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# TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 95 No. 30

TODAYSCATHOLIC.org

## St. Thomas students encouraged to be 'children of the light'

BY DENISE FEDOROW

Catholic students in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend have returned to their classrooms for the 2021-22 school year, and through Mass at the University of Saint Francis and a pastoral visit to St. Thomas the Apostle School in Elkhart, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades has been with them.

He began his visit to St. Thomas Aug. 31 with a Mass, sharing with the elementary and middle school students that he was "very happy to be at St. Thomas to celebrate Mass with all of you. This is my first (pastoral) visit (of the school year), and I wanted to come to St. Thomas."

During the homily, Bishop Rhoades spoke about the first reading from St. Paul's letter to the Thessalonians. He taught the students a Greek word — "Parousia" — which means, "the second coming of Christ," and told them that's what the reading was about. He said Catholics believe He'll come again to judge the living and the dead.

"St. Paul tells the people in the first reading that Jesus will 'come like a thief in the night' — he used that image to say we don't know when He'll come, so we should always be ready for Jesus' second coming every day, living with faith and hope and love so we're ready."

He said St. Paul called Christians 'children of the light,' and asked the students if they knew what that meant and when, exactly, they became children of the light. One student responded, 'in baptism'.

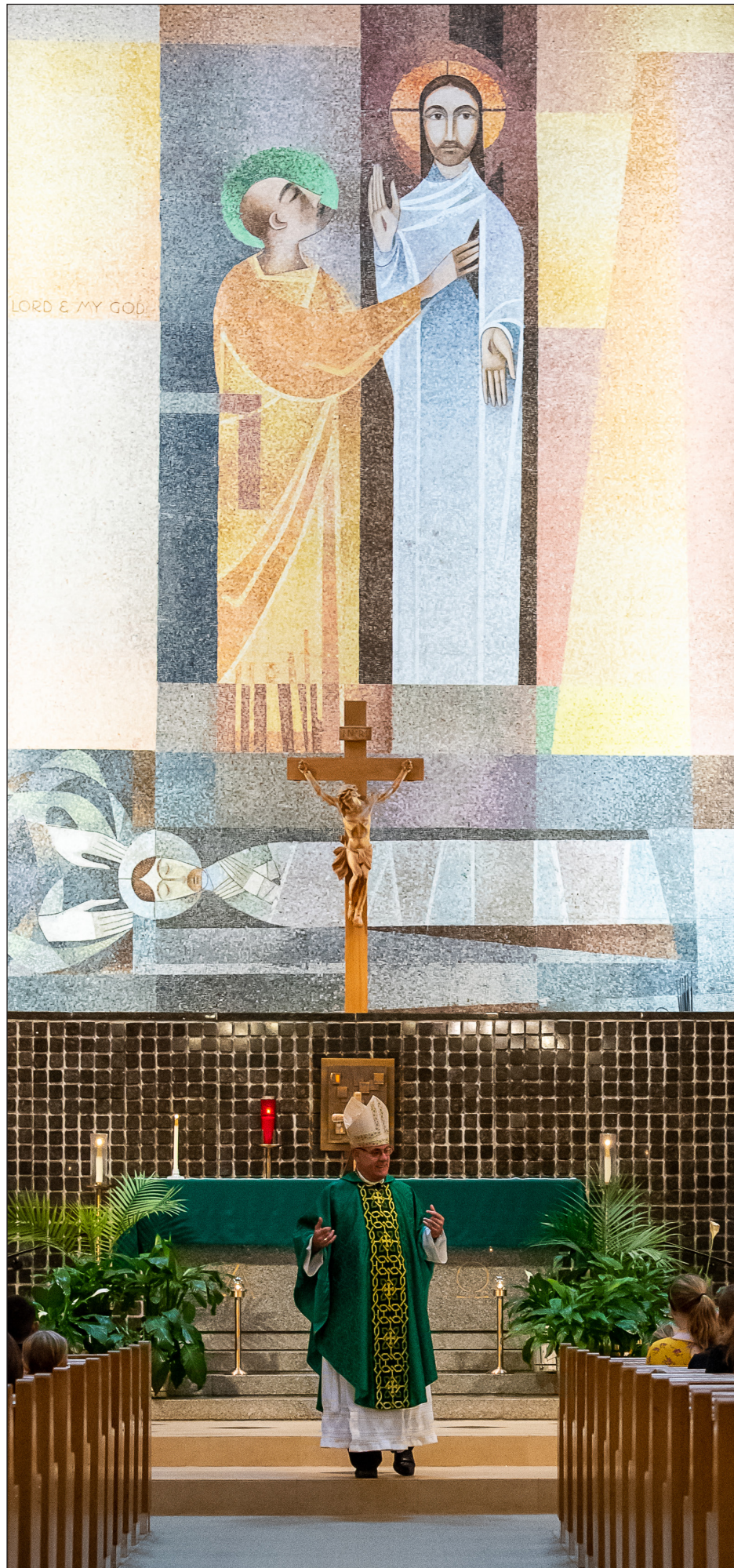
The bishop explained that at their baptism, the priest took a candle, lit it from the Easter candle and gave it to the parents and godparents, telling them to keep the light burning brightly.

