is Muslim. “Here we must all, Christians, Muslims and Jews, strive for peace. I don’t distinguish between Christian, Muslim or Jew — we are all human beings.”

## Pilgrimage company founder recognized with Forty under 40 honor

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — John Paul Lichon, founder and CEO of Catholic pilgrimage company Verso Ministries, has been named a 2021 Forty under 40 recipient.

The Michiana Forty under 40 program shines a spotlight on 40 of the South Bend/Elkhart area's most talented and dedicated young executives, leaders, professionals, employees and adults who demonstrate career success and community engagement, all before the age of 40.

Lichon was nominated by his colleagues. This year marks the recognition of the program's 15th class.

Lichon, 37, founded Verso Ministries in 2016 after hearing God's call to start a pilgrimage company while attending World Youth Day in Kraków, Poland. Since its inception, Verso Ministries has completed 34 domestic and international departures, with over 650 total travelers.

Lichon has served on the pastoral council of his South Bend parish, Holy Cross, since 2016. Through this position, he also sat on the Pastoral Planning Leadership Committee and is currently co-chairman of the parish's Community Building Team. At the parish's elementary, Holy Cross School, Lichon has volunteered at annual fundraising events, Our Lady of Guadalupe celebrations, open houses and more. In addition, Lichon is a professional pia-

# AROUND THE DIOCESE

## M.Div. blessing and sending ceremony



Provided by Stacey Noem

A blessing and sending ceremony took place May 17 at Christ the King Church, South Bend, for lay students graduating this year from the University of Notre Dame Master of Divinity program. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades conducted the ceremony, and the students' Congregation of Holy Cross classmates served as acolytes. From left are Brother Robert Ackerman, CSC; Brother James Walters, CSC; Mary Catherine McDonald; Sarah Gallagher; Colin Whitehead; Bishop Rhoades; Brother Jimmy Henke, CSC; Elizabeth Clarke; Kate Broadbent; Anna Cain; Alejandra Herrera; and Julian Druffner, CSC.

nist and contributes his musical talents at Holy Cross, as well as on the campus of the University of Notre Dame.

Lichon graduated from Notre Dame with a bachelor's degree in 2006, followed by a master's in theology through the university's Echo Graduate Service Program in 2009. He lives in South Bend with his wife, Katy, and their three young children.

## Diocesan student earns master's in theology

ST. MEINRAD, Ind. — Robert J. Leszczynski of Fort Wayne, a student in the Graduate Theology Program at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, was awarded a Master of Arts in theology Saturday, May 8. Graduates accepted their diplomas from retired Father Kurt Stasiak, OSB, archabbot of Saint Meinrad Archabbey and chairman of the school's board of trustees.

The Graduate Theology Program offers master's degrees in theology to lay persons and permanent deacons. These studies provide a solid foundation in the Catholic tradition for those preparing for Church ministry or seeking personal growth.

The mission of Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology is the initial and ongoing formation of priests, permanent deacons and laity to minister together effectively in the service and evangelization of the Roman Catholic Church and the world. Located in southern Indiana, Saint Meinrad fulfills this mission in the Benedictine tradition.

## Compassion for the homeless



Provided by Susan Alwine

Almost two dozen homeless people in Michiana received a gift this spring of a handmade sleeping mat woven from "plarn," or yarn made from plastic shopping bags. Each month, the Women in God's Service group at St. Bavo Parish, Mishawaka, looks for a service project to help the local community: The ladies watched an instructional video on YouTube and then, with additional volunteers, cut, flattened, knotted and crocheted around 8,000 plastic grocery bags into 23 mats that were immediately and joyously received by clients of Our Lady of the Road Outreach, South Bend. Before they were delivered, the mats were blessed by pastor Father Peter Pacini, CSC.

## St. Elizabeth school cleans up



Provided by Lois Widner

Father Stephen Felicichia gives a blessing to some of the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School families who came and helped out with the Great American Cleanup May 8. The students and their families cleaned the grounds of the Fort Wayne school's campus and the bike trail surrounding it.

# St. Mother Teresa Program walks with moderate-abilities students

BY JENNIFER BARTON

**B**ishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne is making strides to accommodate students with special needs, debuting the St. Mother Teresa Program this year. A new initiative, the program is specially designed for students with moderate abilities.

Bishop Dwenger has accepted students with various learning and cognitive disabilities for several years, providing a resource room and in-class modifications for those who need additional aid. Lauren Slater heads the special education program, Gloria Gonzalez manages the resource room, and new hire Erin Rethlake brought her skills to the special education team by creating the curriculum for the St. Mother Teresa scholars and taking the lead role as a teacher.

Her goals for the program are focused more on everyday life skills, rather than preparing for college, “whether that’s independent living skills, working, handling money, any sort of job skills they would potentially need. We do budgeting,” Rethlake said. “Instead of focusing on more curriculum-based subjects, of knowing how to do algebra, geometry, it’s ‘How do I apply their skills to what they’ll do after high school?’ So that’s what it’s more based toward. ... There are academics, obviously, but there’s more independent skills; living, working.”

The pandemic has inhibited those plans, preventing staff from taking students off campus to engage in life skills activities such as shopping for necessities and working outside the home. Instead of utilizing resources such as Gigi’s Playhouse – an education center for those with Down syndrome, conveniently located across the street from the school – Rethlake has put this year’s focus on acclimating the students to the Bishop Dwenger environment. She stated, “It really has been the best-case scenario for the circumstances. It was nice; it was almost like a transition year.”

For its pilot year, the program welcomed two students who spend four of their seven daily class periods in the moderate-abilities classroom and the other three with their peers in general education classes. Rethlake explained that the students in the program attend traditional classes such as theology to hear lectures and participate to the best of their ability but will work on a separate curriculum from their peers.

“It’s a different platform, for students to be in this room. It’s more like people who need more assistance in the classroom, who aren’t quite at grade level, whether that would be a cognitive disability or a health issue that would inhibit them from



Photos provided by Erin Rethlake



**This school year, Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne, added a program and classroom space for students with moderate disabilities so they could receive a Catholic education focused on learning life skills. The program is named for St. Mother Teresa, who had a great love of children and gave priority to educating them.**

being successful in the general education classroom,” Rethlake said.

The St. Mother Teresa Program has been several years in the making. With the growing demand for special education in a Catholic environment, there

was talk between the school’s administration and the special education department about creating a specialized program to meet this need.

Principal Jason Schiffli recalled that when Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades arrived in the diocese roughly 10

tools each year. By next year, the plan is for a sensory swing to be installed in the classroom for those who need its calming effects, as well as possibly the purchase of appliances to teach students basic cooking skills.

Most of the students who will go through the St. Mother Teresa Program are not expected to attain a traditional high school diploma, but rather a certificate of completion, though the option for diploma is not completely off the table. “But we want them to be in this Catholic environment, we want them to be with their peers and their siblings and to receive that big piece of being around their faith. That’s why they’re here,” Slater said.

Peer interaction is key to the students’ overall education, and St. Mother Teresa students eat with their peers and will be encouraged to get involved in extracurricular activities. Slater noted that other Bishop Dwenger students have been very accepting and welcoming and would like to develop a peer mentor program between themselves and the St. Mother Teresa students.

Next year’s students have already been selected, and Rethlake describes the two future Saints as “so excited.” For the time being, students are being chosen from feeder schools.

The department established a thorough screening process to ensure that they mesh well in the classroom and that their abilities can be developed through an individualized curriculum.

As each person is a unique individual, so the curriculum is tailored to each student’s abilities. Slater explained, “We get the flexibility of making it work for that student. It’s been super fun.”

Though she is new to the Bishop Dwenger community, Rethlake has a special connection with students with disabilities, having grown up with a sister who “would be in a classroom like this.”

The program is starting small, but she looks forward to bringing in more students at various levels of need and behavior. “I think that as the program grows and we have more awareness that this is an option for people, I think our levels will start to change.”

The team has seen a great deal of support for the program. Classroom aide Dawn Case testified to the community’s interest, sharing how people have asked her to describe it to them. She sums up its mission by saying that it “embodies our Catholic faith... It’s the right thing to do.”



years ago, one of his goals was for the schools to provide greater special education programs. However, Slater stated that, “We all knew that if we weren’t able to do it right, we weren’t going to do it.”

Bringing the dream to fruition took time. The biggest obstacle to overcome was lack of space.

Bishop Dwenger has undergone many expansions and renovations in its nearly 60-year history. Classroom space has always been at a premium. The team eventually came up with a solution: taking a portion of library space and renovating it into a testing center freed up a room into which the health class could move. The former health classroom, which is situated directly next to the resource room, was a perfect candidate for conversion into a moderate-abilities classroom, complete with installing a connecting door to the resource room.