"Sometimes we sin, and that's darkness. But we shouldn't remain in darkness. Go to confession so we can continue to live as children of the light," he said.

"At the end of the reading, St. Paul tells the people to 'encourage one another and build each other up, help each other out, not tear each other down. Saying mean things, criticizing others, not being kind—that's tearing down,' he added. "As disciples of Jesus, we're called to encourage one another."

In the Gospel reading, the students heard that Jesus was teaching in the synagogue.

"People were amazed at His teaching because He had so much wisdom and was teaching with authority," the bishop said. "At the end of the Gospel, they were amazed again because not only did He teach with such authority, but he even had the authority to cast out demons."



John Martin

Catholic education is a gift, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades tells students at St. Thomas the Apostle School in Elkhart during a pastoral visit to the school Aug. 31. "You can ... pray and learn about God's love, learn about Jesus' teaching, His life and miracles, and you'll have that knowledge and faith the rest of your life."



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## Communication Builds Community

As they prayed, the place where they were gathered shook, and they were all filled with the holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

—Acts 4:31



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[WWW.USCCB.ORG/CCC](http://WWW.USCCB.ORG/CCC)

## Annual collection for USCCB's Catholic Communication Campaign is Sept. 11-12

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Catholic Communication Campaign “relies on the generosity of Catholics across the country to help us continue to spread the good news, especially during these challenging times,” said the chairman of the U.S. bishops’ subcommittee on the campaign.

U.S. Catholics support the campaign through a national collection, which in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is Sept. 11-12.

“Ever since Jesus told His disciples to take His message to all nations, the Church has done so using the best communications methods of the day,” said Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer of Atlanta, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Subcommittee on the Catholic Communication Campaign.

The USCCB has posted several resources about the Catholic Communication Campaign and how the funds are used at [www.usccb.org/ccc](http://www.usccb.org/ccc).

The collection has both local and national impact: Half of the gift stays in the donor’s diocese supporting local projects “to inspire, enlighten, and draw people closer to Jesus,” a May 10 USCCB news release said. The other half supports Catholic communication activities that are national in scope or that aid Catholic outreach in developing nations.

According to the USCCB release, the COVID-19 pandemic presented the “perfect storm” with increasing demand for support from the Catholic Communication Campaign while at the same time most parishioners were unable to attend Mass due to COVID-19-related restrictions the weekend of the collection. “That situation resulted in a significant decline in giving to the CCC, which is trending down by more than half,” it said.



Catholic  
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When limitations and restrictions on group gatherings prompted churches to close their doors, the campaign collection enabled Catholic ministry to continue in places with little communication infrastructure. The USCCB used the funding to help dioceses and parishes livestream the Mass.

The USCCB also launched its own redesigned, mobile-friendly website — [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org) — where Catholics can find daily readings and reflections on Scripture.

The Catholic Communication Campaign also has enabled bishops to lead virtual roundtables on racism, gun control and care

for creation to engage Catholics “on pertinent moral and social issues,” the USCCB said. “The reach of the collection is far and wide — it is also helping the Archdiocese of Blantyre in Malawi launch a radio station to reach rural Catholics.”

U.S. projects with a national reach that have received funding from the campaign include a 2020 documentary titled “Revolution of the Heart: The Dorothy Day Story,” a film by Martin Doblmeier about the co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, as well as a forthcoming documentary titled “Mother Saints” on the lives of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821) and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini (1850-1917).

Another similarly funded documentary will tell the story of sainthood candidate Sister Thea Bowman (1937-1990), a “Servant of God” and the granddaughter of a slave who became a joyous advocate for faith in Jesus and for racial justice.

A campaign grant to Renew International, which produces small-group study materials, will underwrite videos in which Sister Helen Prejean, a Sister of St. Joseph of Medaille, explains church teaching against the death penalty and proposes a better vision of criminal justice.

Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Inc., a Vatican-chartered organization that St. John Paul II founded to promote Catholic social teaching, will use a grant to improve its social media outreach and to produce animated videos on Catholic social principles.

“Gifts to this collection will bring the message of Jesus to your community and to communities on the other side of the world,” Archbishop Hartmayer said.



# New York fire chaplain says there are days when 9/11 'feels like yesterday'

BY GREGORY A. SHEMITZ

BLUE POINT, N.Y. (CNS) — Father Kevin M. Smith, a veteran fire chaplain, trauma counselor and loyal friend to scores of active and retired firefighters in the New York metropolitan area, receives more phone calls in early September than any other time of the year.

Most of the calls are from firefighters who served amid the carnage and chaos in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on New York City's World Trade Center.

A fire chaplain with 30 years of service, Father Smith, 60, is commissioned by Nassau County, New York, to minister to members of the county's 71 volunteer fire departments, many of whom work full time with the New York Fire Department.

He also is a member of the county's Critical Incident Stress Management team, which provides support to firefighters and emergency medical services workers who are dealing with trauma associated with their duties as first responders.

Father Smith's cellphone starts ringing and dingling with calls and texts from firefighters in the days leading up to and including the 9/11 anniversary. They come from front-line heroes who have been emotionally and, in many cases, physically affected by the cataclysmic event.

Father Smith — pastor of Our Lady of the Snow Church in Blue Point in the Diocese of Rockville Centre — can empathize with the callers. He, too, was a first responder at ground zero, arriving near the scene as the World Trade Center's North Tower was collapsing, completing the total destruction of the two 110-story buildings and resulting in a mountain of crushed concrete, twisted steel and pulverized debris where they once stood in lower Manhattan.

In an interview with Catholic News Service to mark the 20th anniversary of the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania, Father Smith spoke about his role as a chaplain on and after 9/11.

"I can't believe it was 20 years ago," he remarked. "There are days when it feels like yesterday."

For Father Smith, Sept. 11, 2001, began at St. Rose of Lima Church in Massapequa, some 40 miles east of the city. An associate pastor at the time, he had been preparing to celebrate morning Mass when a parish secretary told him to turn on the television where he witnessed the second of two hijacked jetliners crash into the World Trade Center.

Several minutes later, his fire pager chirped, alerting him about the mass casualty incident.



CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz

**Father Kevin M. Smith, pastor of Our Lady of the Snow Parish in Blue Point, N.Y., is seen in his office Aug. 25. Father Smith, a Nassau County, N.Y., fire chaplain, served as a 9/11 first responder in the aftermath of the 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City**

After notifying his pastor that he was responding to the call, Father Smith jumped into his black Chevy Trailblazer — a vehicle with emergency lights and sirens — and headed toward the city. Along the way he picked up his younger brother, Patrick Smith, an off-duty New York City firefighter, and dropped him off at his firehouse in the Bronx.

When he eventually arrived in lower Manhattan, Father Smith encountered a surreal scene. The devastation was overwhelming.

"The whole place was filled with smoke," he recalled. "There was a lot of stuff coming out of the air. Fire trucks and Emergency Service Unit vehicles were catching fire from the falling debris and exploding."

Throughout the day and into the early hours the following day, Father Smith — protected by a fire helmet and bunker coat — offered prayers, emotional support and assistance to firefighters and other emergency personnel. A trained firefighter, he also helped search for victims.