There is still plenty of room for growth in the program. Slater hopes to add more educational



John Martin

# Priesthood candidates anxious to be transformed by God's grace

BY TODAY'S CATHOLIC

FORT WAYNE — A tremendous blessing for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will take place June 5, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne. Seven men will commit their lives to serving the Church, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and the faithful of the diocese in the vocation of the holy priesthood.

Each has been formed in wisdom and charity and is looking forward to serving in love the parishes to which they are assigned as priests. Among the record number of candidates for ordination — at least in recent history — are four from the same faith community, St. Vincent de Paul in Fort Wayne. Deacon Augustine Onuoha, Deacon Daniel Koehl, Deacon Keeton Lockwood and Deacon Logan Parrish all call the parish

home.

In addition, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Fort Wayne; Most Precious Blood Parish, Fort Wayne; and St. John the Baptist Parish, New Haven; are rejoicing in the vocations of their sons Deacon Benjamin Landrigan, Deacon Paolo Degasperi and Deacon Michael Ammer, respectively.

The ordination Mass will begin at 11 a.m. but is closed to the public due to social distancing requirements. It will be livestreamed on the diocesan YouTube channel.

## Deacon Benjamin Landrigan

**Q** When did you first know you wanted to



DEACON  
LANDRIGAN

become a priest?

**A** “The earliest I remember thinking about it was when I was in grade school, and I read these lives of the saints books we had at home,” Deacon Landrigan recalled last year. He was drawn to the saints from that time on, fascinated by the purpose in their lives and by their holiness. He knew he wanted to be a saint and that he wanted to go to heaven, and he saw that many of the male saints he admired were priests. “So that was when that idea started in my head. I never stopped wondering about it after that. I was just always thinking about it.”

**Q** What were the Catholic traditions of your family, growing up?

**A** The sixth of seven children, Deacon Landrigan grew up in a household that was deeply Catholic. He spent his life

steeped in the faith, including nightly family dinners, discussing topics concerning the faith throughout the week and watching movies about saints. His family began praying the rosary together daily when he was in middle school. Faith “was part of the atmosphere at home.”

His parents, Daniel and Linda Landrigan, as well as his older siblings, inspired him to be active in the Church. The family is involved in ministry at their home parish of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Fort Wayne, and Deacon Landrigan has always loved being an altar server. Being around the holy sacrifice of the Mass in a closer way helped deepen his connection to the priesthood.

This deep love led him to volunteer to serve at Masses and weddings whenever a server was needed. For about 15 years, he served at every Easter Vigil Mass

at St. Elizabeth, the only exception being the year he served for the bishop instead.

**Q** What moved you to apply to the seminary?

**A** After graduating from Homestead High School in 2014, Deacon Landrigan was accepted to enter the seminary. He credits the guidance of former St. Elizabeth pastor Father James Shafer, with whom he met almost monthly, with developing his vocation; as well as the influence of young priests such as Father Andrew Curry and Father Benjamin Muhlenkamp, who served as pastoral associates at St. Elizabeth.

“Father Drew was the first priest I had interacted much with on a personal level,” Deacon Landrigan stated.

His time in the seminary cemented his devotion to the

**PRIESTHOOD, page 10**

**PRIESTHOOD, from page 9**

priestly life. At Mount St. Mary's in Emmitsburg, Maryland, he grew closer to his seminarian brothers. He makes it a point to keep in contact with them.

The biggest challenge he has had to face in seminary was not the rigorous academics but accepting the knowledge that he was ready to fulfill many of the priestly duties.

"I was intimidated by the ideas of visiting someone who was dying or someone who had dementia, or teaching in a classroom full of kids," Deacon Landrigan confessed. But he feels his experiences in the seminary have prepared him for the more difficult aspects of priesthood. "Over the years, I've grown to love those things that used to intimidate me."

**Q What do you most look forward to about being a priest?**

A Bringing the sacraments to other Catholics, Deacon Landrigan answered.

"Ultimately, that's what it's about: living a life of purpose and meaning that is only found in God. That's what everyone wants; everyone looks all over the place, but we've got the real answer here, in the Church."

It does feel a bit surreal, he added, since he has been waiting to commit his life to God for so many years. There were times he wondered if his call was from God or simply his own longing.

"I've always thought it was good for people to know that God can call you in simple and ordinary ways. A lot of times people are looking for the extraordinary sign, and they can really wrestle with the idea that God can work

in their ordinary life."

**Q Who are the saints close to your heart?**

A Two priestly examples stand out, he said: St. Edmund Campion, a Jesuit priest and Catholic martyr in England under the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, and Maximilian Kolbe, saint of Auschwitz. Deacon Landrigan first read about St. Edmund as a child in the adoration chapel at St. Elizabeth. St. Maximilian had such an influence on him in middle school that he chose Maximilian as his confirmation saint.

## Deacon Michael Ammer



DEACON AMMER

**Q Have you always heard the calling to be a priest?**

A Not always, said Deacon Ammer. It has been a gradual, patient journey. "But definitely for about six years now."

Hailing from St. John the Baptist Parish in New Haven and a supportive Catholic family, Deacon Ammer originally wanted to teach physics, he said. In high school, he began to appreciate "the reality of diving deeper, figuring things out, understanding how things work" and the critical thinking abilities that accompanied the science. His drive to learn turned out to be not only applicable to his degree, but to his life as a disciple of Christ.

**Q Tell us about the journey from physics to a vocation.**

A Deacon Ammer's education

at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne introduced him to friends of varying faith traditions and denominations. When he saw a need to articulate his own faith, he dove into learning it seriously and deeply. The idea of a priestly vocation quietly surfaced; he recalled it following him as he pondered his path after graduation.

Ultimately, Deacon Ammer decided against teaching physics with his new degree and began to wrestle with a subsequent aimlessness. He said he considered pursuing engineering but did not find peace in the decision. At the conclusion of the summer after graduation, "Everything opened up. I had no school, no job, no girlfriend, no nothing. That's when God really hit me over the head and said it was time to really consider the priesthood."

He briefly taught mathematics at Northrop High School, Fort Wayne, while his decision to answer to the call became clear. He wanted to further discern the priesthood and, seeing the present moment as the most acceptable time, dedicated himself to daily prayer and adoration.

Six months later, Deacon Ammer's outlook on his vocation had transformed. "God showed me where I needed to go and changed my heart to wanting the priesthood. I was willingly and happily applying to the seminary."

**Q Who were your spiritual resources as you discerned the call and studied in the seminary?**

A "In seminary, I had a few priests who gave me spiritual direction, and they guided me

in my discernment. There are countless spiritual books that helped me grow closer to God and helped me discern my vocation, too. One book that was given to me while I was discerning before seminary was "To Save a Thousand Souls," which is written to help men discern whether they should enter the seminary. It helped me work through some things that stood in the way of me going to seminary. At this time, Father Andrew Budzinski, the vocation director, helped me discern, along with Fr. Daniel Whelan, who gave me direction and helped guide me.

"During the summer after two years in the seminary, the question of priesthood was heavy on my heart. It was very providential that my summer was spent in Omaha, Nebraska, at the Institute of Priestly Formation, which is a spiritual summer for diocesan seminarians and clergy. This summer gave me a lot of tools in prayer and helped me grow closer to God and helped me move from discernment to decision.

Throughout the last few years in seminary, I stayed the course with the help of my spiritual director and formators. Last year, during my deacon ordination, God gave me the grace to say yes. That is when my

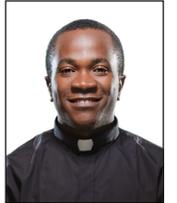
discernment to the priesthood ended."

**Q How has your diaconate year helped to prepare you?**

A "I know it has been God's hand, leading me step by step." He has enjoyed being a deacon, he said, especially being present to people by preaching and administering the sacrament of baptism in his parish assignment.

Even within the ministerial context amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Deacon Ammer is hopeful he will be able to use his critical thinking and patience to continue evangelizing and meeting the needs of the faithful.

## Deacon Augustine Onuoha



DEACON ONUOHA

**Q For how long did you hear the call to be a priest before you entered the seminary?**

A "I can remember that it was at the age of 10 that I felt God's call to the priesthood."

The third of four children, Deacon Onuoha said the call

**PRIESTHOOD, page 12**

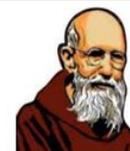
## Congratulations to our new deacons!