As shaken first responders went about their business amid the mayhem, a number of them asked Father Smith to hear their confessions.

"They wanted absolution before heading down to 'the pile' because you didn't know what

was going to explode next, what was going to fall down," he said.

In addition to ministering to the firefighters, the priest blessed the bodies of many of the FDNY's 343 fallen heroes, including Franciscan Father Mychal Judge, the beloved FDNY chaplain and first certified casualty of 9/11.

For several months following 9/11, Father Smith would commute almost daily from his parish to ground zero, where he continued to offer support to the firefighters, including his brother Patrick, who was among those participating in the recovery efforts.

He said his faith helped sustain him through the difficult work and grueling schedule. "Prayer, adrenaline and the Holy Spirit," were the emboldening forces, he said, adding: "I had a sense that God was with me."

Referring to his vocation as "a ministry of presence," he said he spent time with the firefighters when they were working at ground zero and during their meals and rest breaks.

"I appreciated being a priest and a lot of people appreciated me being a priest. A lot of guys said, 'Father, thank God you're down here with us.' ... I felt needed."

Father Smith was also present to the bereaved members of the

fallen firefighters' families. He estimates that he concelebrated 30 to 40 funeral Masses of firefighters, sometimes two or three in a single day.

"I knew a lot of the guys," he said.

He also had been friendly with a number of people who worked inside the towers. One of his former parishes, St. Mary Church in Manhasset, lost 22 parishioners and alumni from its elementary and secondary schools, the majority of whom Father Smith had known personally. He concelebrated several of those funeral liturgies.

"I remember a year or two after 9/11 looking at a list of victims to see how many people I actually knew," Father Smith said. "It was about 60. Sixty friends that I had contact with and knew their families. They were firefighters, guys from Cantor Fitzgerald and the other financial groups at the Trade Center."

Like many emergency responders who served at the World Trade Center site on 9/11 and post-9/11, Father Smith developed health issues related to the toxic conditions of the environment.

"I have chronic sinusitis. I have sleep apnea. I've had some skin cancer," he said. "All have been certified as 9/11-related."

His brother Patrick, meanwhile, was forced to retire from the FDNY in 2006 with a 9/11-related respiratory illness.

Father Smith said he has proactively addressed the emotional scars that he bears from his time at ground zero. "I go to counseling," he said. "It helps, especially on the (9/11) anniversaries."

## Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades



Monday, September 13: 6:30 p.m. — Virtual Meeting of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Religious Liberty

Tuesday-Wednesday, September 14-15 — Meeting of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Administrative Committee, Washington, D.C.

If you're going to do trauma counseling, it's not a bad thing to check in with somebody from time to time.

"The first couple of years, I'd have nightmares, flashbacks, a lot of that stuff."

Father Smith's 9/11 recollections also include positive memories of a time when people expressed their appreciation for the firefighters, police officers, construction workers and many others who pitched in at ground zero.

"At night, when you left the Trade Center, there would be people on the streets with big signs saying: 'Thank You.' They'd hand you a bottle of water or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich made by a school kid in Connecticut."

Father Smith fondly remembers strangers chatting with and helping one another, a byproduct of the collective pain people shared and their desire for healing in the wake of the catastrophe.

He said he misses the post-9/11 period that was marked by a heightened degree of charity and fellowship, along with intense national pride and unity.

"It petered out over time to the point today where we're probably yelling and screaming at each other a lot more than we should," the priest said.

"You wish that some of the lessons we learned from 9/11 would have been passed on, like reaching out to one another, forgiving one another, being a little more patient with one another."

The most important lesson, he said: "Cherish every single day."

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# Supreme Court rules against blocking Texas' abortion ban

BY CAROL ZIMMERMANN

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In a late-night decision Sept. 1, the Supreme Court ruled against blocking a Texas law banning abortions at six weeks of pregnancy.

The 5-4 vote, issued with a one-paragraph unsigned opinion, said the challengers to the Texas law — which went into effect Sept. 1 — did not adequately address the “complex and novel antecedent procedural questions” in this case.