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**PRIESTHOOD, from page 10**

came after years of devout attentiveness and participation at Mass. Not only did he serve as an acolyte, but he “would always sit at the front pews of the church, admiring how my pastor celebrates the Eucharist with so much love and dedication.”

“My parents are very devout Catholics, and my upbringing was deeply rooted in Catholic tradition.” His father, Patrick Onuoha, died when Augustine was 4 years old. His mother, Felicia Onuoha, is a nurse and teacher. Although he wanted to become a teacher or a medical practitioner like his mother, Onuoha said that the “zeal for the Catholic priesthood” was still present in him.

“Having discussed this with my home pastor, who sent me on a vocation discernment retreat, my strength and courage of becoming a Catholic [priest] was reinvigorated.”

**Q What was the path of your formation?**

A Deacon Onuoha attended

Assumpta Minor Seminary and St. Paul's International Secondary School in Imo State, Nigeria, where he was born and raised. After high school, he proceeded to attend St. Joseph Major Seminary in Ikot-Ekpene, Nigeria, studying philosophy from 2009-13. Only a few years later, his pursuit of vocation to the priesthood brought him to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, thousands of miles from home.

“After first-year theology in 2015, I proceeded to University of Dayton, Ohio, to acquire [a] master's degree in theology before I was accepted by His Excellency Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades,” he said. “I am sure that God brought me to this diocese to serve God and our people. In my prayers, imagination, daydreaming and the reading of the Gospels, I find myself remaining in this desire of becoming a Catholic priest.”

**Q How has your diaconate year helped to prepare you for ordination to the priesthood?**

A Deacon Onuoha said he

really felt grateful for the opportunity to begin “serving our people in love, sincerity, docility and disposition” as a deacon, configured to Christ as servant. He fully embraced his responsibility to “proclaim and preach the Gospel, baptize, witness marriages, take the Eucharist to the sick, celebrate funeral and burial services and pray the divine office for the intention of the Church and her members.”

“I have met very wonderful people and priests in my life who have encouraged me in this journey thus far.”

**Q Who or what has guided you spiritually along the way, as you prepared for your priestly ministry?**

A Deacon Onuoha said that once the desire to become a priest was ignited in him as a young boy, he watched his pastor celebrate the Eucharist with love and dedication. “That same love for Jesus and the Church burns within my heart, and I can't wait to share this love with people as a priest.” He has a devotion to St. John Paul II, St. Therese, St. Padre Pio and St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata, who have guided him along the way.

to consider the vocation of religious life. He had just moved from Auburn to Fort Wayne and joined St. Vincent de Paul Parish. There, he met Msgr. John Kuzmich and began going to daily Mass.

“The way he would celebrate Mass and draw people to God opened my eyes, heart and soul to Him. Seeds were planted within me then.”

He attended Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne, continued going to Mass regularly and began praying every day. His prayer was ordinary, he said, just “talking to God, sharing the joys and frustrations of the day, thanking Him, spending 15 minutes in the morning or evening.”

After high school, he applied to enter the seminary, wanting to respond and answer God's call. He was asked to wait a few years, go to college, gain some more life experience and grow.

Deacon Lockwood now looks back on that period as a time of particular grace.

“That's when I really became active in my parish, at St. Vincent. I served as a sacristan and joined a discernment group with Father Andrew, who really helped me hone my desires and work through my thoughts and feelings of a vocation.”

**Q How did your family support your calling?**

A “They gave me real-life examples in how they loved others, person to person in relationship and carried themselves through life.”

**Q Would you tell us about the experience of your formation in seminary?**

A In 2014, Deacon Lockwood reapplied and was accepted by

Bishop Rhoades as a seminarian for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. He attended the Pontifical College Josephinum in Ohio for the next three years. During that time his mother passed away, and his home parish of St. Vincent de Paul, Fort Wayne, became a second home.

He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy and then studied morality and sacred Scripture at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland. “Analyzing the Pentateuch and Gospels and how they connect was one of my favorite courses.”

**Q What does your prayer life look like?**

A Deacon Lockwood said his prayer life takes a variety of forms now, from a daily holy hour in front of a tabernacle or exposition of the Eucharist, to Lectio Divina, a daily rosary and the Litany of the Hours five times a day. Sometimes his prayer is communal, such as the Divine Mercy Chaplet or rosary; at other moments it's individual. Both allow him to delve deeper into relationship with God who created, saved and sustains him, he said.

**Q What are you anticipating most highly as a priest?**

A He served a diaconate year at St. Joseph Parish, Fort Wayne, assisting with baptisms, preaching at Mass and speaking with children completing the Rite of Christian Initiation of Children. He is looking forward to preaching both in English and Spanish, through which “I can connect with people in a large group and share our faith.”

**Deacon Keeton Lockwood**

DEACON  
LOCKWOOD

**Q What was your earliest awareness that God might be calling you to a priestly vocation?**

A In the sixth grade, Keeton Lockwood first heard God's call

# Congratulations!



Deacon Mark Hellinger



Deacon Brian Isenbarger

Barrett McNagny congratulates  
Deacon Mark Hellinger and Deacon Brian Isenbarger  
on their ordination to the Diaconate.



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*Congratulations* to  
those ordained to the diaconate



Mark Hellinger



Brian Isenbarger

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**PRIESTHOOD, from page 12**

**Q Who have been your spiritual mentors as you prepare for ordination?**

A Excited for this next stage of growth, Deacon Lockwood said he is grateful for all he has been given. He particularly hopes to be able to minister and share God's love with His people. St. Benedict Labore, his confirmation saint, and St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata are both models of how Deacon Lockwood feels called to serve, with a special love for the poor and homeless.

He recalled riding along with his mom when he was young, and asking, "Can we help them?" upon seeing someone begging on the side of the street. "She always would share some groceries or money to buy some fast food, planting the good seeds of service and God's charity and love" — which now are clearly flourishing in her son.

**Deacon Paolo Degasperi**



**DEACON DEGASPERI**

**Q What were the influences that encouraged you to consider religious life?**

A The Franciscan tradition appealed to a young Degasperi because of the influence of his older brother and sister, both of whom joined a Franciscan order. They had been born in Trent,

the city in which the ecumenical Council of Trent, the event that spurred the Catholic counter-reformation, took place.

"My brother became a friar when I was 10 or 11. So I think they were — especially my brother — very instrumental both in helping me grow in my faith, and to know my faith well."

Deacon Degasperi spent most of his high school and college years resisting the call to the religious life. But by the end of college, he had to make a decision.

"At this point, it's becoming a serious thing. And so, I just started to pray again, to be open to the possibility. When I did that, I just knew," he stated. He joined a Franciscan order in Italy at age 22.

**Q How did you come to be in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend?**

A The order began to experience disunity, Deacon Degasperi said. "I knew he needed to find a better fit. I was losing the enthusiasm, losing the conviction about my call because of that situation. In order to preserve my vocation as a whole, I started to look around to see if there was another place I could go."

He knew about the community in Fort Wayne and was invited to spend a summer there, which he did. The fraternity of the Poor Brothers was what he had been looking for. But after nearly 10 years as a Franciscan brother, Deacon Degasperi, who had been known as Brother Felice, and many of his brothers decided it was time to move in a different direction. The order disbanded,

although by this time he was among the brothers studying for the priesthood at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati.

**Q Why did you make the decision to become a priest?**

A St. Therese of Lisieux, to whom he has a strong devotion, played a part in the decision. When he arrived at the community's former home at St. Andrew Church, he found a small statue of a female saint in his cell. At first, he couldn't tell who she was. "I saw the cross and the roses. It was St. Therese ... So that was little sign that I was supposed to be here for this time."

Degasperi and several of his religious brothers had already begun studying for the priesthood at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati, when the community agreed to disband due to personal discernments. The influence of diocesan priests he has encountered in Fort Wayne played a strong role in helping him discern a vocation to the diocesan priesthood, so he applied and was accepted.

"The good thing about coming to Fort Wayne was to experience very faithful priests — very normal, very young. Their life can be appealing to young men," he said. Part of this realization came about during a summer assignment at Most Precious Blood Parish in Fort Wayne, where he served among the laity, "comforting them and helping any way I could."

**Q Did being a religious brother assist in discerning your priestly vocation?**

A Absolutely, said Deacon Degasperi. His years as a Franciscan brother have given him a strong foundation for the priesthood. "The witness

of someone wearing a religious habit or clerical garb is just a sign that speaks a lot to the presence of God."

He points to his transformation in the last 10 years and how the "intense spiritual life" ingrained in him as a Franciscan has increased his ability to be a good priest. "Sanctity, for a priest, is not just about himself; it's not for his own sake so much, but it's always for the sake of others. A holy priest changes lives more than a lukewarm one."

Although his discernment process is unusual, Deacon Degasperi still sees the essence of the diaconate as a matter of service. "That's really the priesthood for me, the most exciting thing: the fact of becoming — unworthy and unprepared as I am — an instrument in the hands of Jesus."

**Q What are you most looking forward to in your vocation?**

A Preaching and sharing the wisdom he gained during his time as a brother, Deacon Degasperi said.

**Deacon Logan Parrish**



**DEACON PARRISH**

**Q What does becoming a priest mean to you?**

A Deacon Parrish said he is drawn to the fatherhood aspect of the priesthood. His devotion to St. Joseph as spiritual father and the examples of other young priests gave him a greater desire to also become a

spiritual father to young people.

"Certainly, the means of fatherhood is the sacraments, but I think that as Father Daniel (Scheidt) says, 'You can't get any title better than father.'"

**Q How did you first hear the call to the priesthood?**

A It was a seemingly innocuous process at the beginning, Deacon Parrish remembered.

While a student at Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne, he became involved in several school sports. But in the fall of his sophomore year, he felt a change in his spiritual life during a retreat at his home parish of St. Vincent de Paul.

"At the end of the retreat, one man said, 'you guys should pray every day' and it just seemed so reasonable that I thought 'OK, I guess I could do that.' So, I started praying a decade of the rosary every day in the chapel at Dwenger."

He began inviting friends to join him in saying a decade before lunch. This time of prayer brought him immense joy, he said. "That sort of devotion and fostering of love for the Lord was beautiful."

During his senior year, then-chaplain Father Jacob Meyer began asking the school's altar servers if they had ever considered seminary and said they should follow any perceived call if they felt even the slightest nudge. Deacon Parrish joked, "I think I received an application like four times," including one from Bishop Rhoades.

After his first year of college and following a breakup with a girl he had been dating, while driving home afterward, he felt

**PRIESTHOOD, page 14**

**Congratulations!**  
The prayers of Holy Family and St. John the Baptist Parishes in South Bend are with our new deacons  
**Mark Hellinger and Brian Isenbarger.**

MARK, AS YOU SHARE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST, MAY YOU BE FILLED WITH THE SURE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS LOVE!  
**CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE!**

FROM YOUR COUSIN,  
FATHER JOHN DELANEY

**DEACON MARK HELLINGER**

**BRIAN, CONGRATULATIONS!**

MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS YOU.  
KEEP LISTENING TO HIS VOICE AND THE PLANS HE HAS FOR YOU.

**LOVE MOM & DAD**

**PRIESTHOOD, from page 13**

a nudge to go to the Mary alcove at St. Vincent. He stopped and knelt before the statue, giving her his joys as well as the pain of his breakup. As he finished a rosary, the weight was lifted from him.

"I've heard it said that the Lord takes our good to give us better. That really rings true. Never could I have imagined a better candidate for motherhood, a woman that I would have desired to start a family with — I had that image of marriage. Never would I have thought that the Lord would have wanted to give me something better than that."

**Q What has been your journey as you followed God's calling?**

A Deacon Parrish transferred from Holy Cross to Mount St. Mary's Seminary in 2015, completed his formation and was ordained to the diaconate June 20. The friendships he had made in high school stayed with him, though, and whenever he sees them, he speaks about the seminary, urging some to reconsider the vocations they had felt called to in high school. The friendships fostered on the sports teams and in the chapel at Bishop Dwenger were the same ones that helped him recognize his vocation to the priesthood, he noted.

**Q During your discernment, who has been your support and inspiration?**

A Deacon Parrish is the oldest of 10 children. He said his parents, Bill and Mary Jo Parrish, are supportive of his vocation and eager to attend his ordination.

"The faith and growth in

faith that I witnessed in my own household over the years made a deep impression," he said — particularly watching his father's faith journey.

Many holy men also influenced Deacon Parrish throughout his life: particularly "the energy and invitation of Father Jacob (Meyer)," the stability and priestly image of Msgr. Kuzmich and the holiness of former Bishop John M. D'Arcy" helped him make his decision.

### Deacon Daniel Koehl

**Q Who were the early influences in your decision to enter the seminary?**

A "I have a very supportive family. They have always been there for me and have been behind me through these many years of seminary formation. I can't thank them enough," Deacon Koehl said last year.

His mother and father are practicing Catholics, which he said played a critical role.

"One of the really beautiful aspects of this upbringing is that the Catholicism in our family was just a given. It was never any question of whether or not we were going to go to Mass on Sunday, or if we were going to pray before meals and bedtime. I was never asked if I would like to go to the public school instead. My parents knew what was best for me and taught me to live accordingly.

Deacon Koehl attended St. Vincent de Paul School, in the

parish where he was raised, and then Bishop Dwenger High School. Upon graduation in 2011, he began to study engineering at Purdue University, West Lafayette, but after two years discerned God's call to enter the seminary.

"The faith was seemingly always the backdrop on my life. My younger brothers have always shown me the greatest support. Both are young adults now and our friendship only continues to grow. It is especially edifying when they, though younger than me, teach me something about being a faithful Christian man. I have received so much affirmation and support from them over these years I've been in seminary. They make it pretty easy to be a big brother."

**Q Were there other examples of priestly ministry that encouraged you?**

A Koehl is grateful for the leaders of his parish youth group, because they taught him that Jesus was alive and a person who wanted a relationship with Him.

"As many vocation stories go, there were perhaps many small signs, or at least influences, which led to a greater level of discernment in the seminary. For example, when I was in middle school, I learned to serve at Mass. On Sundays, I would very frequently stop at the sacristy to ask the priest if he needed any more servers. As a result, I began to serve Mass so frequently that many friends and family began to call me 'Father Danny.' At the time, I just laughed at them, but today I realize the importance that serving Mass, being in the sanctuary with the priest, really had on me. It taught me the beauty of holiness and gave me

a special insight into what it meant to be a priest.

There was one priest who was a spark to his discernment, but it only takes a spark to start a fire, he told Today's Catholic.

"The late Bishop John M. D'Arcy was the first person I ever heard say the word 'vocation.' He set forth in my very young mind the idea that God is calling me to holiness in a certain way of life. I hope that that initial message will bear great fruit in my life as a deacon and priest."

Another time, during a high school retreat, there was time set aside for the sacrament of reconciliation.

Koehl said he made a very good examination of conscience, to the extent of picking through his life and finding all the sins and habits that put up barriers between the Lord and him. He recalled that when the priest was saying the words of absolution, he had a very clear sense of the presence of Christ in the priest.

"In that moment, it was as if Christ was offering me the seat on the other side of the confessional, to be an instrument of mercy for others as His priest. A great peace washed over me and, from that point on, I always sort of knew that I would be a priest, even if I made it there by an indirect route."

**Q Who are your favorite saints?**

A. When the Office of Vocations asked the question recently, Deacon Koehl had a comprehensive list.

"St. Maria Goretti, St. Edmund Campion, St. Thomas Becket, St. John Cassian, St. Benedict, St. Pius X, St. Pius V, Blessed Stanley Rother, Blessed Solanus Casey, Blessed Karl of Austria, St. Daniel the Stylite, St. Patrick, St. Edward the Martyr, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, St. Anthony."

**For resources to help discern a vocation, visit [diocesefwsb.org/vocations](http://diocesefwsb.org/vocations).**



DEACON KOEHL

*Congratulations*

Welcome to the diaconate

**Deacon Brian Isenbarger**

A graduate from St. John the Baptist School, New Haven



**Congratulations Mark Hellinger ('14)**

ONCE A KNIGHT, ALWAYS A KNIGHT!



**BISHOP LUERS**  
HIGH SCHOOL



ORDINATION TO THE  
**PRIESTHOOD**  
LIVESTREAM • JUNE 5 • 11 a.m.

With praise and thanksgiving, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will ordain Deacons Michael Ammer, Paolo Degasperri, Daniel Koehl, Benjamin Landrigan, Keeton Lockwood, Augustine Onuoha, and Logan Parrish to the Priesthood through the imposition of hands and the invocation of the Holy Spirit.

While this ordination is a private event, it will be livestreamed for the general public at 11 a.m. on [diocesefwsb.org](http://diocesefwsb.org), and on the diocesan YouTube and Facebook @diocesefwsb.



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# Dedication, teamwork build tradition of Academic Super Bowl success at Bishop Luers

BY KEVIN KILBANE

Cooperation, hard work and a love of learning propelled four teams from Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne to the state finals of the Indiana Academic Super Bowl competition this spring.