“This order is not based on any conclusion about the constitutionality of Texas’ law, and in no way limits other procedurally proper challenges to the Texas law, including in Texas state courts,” the opinion said, leaving open the possibility that the state’s abortion providers could challenge it in other ways.

The Texas abortion providers



CNS photo/Lucas Jackson, Reuters

**Texas Gov. Greg Abbott is seen in this 2018 file photo. The Supreme Court took no action to block a Texas bill Aug. 31 that prohibits most abortions after six weeks of pregnancy.**

had come to the Supreme Court with an emergency appeal to stop the law, but the court initially did not respond.

The Texas Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the state’s Catholic bishops, said the Supreme Court’s action marked the first time since *Roe v. Wade* that the nation’s high court “has allowed a pro-life law to remain while litigation proceeds in lower courts.”

President Joe Biden criticized the Supreme Court’s action and said in a Sept. 2 statement that his administration will look to launch a “whole-of-government effort to respond to this deci-

sion” and look at “what steps the federal government can take to ensure that women in Texas have access to safe and legal abortions as protected by *Roe*.”

Similarly, Attorney General Merrick Garland issued a statement, which said the Justice Department was deeply concerned about the Texas abortion law and would be “evaluating all options to protect the constitutional rights of women, including access to an abortion.”

In the Supreme Court’s decision, Chief Justice John Roberts joined Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Stephen Breyer in dissenting votes and each of them wrote separate statements expressing their disagreement with the majority.

A key part of the law that the dissenting justices took issue with is its emphasis on private citizens bringing civil lawsuits in state court against anyone involved in an abortion, other than the patient, but including someone who drives the patient to a clinic. As further incentive, the state law says anyone who successfully sues another person could be entitled to \$10,000.

Sotomayor said the majority opinion in this case was “stunning.” She said that when the court examined a “flagrantly unconstitutional law engineered to prohibit women from exercising their constitutional rights and evade judicial scrutiny, a majority of Justices have opted to bury their heads in the sand.”

Kagan similarly called the Texas law “patently unconstitutional,” for its emphasis on encouraging “private parties to carry out unconstitutional restrictions on the state’s behalf.”

Roberts said the “statutory scheme” involving citizens’ enforcement of the law “is not only unusual, but unprecedented.”

“The legislature has imposed a prohibition on abortions after

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CNS photo/Bob Roller

The Texas State Capitol building is pictured in Austin Sept. 3. In a late-night decision Sept. 1, the Supreme Court ruled against blocking a Texas law banning abortions at six weeks of pregnancy.

roughly six weeks, and then essentially delegated enforcement of that prohibition to the populace at large. The desired consequence appears to be to insulate the state from responsibility for implementing and enforcing the regulatory regime."

He also noted that the case is not shut, saying that although the court denied the emergency relief sought by the applicants, its order is "emphatic in making clear that it cannot be understood as sustaining the constitutionality of the law at issue."

In a statement just after the court's decision, Nancy Northup, president and CEO of the Center for Reproductive Rights, which represents abortion providers challenging the Texas law, said these challengers would keep fighting.

"We are devastated that the Supreme Court has refused to block a law that blatantly violates Roe v. Wade," she added.

Kristan Hawkins, the president of Students for Life of America, said in a statement that her group was "celebrating this decision for what it is, baby steps in the right direction toward the obvious conclusion that Roe is fatally flawed and must go."

The law, signed by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott in May, became effective at midnight central time Sept. 1. It is one of the strictest abortion measures in the country, banning abortions in the state after a fetal heartbeat is detectable. The law has an exception for medical emergencies but not for rape or incest.

"We celebrate every life saved by this legislation. Opponents of the law argue the term 'heartbeat' is misleading. They call it 'embryonic cardiac activity' or worse, 'electrically induced flickering of embryonic tissue.' These attempts to dehumanize the unborn are disturbing," the Texas bishops said in a Sept. 3

statement.

The night before the law took effect, court watchers on both sides of the issue kept vigil at the Supreme Court waiting for an order that never came. Abortion providers in the state had argued that the law would prevent about 85% of abortions in the state and will likely cause many clinics to close.