"This is our first year ever to have four teams in the state finals," said Alicia Baumgartner, a Bishop Luers chemistry teacher who served as the school's Academic Super Bowl program moderator and a science team coach. Bishop Luers, which has a long history of success in Academic Super Bowl, had a previous best of two teams reaching the state championships.

The state finals May 10 crowned champions in each of six categories: English, Science, Fine Arts, Social Studies, Math and Interdisciplinary. The latter category includes questions involving all five other categories.

Bishop Luers finished second in the Fine Arts, Social Studies and Interdisciplinary subject categories and seventh in English.

The Knights competed in Class 3 of the high school division for schools with enrollment of 356 to 611 students. The four Bishop Luers teams in the state finals each earned their way there by scoring among the top several teams in their subject category during an area competition April 20 involving more than 60 schools.

Bishop Luers was the only high school from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend competing in the Academic Super Bowl



Provided by Jenny Conrad

**These Bishop Luers High School students competed in Indiana's Academic Super Bowl state finals and brought home to Fort Wayne second place in three subject categories and seventh place in a fourth category.**

state finals.

"Our students definitely pushed each other," Baumgartner said of this year's team. "These kids are the ones doing the research and teaching each other."

"We all just worked really well together," said junior Stella Baker, who competed with teams in the English and Fine Arts subject areas. Many students have been on the same teams for a few years, which also helped, Baker said.

An extracurricular activity, Academic Super Bowl challenges students to develop research skills beyond what they typically use during classroom work, the

Indiana Association of School Principals said on its website, [iasp.org](http://iasp.org). The association works with Purdue University in West Lafayette to organize the program.

During competition in each subject category, team members must answer 25 multiple-choice questions related to the year's research theme, which changes annually, Academic Super Bowl rules said. This year's theme was "The American Woman: A Generation of Progress — 1920-2020."

"It was pretty interesting to see how many struggles women have had to come against," said Bishop Luers junior Catherine

Bougher, who competed on the English category team.

Team members — four for the Interdisciplinary category and three for each of the other subject areas — work together to answer questions, the rules said. Each team must respond to most questions within 20 seconds. Question writers can give them 40 seconds to answer in some cases, such as when the question takes a long time to read or the answer involves many math calculations.

Normally, area competitions and the state finals at Purdue take place in person. This year, all competitions took place online to keep participants safe

from the coronavirus.

Bishop Luers' team included 35 students, Baumgartner said.

Some of the school's subject category teams began meeting in September and others started in October, said Baumgartner and Kathy Schall, head of Bishop Luers' English department and co-coach of the English subject team with fellow English teacher Kate Sturm.

Initially, each team met about an hour a week with its coach or coaches, and team members researched their subject area on their own time, Baumgartner said. Closer to the spring competition season, teams spent about two hours a week working on their research, said senior Grace Bryant, who competed on the Fine Arts and Interdisciplinary teams.

Older students share information with each other and help prepare freshmen and sophomores for questions about topics they haven't studied yet in their classes, according to Baumgartner.

"I really like the people who do it," Baker said.

"You really get to know each other," Bougher added, saying they get to eat good food and talk about "weird things" that interest them.

Schall said she believes that over the years, Bishop Luers' Academic Super Bowl teams have benefited from dedicated coaches. The program also receives strong support from the student body and school staff.

"It is important to have recognition for clubs that are achieving great things," she noted.



ST. MARY OF THE  
ANNUNCIATION CHURCH  
BRISTOL, IN

BRIAN ISENBARGER AND MARK HELLINGER

## A perfect time to become sanctuary parishes and save lives

In a time of pandemic, when lives, health and well-being are at stake, we must work together for the common good. In these pandemic moments, there should be no room for selfishness.

The relaxation of restrictions associated with the pandemic may give the impression that the health crisis is over, and we are back to normal. Not so fast.

Tens of thousands of people are still contracting the virus daily. Thousands of deaths are reported every week in our country. Entire nations, including many of our immediate neighbors, are experiencing dire moments. If our neighbors cannot control the pandemic, we are not safe.

Solidarity seems the best strategy to ensure everyone's well-being during this pandemic. More exactly, Christian solidarity: seeing the face of Christ in the other, especially people who struggle most, and doing something to alleviate their suffering so they can live with dignity.

To be in solidarity demands empathy. We should be able to ask how others are doing. We should be able to understand what afflicts them and what prevents them from accessing that which would make their lives better.

Although our society has considerably improved its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are populations that unfortunately continue to carry the



HOSFFMAN OSPINO

### JOURNEYING TOGETHER

brunt of this health crisis with their bodies and their lives.

The pandemic continues to affect Hispanics disproportionately, and that hits home for Catholics. Nearly half of the U.S. Catholic population is Hispanic.

Despite the vaccine surpluses and, according to a report this month from the Kaiser Family Foundation, being the population most eager to be vaccinated, Hispanics have one of the lowest rates of COVID-19 vaccination in the country.

There are many reasons behind this seeming contradiction: lack of basic information and lots of misinformation, such as conspiracy theories; poor access to essential health care structures and services; language barriers; and a cadre of fears associated with immigration law enforcement, among others.

Small details matter. Self-proclaimed interpreters of Catholic morality often confuse Hispanics and other Catholics with personal opinions that regularly contra-

OSPINO, page 17

## Four qualities manifested by the Apostles just after Pentecost

The Apostles were dramatically changed at Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit for mission that took place there. Prior to this, even after seeing the risen Lord, they were timid and most uncertain about what to do. Peter even went back to fishing. But after Pentecost, all this changes. They are bold, courageous and quite certain of all Jesus taught.

It is worthwhile to look back at a text that sets forth this change in the Apostles with a picture of courage and holy boldness that is too little evident in many Catholics. Let's look at the passage, which takes place just after the healing of the paralyzed man at the gate. And then let's reflect on four qualities that the Apostles Peter and John manifest.

"Now, when [the Sanhedrin] saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. But when they had commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another, saying, "What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But in order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name." So, they called them and

charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard." And when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened." (Acts 4:13-21)

### Their authority

The text opens with a reference to the "boldness" of Peter and John to the fact that the religious authorities are "astonished." How could such uneducated and common men speak and act this way?

The Greek word translated here as "boldness" is "parresía" or "parrhesia") from "pás," or "all" + "rh sis," meaning "a proverb or statement quoted with resolve." In other words, parresía means to speak with confidence and exhibit strong resolve; it means to speak plainly, publicly, or effectively. It is from the root rh sis that the term rhetoric comes. Rhetoric is the art of effective or persuasive speaking and in its more technical sense usually requires training in logic and poise.

Thus, the boldness described in this passage shows the transformation that the resurrection and Pentecost have effected. Prior to Pentecost, the



MSGR. CHARLES POPE

### COMMUNITY IN MISSION

Apostles, though often zealous and willing to make sacrifices to follow Jesus, were also slow to understand and often confused. Beginning with Easter Sunday (e.g., Luke 24:32, 45) and most likely throughout the 40 days before ascending, the Lord instructed and formed the Apostles in the Gospel. It would take Pentecost, however, to fully quicken their minds and confirm their hearts. Jesus had said, "I still have much to tell you, but you cannot yet bear to hear it. However, when the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth." (Jn 16:12-13) Elsewhere, He added, "All this I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have told you." (John 14:25-26)

Prior to Pentecost, the Apostles and disciples gathered in fear, behind locked doors. Afterwards, though, they go about with the boldness described here. The religious

POPE, page 17

## In revealing the Trinity, God shows He wants us to know Him



### THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

### Feast of the Holy Trinity Matthew 28:16-20

The Book of Deuteronomy provides this feast's first reading. Deuteronomy is among the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. These books form for Jews the basic revelation by God.

This reading describes an instruction given by Moses to the Hebrew people as they wandered across the Sinai Peninsula, fleeing Egypt where they had been slaves, and in search of the prosperous land that God had promised them.

In this reading, Moses is quoted as having told the people that God created all. God had spoken to them. God is in

heaven. Finally, Moses said that the people must obey God's commandments. Each statement in powerful in its implications.

They revealed God. Moreover, they were God's own revelation. Freely, God had revealed to humans the identity of their Creator, had related to them, and had set the standards for the people's relationship with the Creator.

For the second reading this weekend, the Church presents a passage from the Epistle to the Romans. By the time St. Paul wrote this letter to the Christians of Rome, the reality of God, certainly as understood in the Jewish tradition and in the Christian tradition beginning to form, was accepted.

The marvel in Paul's message is that Christians share the divine life. They are more than creatures of God. They are God's children. God is the Father. Indeed, disciples are encouraged to address God as "Father," as "Abba," an ancient term for fathers that was a particular, gentle and loving endearment.

Paul continues. As children

of God, the faithful are heirs to the eternal life of God. All this, of course, is accomplished in and through the individual Christian's bond with the Lord Jesus.

St. Matthew's Gospel supplies the last reading. It is a Resurrection narrative, clear and compelling. The risen Lord appears before the 11 surviving Apostles on a mountain. He spoke to them in human words. They understood. He conferred upon them all authority on earth and in heaven. He then commissioned them to go into the entire world, bringing all whom they would meet into the one body, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Then, Jesus promised to be with them until the end of the world.

### Reflection

Overall, the teaching in these lessons is that God lives, and that God unites with us. He communicates with us. He meets us in our world. He speaks our language. He loves us.

God revealed to us the reality and the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the very identity of God. Humans never deduced or even imagined the Trinity on their own, in their own minds. It was divine Revelation in every sense.

Why did God reveal the Trinity to humans?

To answer the question, it helps to think about how people introduce themselves or make themselves better known.

"Good morning, I am John," or, "I am Mary." As the conversation continues, "I live around the corner," or "I am from the next town." "I went to school here." "My sister is older than I." "I work for the department store in the mall."

Being more personal: "I had surgery for a tumor." "I am 50 years of age." "I am married." "My wife and I have four children."

It goes on, each statement giving more information about the person so that we better may know him or her.

In revealing the Trinity, in sending Jesus to be among us and tell us so much about God,

our heavenly Father gives us every opportunity to know Him. He wants us to know Him. He loves us.

We belong to God. We are God's children. We are much, much more than creatures. We are God's cherished sons and daughters.

### READINGS

**Sunday:** Dt 4:32-34, 39-40 Ps 33:4-6, 9, 18-20, 22 Rom 8:14-17 Mt 28:16-20

**Monday:** Zep 3:14-18a (Ps) Is 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6 Lk 1:39-56

**Tuesday:** Tb 2:9-14 Ps 112:1-2, 7-9 Mk 12:13-17

**Wednesday:** Tb 3:1-11a, 16-17a Ps 25:2-5b, 6, 7bc, 8-9 Mk 12:18-27

**Thursday:** Tb 6:10-11; 7:1bcde, 9-17; 8:4-9a Ps 128:1-5 Mk 12:28-34

**Friday:** Tb 11:5-17 Ps 146:1b-2, 6c-10 Mk 12:35-37

**Saturday:** Tb 12:1, 5-15, 20 (Ps) Tb 13:2, 6efgh, 7-8 Mk 12:38-44

**POPE, from page 16**

leaders are “astonished” and marvel that such common and unlearned men can have such a sweeping command of their topic, and such serene courage. Peter and John have healed a man who had been lame for 40 years, a man they knew was lame and had seen in the temple. The religious leaders cannot explain it; further, the usual threats do not seem to have the desired effect on them.

Yes, Peter and John are bold, confident, and unafraid. They are manifesting the gift that the Lord promised when he said, “On account of My name, they will deliver you to the synagogues and prisons, and they will bring you before kings and governors. This will be your opportunity to serve as witnesses. So, make up your mind not to worry beforehand how to defend yourselves. For I will give you speech and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.” (Luke 21:12-15)

Such a change in these men, especially Peter! It is clear that the Lord has gifted them just as He promised. Their boldness is God’s grace. May that grace reach Church leaders today, both clergy and lay. Holy boldness such as this is needed more than ever.

**Their association**

The text says that the Sanhedrin recognized that they had been with Jesus. What a magnificent line. While this may have meant they recalled that these men had accompanied Jesus, for the reader the expression has far more depth. Peter and John, by their transformed lives, are manifesting that they have been with Jesus. They are showing forth the fruit of a life-changing, transformative relationship with Jesus Christ. Yes, these men have been with Jesus; it is obvious!

How about you and me? Would someone be able to look at us and conclude that we have been with Jesus? Is this not a description of what should be the normal Christian life? Is your association with Jesus Christ obvious to others? It ought to be.

It is, of course, a sad reality that most Christians are content to hide out or to blend in with

the culture. They are undercover Christians, secret-agent saints, and frozen chosen. There’s no real fire to attract attention, no bold proclamations or visible signs of spiritual life. Few would ever conclude that they had been with Jesus.

Where are we on the light spectrum? Is the light of Christ in us visible? (Mat 5:14) Do we bear the brand marks of Jesus? (Gal 6:17) Do we love our enemies? (Mat 5:44) Do we shine like the stars in the midst of a twisted and depraved generation? (Phil 2:15)

**Their arresting ability**

Although St. Peter and St. John have been arrested, they have, in effect, turned the tables and arrested the Sanhedrin. As remarked above, Peter and John do not seem cowed by the usual threats and their arguments are not easily set aside, for they speak with sincerity and authority. Further, the crowds are amazed and the leaders themselves cannot explain how a man, known by them to have been lame for 40 years, now walks and even dances.

They don’t really know what to do. They are arrested by the winsome and courageous witness before them.

True holiness can have this effect, at least in certain conditions. St. Teresa of Kolkata was like this. Though many did not share her faith, even enemies of the faith admired her. This was not because she was a people pleaser; in fact, just the opposite. She had a boldness to scold even the most powerful, but a love that could not be denied. Her reflection of the glory of Christ arrested one and all.

This is perhaps one of the rarest gifts of all, yet still one to seek, so that at least some in every age have a holiness and a goodness that is arresting in its purity.

**Their assertiveness**

To be appropriately assertive is to get one’s needs met without trampling others. And what is the greatest need of any saint? To proclaim Christ, crucified and risen. Thus, when Peter and John are warned to stop proclaiming the name of Jesus, they assert their need and right to continue doing so. However,

they do so without disrespecting the leaders before them. They do not shout, “We won’t listen to you!” They do not personally disrespect them at all. Rather, they commend themselves to the conscience of these leaders as a way of respectfully declining a command they cannot follow: “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.”

In other words, they say, “Brothers, Elders, would you not agree that a man must obey God before obeying any man? Do what you must do. Make your judgments. But we must obey the Lord and speak of Jesus until our last breath.”

They are respectful but clear. They assert themselves and their mission but do not attack and trample the reputations or lawful authority of those in the community or state. They cannot cooperate in an evil directive, but they do not attack or stage an attempted overthrow of power. They stand before their opponents and look them in the eye. They will not flee or yield to fear, but neither will they become like them in arrogance and unrighteous demands.

This is a good model for us who are entering into increasingly difficult days, in which the pressures made upon us by the culture and the government may require that we refuse to cooperate with evil demands. Our goal is not to humiliate and overcome our opponents, but to convert them; and if not them then the culture around us. As St. Paul says, “We do not use deception, neither do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God.” (2 Cor 4:2)

So here is a model for us and a set of challenges. We are to manifest a bold and sincere confidence in the Gospel we proclaim, because we have met Jesus and are being transformed into His likeness. Indeed, we should ask and strive for that rare holiness that is arresting in its purity but also assertively announces Christ Jesus without compromise or hypocrisy.

Help us, Lord.

**OSPINO, from page 16**

dict Church teaching. Seeing a law enforcement officer at the entrance of a large vaccination center can be a deterrent for people who may not have their immigration affairs in order.

It is tempting to take for granted that one can trust information available in certain specialized websites or that law enforcement officers at a vaccination center are there to help, not to ask for proof of citizenship. Yet many people, because of their life circumstances, do not. Vulnerable people do not take life for granted.

Here is where our Catholic parishes can make a major dif-

ference. The mantra for Catholic faith communities during these days of pandemic should be, “How can we help?”

I think that Catholic parishes can become sanctuary parishes in creative ways. The sanctuary movement is often associated with providing a safe space for refugees and immigrants. True, yet the ultimate thrust of the sanctuary movement is to save lives.

Many Catholic parishes throughout the country are hosting COVID-19 vaccination clinics. They often do it in neighborhoods with large immigrant populations. These communities are functioning as de facto sanctuary parishes.

We have more than 16,700

Catholic parishes in the country that could become sanctuary communities providing reliable information, hosting vaccination clinics and being safe spaces where vulnerable people’s fears are no more. We could do something similar in the buildings and parking lots of our Catholic schools and colleges.

The sanctuary movement provides great inspiration for our parishes to respond prophetically in the name of Jesus Christ to the challenges of the current pandemic. Let’s do it!