Currently, at least 12 other states have legislation banning abortions early in pregnancy, but these bans have been blocked by courts.

"Hopefully, this law will begin saving the lives of tens of thousands of Texas babies and we look forward to the day that babies' lives will be spared across America," said Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life.

She also applauded the efforts of the Texas Right to Life and "pro-life Texans who have been devoted to providing a voice for the voiceless. We praise all of our state affiliates who have diligently and tirelessly worked with state legislators to protect unborn babies by passing laws that protect children whose hearts have begun to beat," she said in a Sept. 1 statement.

Two months after the law was signed, abortion providers challenged it in court, saying it violated patients' constitutional right to end a pregnancy before viability, when a fetus is said to be able to survive on its own.

The Supreme Court has consistently ruled that states cannot restrict abortion before the 24-week mark. This fall, the court will take up a Mississippi abortion ban after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

Those appealing the state law filed a motion in late August that was denied by the district court. They turned to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit, which granted their request to put the district-court proceedings on

hold but denied the challengers' request to expedite the appeal, which led them to seek emergency relief from the Supreme Court Aug. 30.

Scotusblog, which reports on the Supreme Court, said the Texas attorney general and other defenders of the state's abortion law had urged the Supreme Court to stay out of the dispute, saying the court is limited in its power to grant relief before laws have actually been enforced. They argued that courts can bar people from doing something, but they have no power to "expunge the law itself."



For Registration and Speaker Information, Please Visit:

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## Eucharistic Miracle Exhibit

By Bl. Carlo Acutis

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## Abandonment to Divine Providence: How Truth and Reconciliation Can Become a Path To Healing Sex Abuse in the Catholic Church

**Helen Alvaré**

Professor of Law at Antonin Scalia Law School,  
George Mason University

**Thursday, Sept. 23, 7:30 p.m.**

McKenna Hall Conference Center 215/216,  
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Sponsored by a Church Sexual Abuse Crisis research grant, University of Notre Dame  
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## Catholic Charities agencies rely on virtual outreach in Ida relief

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (CNS) — With several Northeast states now joining major metropolitan regions in the Gulf Coast as Hurricane Ida-related disaster areas, Catholic Charities agencies are using virtual deployment systems refined during the coronavirus pandemic to maximize their outreach to those in need. Prolonged power outages or record flooding are making quick disaster response access to the greater New Orleans and New York City areas an impossibility following the remnants of Hurricane Ida as it marched north after making landfall Aug. 29 in Louisiana. Right now, disaster response teams are turning to digital workaround solutions using staff members well outside the disaster zones. "COVID set the stage for being able to do virtual deployment: instead of a physical person on the ground, staff can assist by doing phone calls, setting up shared documents on the internet, and taking an administrative burden off the local staff," said Kathleen Oldaker, senior director of disaster strategy for Catholic Charities USA. As it did during Hurricane Katrina, Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is expected to serve as the central supporting role in recovery efforts in hard-hit New Orleans and Houma-Thibodaux.

## Bishops to faithful: Discern 'ecological conscience' using papal teaching

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The chairmen of two U.S. bishops' committees echoed Pope Francis' invitation to cultivate an "ecological conscience" in response to growing environmental challenges that affect human life in a message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. "Our times require robust consciences, capable of wise discernment in the face of complex moral problems," said Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, and Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Illinois, chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace. Observed Sept. 1, the day opens the Season of Creation, a five-week period set aside annually to allow individuals to reflect and pray about how they can protect the earth from the unfolding ecological crises resulting from climate change, widespread pollution and degradation of the environment. While focusing largely on the pressing need to address environmental concerns, the prelates' message also quoted Pope Francis' March 2021 speech celebrating St. Alphonsus Liguori as a doctor of the Church. The pope then cited "countless chal-

## Solidarity of Catholics, Muslims continues in Indianapolis



CNS photo/Sean Gallagher, The Criterion

Michael Saahir, left, and John Mundell stand by the sign of the Nur-Allah Islamic Center in Indianapolis Aug. 26. The pair and other Muslims and Catholics in Indianapolis have had a close relationship since 1997. In the days following the 9/11 attacks, the center had multiple bombing threats made against it; so when Muslims of the center gathered for prayer on the Friday after the attacks, they knew they could become the victims of an attack themselves. But joining them were Catholic members of Focolare, an international lay ecclesial movement in the Church that, among other things, promotes unity.

lenges" to humanity, including the defense of life, advancing artificial intelligence, threats to democracy and "the urgency of brotherhood. These 'countless challenges' must be met with a deep and well-formed faith," the three-page statement said. "Indeed, one of the underlying drivers of our current crisis, both moral and ecological, is a radical world view that has placed excessive trust in the power of mankind and disregarded God." The full statement is available online at [bit.ly/2WOWqA6](https://bit.ly/2WOWqA6).

## Indiana Catholic takes part in national 'Biking for Babies' ride

INDIANAPOLIS (CNS) — This is the way Emily Mastronicola dreamed it would be. On the last day of a grueling, weeklong journey that tested people's hearts and spirits, the 26-year-old Catholic woman from Indianapolis took the lead of a team of cyclists preparing to meet with other groups from across the country for a triumphant, last-mile ride together toward the "Celebration of Life" finish line in St. Louis. Even the challenge of riding her bike up

a 15-mile stretch of daunting hills couldn't sap the joy that Mastronicola was feeling July 17, the final day of the national ride of "Biking for Babies." The pro-life organization's mission is: "renewing the culture of life, one pedal and one pregnancy resource center at a time." With those 15 miles behind her — on a day when she rode 120 miles — Mastronicola could not stop smiling as she lined up with the other 49 riders who had biked from Ohio, Alabama, Colorado and Wisconsin for that final mile together. "Everyone was so tired but full of joy to be there and meet the other people," she recalled. "Riding in together was beautiful, really beautiful."

## Mexican bishops concerned over fate of migrants, including Haitians

MEXICO CITY (CNS) — The Mexican bishops' migrant ministry has disavowed a proposal from Mexico's National Immigration Institute that would establish a camp for migrants and asylum-seekers stuck in the southern city of Tapachula, near the border

with Guatemala. The issue seems to have generated some confusion. In a brief statement issued Sept. 2, the bishops' ministry said the idea of a camp for Haitians in Tapachula was proposed publicly to the migrant ministry during a conference on migration "without the existence of any agreement or acceptance of this topic. The (ministry) is concerned about the conditions in which migrants find themselves in Tapachula: overcrowding, insecurity or lack of work, which can lead to violations of the human rights of these people," the bishops' statement said. Responding to the National Immigration Institute, the Mexico office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees said in a Sept. 2 tweet that the institute "had just sent the request" and the "issue of the Haitians is complicated." The statements followed news of three caravans of migrants — involving many Haitians — setting out from Tapachula, in an attempt to reach central and northern Mexico and the U.S. border. Mexican immigration and security forces have impeded the caravans, which have proceeded along a coastal highway in Chiapas state.

## Anglican bishop to step down, join Catholic Church

MANCHESTER, England (CNS) — The Anglican bishop of Ebbsfleet stepped down from office after announcing that he will become a Roman Catholic. The resignation of Bishop Jonathan Goodall was announced by Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury in a Sept. 3 statement released by Lambeth Palace. Bishop Goodall is a former ecumenical secretary to a previous archbishop of Canterbury and was ordained in 2013 to serve as a "flying bishop" of a diocese erected to cover traditionalist parishes that would not accept women priests. "I am deeply grateful to Bishop Jonathan for his ministry and many years of faithful service," Archbishop Welby said. "My prayers are with him and Sarah, both for his future ministry and for the direction in which they are being called in their continuing journey of dedicated service to Christ," he said. He continued: "With regard to the see of Ebbsfleet, we will be starting a process of consultation with colleagues and others — including the parishes to whom Bishop Jonathan ministers — to determine what the next steps will be."