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

**SCRIPTURE SEARCH®**

Gospel for May 30, 2021

Romans 8:14-17 / Matthew 28:16-20

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, Cycle B, promises of love and care. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

RECEIVE	SLAVERY	FALL BACK
INTO FEAR	ADOPTION	ABBA
WITNESS	CHILDREN	HEIRS
CHRIST	GLORIFIED	ELEVEN
DISCIPLES	GALILEE	MOUNTAIN
JESUS	DOUBTED	HEAVEN
ON EARTH	NAME	THE END

**HEIRS**

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



**ST. JOAN OF ARC**

1412-1431  
 FEAST: MAY 30

An illiterate but intelligent French peasant girl, Joan was thrust into the Hundred Years’ War by her “voices,” inner promptings urging her to save France from England and Burgundy. After meeting the French dauphin and being examined by theologians, she led the army to victories at Orleans and Patay. Captured later by the Burgundians, she was abandoned by the dauphin and sold to the English, who burned her at the stake for witchcraft and heresy. Joan was rehabilitated by a papal commission in 1456.

## SCHOOL SECRETARY St. Bernard Catholic School

Wabash, IN 46992  
www.stbernardcatholicsschool.org

St. Bernard School, Wabash is looking for a school secretary. St. Bernard School is a small K-6 school located 45 miles southwest of Fort Wayne, IN. This person must be friendly and personable. This person must also be knowledgeable of technology, word processing and spreadsheets.

### Duties include:

- Answering the phone
- Relaying messages
- Coordinating the school lunch program
- Being responsible for PowerSchool input and troubleshooting
- Keeping track of school funds for the Principal
- Keeping the Principal updated of daily events
- Efficiently running the school office
- Attending to minor injuries of students
- And other duties assigned by the Principal or Pastor

This is a full-time position which would start August 1, 2021. Please go to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend's Office of Catholic Schools website to apply.

For more information, contact:

Janice Martin WP

Administrative Assistant, Catholic Schools Office

260-399-1411 or [jmartin@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:jmartin@diocesefwsb.org)

Go to <https://theapplicantmanager.com/jobs?pos=DF425> to apply.

Application Deadline: June 18, 2021

## MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST



The Office of Vocations of the Congregation of Holy Cross (United States Province) seeks a Marketing Communications Specialist. The position designs and produces electronic and print media, as well as promotional items and materials, highlighting the formation programs and vocations office programming of the Congregation of Holy Cross. Qualified applicants will be practicing Catholics and must possess a bachelor's degree from a four-year college or university. High organizational skills required. For a complete position description, or to apply, submit your resume and cover letter to Father John DeRiso, CSC, Director, Office of Vocations, via email at [jderiso@nd.edu](mailto:jderiso@nd.edu).



## PRINCIPAL NEEDED

St. John the Baptist Catholic School in New Haven is looking for a principal to begin work on July 1, 2021. The school has an enrollment of 215 kindergarten – grade 8 students with an experienced and dedicated faculty of 17 plus additional school support staff. St. John the Baptist Catholic School has received an "A" grade from the Indiana Department of Education.

### Qualifications:

A practicing Catholic in full communion with the Church and active in their current home parish within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend with belief in the Catholic Church and her teachings and doctrines. Minimum of five years teaching experience – previous administrative experience helpful. The candidate will possess or be eligible for an Indiana Elementary Administrative License. Evidence of strong leadership, communication, and organizational skills needed to form and guide teachers and staff in the Church's mission and academic excellence.

Questions regarding this job opening should be directed to the Catholic Schools Office at 260-422-4611. Interested applicants should apply online at [diocesefwsb.org/careers](http://diocesefwsb.org/careers). Application deadline is June 1, 2021.

# Bringing the community back together with music

BY KATIE MURRAY

As the weather changes and the pandemic eases, it has brought a breath of fresh air and new beginnings. Many gatherings were put on hold to keep everyone safe and healthy, but with the guidance and grace of God, people are now able to come together again.

For Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception parishioners Mark and Teresa Stachofsky, and Mike Dulac, parish music director, live music performances with other musicians was what they missed the most. The trio decided to plan an event that would bring other musicians in the community together and give them a chance to perform live again — something that was not possible the last year and a half.

"Music is a central aspect of worship, faith and life in the Catholic Church" said Teresa, one of the organizers of the concert series. They invited musicians and singers from their parish and others, the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, students from the University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne, and anyone wanting the chance to play again. In addition to bringing the community together, they thought it would highlight the historic beauty of the cathedral and to give praise to God.

Dubbed the Cathedral Artists Music Series, the first concert took place at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception May 2. The theme of the night was classical music written by English composers, fitting to the setting of the cathedral.

Christine Hudson, a parishioner of St. Jude, Fort Wayne, said, "I loved the idea. I think that I missed things like this greatly and I missed beautiful music with beautiful people in one of the most beautiful churches in our community. To be able to hear live music and just enjoy the beauty right now, it seems like we haven't had enough of that."

Attendees at the first concert heard some of the most famous English composers, such as Henry Purcell, Ralph Vaughan-Williams and John Rutter, all 17th- to 19th-century artists. The sounds of the songs echoed aesthetically throughout the cathedral, bringing a serene calm among the crowd.

Sister Mary Govert and Sister Marilyn Oliver, Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration

in Fort Wayne, both said their favorite part was the last song, "Vivace" ("A-Roving") by Rutter. "It was so full. The kids were so good. I just think this is a wonderful thing for the community and to be able to have something this great. A nice variety of musicians and see the church" said Sister Marilyn. "I did notice that people kept looking over to the stations, into the stained-glass windows and taking that part in too," added Sister Mary. Both said they were looking forward to the next concert.

Musicians Joseph and Lindsay Platt, invited to perform by Mark, are parishioners of the cathedral. "The opportunity to play

*"Music is a central aspect*

*of worship, faith,*

*and life in the Catholic Church"*

TERESA STACHOSKY

and share is always a fulfilling thing to do. Giving the gift of music to others is always fulfilling," said Joseph. "I was grateful for the opportunity to share the beauty of the cathedral with others. It's a unique downtown treasure that many might not know about. Some of

the people here tonight may not have been Catholic. So hopefully they got to experience our church and community."

"It's an opening for those who aren't a part of our community," added Lindsay.

Listeners filled every other pew, as the pews were roped off for social distancing.

"It feels like Fort Wayne is hungry and ready for music and the arts," said Lindsay. "It was a wonderful opportunity."

"My experience putting this together has been wonderful," said Teresa. "It has been so much fun, and it feels so good to sing such wonderful music again. It has been a long time. It's always nice to use the talents that God gave us."

The organizers said that they hope the series can be a permanent thing at the cathedral. "We really want to have at least two concerts a year. We would love it if it became more. We'd really like to see this as a place that people can come into this building and see what a great place this is, and maybe consider even coming back on a Sunday morning," said Teresa.

The next concert is planned to take place in September. The organizers are taking donations to bring in local professional musicians who are going through hardship as a result of the pandemic. To donate, visit [www.cathedralfw.org](http://www.cathedralfw.org) and click on "online giving."

# 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](http://www.todayscatholic.org/event). For additional listings of that event, please call the advertising sales staff at 260-399-1449 to purchase space.

**Corpus Christi procession**

**FORT WAYNE** — Immediately following the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, June 6, at Our Lady of Good Hope Parish, 7215 Saint Joe Rd., exposition will take place until 3:30 p.m. At that time there will be a eucharistic procession around the grounds of Our Lady of Good Hope to an outdoor altar on the front lawn of the church. There will be a brief talk and Benediction. After, the procession will conclude in the church with the praying of the Divine Praises and the Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament. (In the event of inclement weather, the talk and Benediction will all occur in the church). First communicants are invited to come in their attire and be in the procession before the monstrance. They are also invited to bring a basket with flower petals to toss in front of Christ during the procession.

**Corpus Christi procession**

**ELKHART** — A procession from St. Thomas the Apostle Parish through downtown Elkhart to St. Vincent de Paul Parish, with a stop at Women's Care Center, will be Sunday, June 6, at 4 p.m. Meet at St. Thomas parking lot, 1405 N Main St., at 3:45 p.m. Benediction will follow immediately after the procession at St.

Vincent de Paul Church. You will need to provide your own transportation back to St. Thomas. First communicants and confirmandi are especially encouraged to participate and wear their dress attire.

**Red Cross blood drive at Our Lady of Good Hope**

**FORT WAYNE** — Our Lady of Good Hope is sponsoring a blood drive on Saturday, June 12, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the gym. Contact Debi Schoedel at 260-485-9615 or [info@olghfw.com](mailto:info@olghfw.com).

## Make a difference in a life, in the world

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- Housing including all utilities, board, \$200/week stipend
- Long term applicants preferred.
- Must have deep Catholic faith, strong personal skills, flexibility and computer literacy.

Send resume with three references to [copenitents@yahoo.com](mailto:copenitents@yahoo.com) 260-739-6882

[FranciscanVocationHouse.com](http://FranciscanVocationHouse.com)

## REST IN PEACE

**Bristol**

Donald L. Brown, 85, St. Mary of the Annunciation

**Decatur**

Diane F. Carpenter, 74, St. Mary of the Assumption

**Fort Wayne**

Joseph Bragg, 64, St. Charles Borromeo

Jeff Brockman, 59, St. Vincent de Paul

Mary L. Hitchler, 99, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

David J. Moore, Sr., 82, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Robert Shaw, 88, St. Jude

Calvin L. Swangin, 62, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

**Granger**

Carolyn Wantuch, 85, St. Pius X

**Mishawaka**

Dawn Brassuer, 79, St. Joseph

Jim DeWinter, 72, St. Joseph

Christine Larimer, 75, St. Joseph

Larry Wartha, 82, St. Joseph

**New Carlisle**

Stanley Zakrzewski, 95, St. Stanislaus Kostka

**South Bend**

Guy Cressy, 72, Holy Family

John Dials, Sr., 74, Holy Family

Joan Golubski, 91, Holy Cross

Michael Lutomski, 87, Holy Family

Cecilia Nowak, 97, St. John the Baptist

Steve Sulentic, Sr., 71, Holy Family

With Choice expansion, affording a **CATHOLIC EDUCATION** may be easier than you think.

Starting this fall, families whose household income is at or below 300% of Federal Reduced Lunch guidelines and who meet eligibility criteria may qualify for scholarships towards private school tuition.

HOUSEHOLD	300% FRL
1	\$71,484
2	\$96,681
3	\$121,878
4	\$147,075
5	\$172,272
6	\$197,469
7	\$222,666
8	\$247,863
9	\$273,060
10	\$298,257

Learn more: [diocesefwsb.org/schools](http://diocesefwsb.org/schools)

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ON TO PURDUE!



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St. John the Baptist Catholic Church  
Making Christ the Center of Our Lives



## HR Manager PART-TIME

Are you looking for a great part-time Human Resources Manager position? We are hiring! Ave Maria Press, a Catholic publishing company located in Notre Dame, Indiana, has an immediate opening for an experienced part-time human resource manager to manage all areas of HR functions. Hours are flexible and should average 25 hours per week.

Send resume and cover letter to [pgates1@nd.edu](mailto:pgates1@nd.edu). Check out the complete job description at [www.avemariapress.com](http://www.avemariapress.com).

# With voucher expansion, Catholic school families exchange 'either/or' for 'and'

BY JODI MARLIN

When Indiana's Choice Scholarship Program was passed in 2011, it was one of the largest voucher systems in America. In April, the Hoosier state legislature voted to approve a bipartisan budget that included a significant expansion of that initiative.

"Hoosier families won," John Elcesser, executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association, told the Indiana Catholic Conference at the time. Both organizations lobbied for the expansion, which will give more middle-income parents the option to choose a faith-based education for their children.

Dr. Joseph Brettnacher, superintendent of Catholic schools for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, emphasized the impact the legislative changes will make on Catholic schools' mission.

"The most important aspect of the Choice expansion is that more families will have the ability to send their children to faith-based schools, where students can develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ within His mystical body, the Church. Our goals for students are to create disciples of Jesus Christ, help them fulfill their destiny to become saints and reach heaven."

## Two-pronged increase

As reported by the ICC, the current eligibility for vouchers stands, in most cases, at a maximum family income of 150% of the federal Free and Reduced Lunch program limit. Under guidelines that take effect for the 2021-22 school year, that threshold jumps to 300%, helping middle- and upper-middle-class families who are still struggling to pay for private school tuition.

In addition, eligible families will see increases in the dollar amounts of the vouchers their students receive. The program currently operates under three tiers, with students receiving vouchers of 50%, 70% or 90% of state tuition support based on family income. Going forward, all eligible students will receive a 90% voucher, representing 90% of the state's tuition support for their child if the child had attended his or her local public school, eliminating the previous 50% and 70% tiers.

On the donor side, the Indiana School Scholarship Tax Credit cap also has been increased from the current \$16.5 million total — the amount the entire state tax credit program can award in a fiscal year — to \$17.5 million in 2021-22 and \$18.5 million in



Jennifer Simerman

**A student of Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne, and chaplain Father David Huneck share a lighthearted moment. The Indiana Choice Scholarship Program expansion, passed as part of the state's 2021-23 budget, will allow more middle-income Catholic families to pursue a faith-based academic environment for their children.**

Year Two of the budget.

Gov. Eric Holcomb's 2021-23 budget also establishes an Education Scholarship Account program for students with special needs, with the same financial eligibility as the voucher program. The program opens for the 2022-23 school year.

Key to the success of the legislation that has opened the doors of Catholic school education to so many, was, Brettnacher mentioned, the work of Indiana Speaker Todd Huston, Rep. Tim Brown, Rep. Bob Behning, Sen. Rod Bray, Sen. Eric Bassler, Sen. Ryan Mishler and Sen. Liz Brown, among others. Elcesser and Betsy Wiley, president of the Institute for Quality Education, supported the successful legislation as well.

Many people in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend schools, and their legislative liaisons, contacted their state legislators in support of the Choice Scholarship Expansion, acknowledging Brettnacher.

"We also want to acknowledge the intercession of those who have gone before us: all the priests, brothers and sisters who taught in our school — especially saints like St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. John Neumann, St. Andre Bessette. And we thank Bishop [Kevin C.] Rhoades for his steadfast support of our Catholic schools, in addition to all the diocesan bishops before him."

## 'Room to breathe'

For some families, the increases will immediately change their children's educational options. Those for whom Catholic education was previously not financially viable are now likely to find it to now be within reach.

Other families, like the Glenn family of Fort Wayne, say the change will give them "room to breathe."

Dedicated to prioritizing a Catholic school education for their six children, the Glenns

moved from Warsaw — which has no Catholic high school — to Fort Wayne when their oldest was of an age to enroll.

"We wanted a smaller school, and the religion class: We wanted a school where the teachers would reiterate what we're teaching at home," said mom Mackenzie. Two have since graduated from Bishop Luers High School, one is a student there now and three attend St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's grade school.

"We're still kind of wrapping our head around it, but we think it will help us to be able to do the other activities they're interested in — the sporting events, the camps, the extracurricular things outside of school," Glenn shared.

Even with the previous state vouchers and other scholarships, "We've never paid less than 50% tuition," she shared. To compensate, they limited other activities. "There was a lot of either/or." The summers were "off," mean-

ing they engaged few outings, teams or camps.

"I feel like this is going to help us tremendously to be able to do those things more often: go to the zoo, go to the movies," Glenn said. "We're excited: This is going to take some of the stress off our shoulders."

Although she is grateful for the time the family spent together, having more flexibility in the budget will allow a little breathing room — especially now that three of the children drive.

"For a long time, it was a struggle to stay afloat. ... Now, we'll have a little more money to help with the bills for flat tires, new tires, things like that."

The Wes and Stephanie Lantz family of Warsaw were similarly excited to hear the news of the program's expansion. Stephanie is a stay-at-home mother to their three children, who attend Sacred Heart School.

"It takes a little financial pressure off of us, for sure. It also opens doors for us for middle school and high school, for them to be able to progress in their Catholic education. Financially, that was going to be burdensome, going into higher education. ... We love our faith, so we would have figured something out. But this is a bonus for us, to not have to worry about not spending money on this or that, so we can save for school. With me hopefully volunteering in the school again this year, instead of working, this will take the pressure off."

Secretary for Catholic Education Carl Loesch expressed gratitude to legislators and the Indiana Non-Public Education Association for advocating for more families to have the opportunity to choose the school that best fits their child. He also lauded the efforts of diocesan schools to provide a quality Catholic education, even during Covid.

"Our Catholic schools, our teachers and our administrators have done an excellent job during the pandemic keeping our schools open as much as possible. This comes from our core beliefs that our Catholic faith is incarnational, sacramental and relational," he said. "Young people are formed best when they can relate in person with their teachers and their peers. We are grateful that this new legislation will allow us to welcome more students and families who want to partner with Catholic schools for the formation of their children."

"Contact your local Catholic school to schedule a visit to see the difference a Catholic education can make for your child."