## Vietnamese archbishop as COVID-19 surges: 'How can our hearts not ache?'

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam (CNS) — Archbishop Joseph Nguyen Nang of Ho Chi Minh City has encouraged people in his archdiocese, a COVID-19 epicenter, to cling to hope and support one another. He said local people have been in lockdown for three months to contain the delta variant outbreak but remain at grave risk of infection, reported [ucanews.com](https://ucanews.com). "Difficulties and challenges now are no longer just food and medical and financial supplies, but psychological and spiritual suffering because our loved ones are infected or have passed away hastily without immediate cremation. They will return in urns of their ashes," he said. The Center for Disease Control in Ho Chi Minh City reports an average of 241 deaths daily. Archbishop Nang noted priests and religious have died of COVID-19, while many others have recovered. Binh An Parish recorded 70 deaths during July and August, and many other parishes have 10-20 deaths. Many families have two or three dead relatives, while some families have no one left, [ucanews.com](https://ucanews.com) reported. "How can our hearts not ache when we witness these distressing scenes and see children left alone because their families died from COVID-19?" Archbishop Nang asked.



## Vincentians and friends to walk for the poor

FORT WAYNE — The ability of the St. Vincent de Paul Society to act in ways that lift families out of poverty is largely dependent on volunteers and donations. Both, organizers hope, will come together Oct. 3 for the society's largest annual fundraising event: the fifth annual Friends of the Poor Walk/Run at Parkview Field, Fort Wayne.

New this year is an additional, shorter route option of just 1.25 miles, in addition to the 3-mile walk. There is now no entry fee, making it important that each participant be sponsored by as many people as possible via pledges for his or her walk. To sponsor someone, visit [www.fopwalk.org/eventlisting/eventdetail/?eventid=2581](http://www.fopwalk.org/eventlisting/eventdetail/?eventid=2581). Many walkers are already registered online.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will offer a prayer immediately before walkers head out into the local neighborhood. The walk begins at 1 p.m. with on-site registration and check-in beginning at noon. Virtual walks or runs are encouraged as well for individuals or conferences that cannot attend the one at Parkview Field.

## New Ave Explores series focuses on the Bible

NOTRE DAME — The next Ave Explores series will focus on the Bible. It began Sept. 8.

Ave Explores is a free educational series created to help Catholics consider aspects of the Catholic faith from a variety of angles, allowing individuals to look at topics relevant to their daily spiritual lives in fresh, engaging and practical ways. The series is also perfect for seekers and those who want to learn more about the Catholic faith.

Through this four-week, multimedia series, participants will learn from experts including Jeff Cavins, John Bergsma, Father Joshua Johnson, Sarah Christmyer, Alex Jones, Meg Hunter-Kilmer, Rachel Balducci, and Sonja Corbitt. The Ave Explores podcast is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and Google Play Music, and is also located on Breadbox Media, Redeemer Radio and Spoke Street Media.

Following is some of the content planned for the four-week Ave Explores: The Bible series.

- Week 1 will be an introduction to Scripture by examining visio divina and lectio divina, as well as some of the Bible's surprises.

- Week 2 focuses on the Old Testament, including the covenants, Psalms and the Jewish roots of Scripture.

- Week 3 looks at the New Testament, including praying with the various letters, how the Gospels were written and the

# AROUND THE DIOCESE

## Annunciation House blessing



Provided by Madeline Nugent

Father Mark Gurtner, vicar general of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, blessed the house chapel and altar at Annunciation Women's Vocation Discernment House Aug. 24, thus designating the Mary Cross and Lawrence Tippmann Chapel a sacred space. Annunciation House is located at 2637 Schele Ave., Fort Wayne. Six residents currently reside in Annunciation House and additional interested residents may apply at [VocationDiscernmentHouse.com](http://VocationDiscernmentHouse.com) or by calling 260-424-1080.

book of Revelation.

- Week 4 hones in on how the Scriptures are applicable in a person's everyday life.

Sign up for limited-time, weekly emails with this series of Ave Explores content at [www.avemariapress.com/aveexplores-bible](http://www.avemariapress.com/aveexplores-bible).

## OSV Challenge Showcase finalists announced

HUNTINGTON — OSV Institute for Catholic Innovation is preparing to gather fellow trailblazing Catholics who are eager to share the beauty, creativity, imagination and innovation of the Church at the 2021 OSV Challenge Showcase. The showcase is a free, virtual event taking place Sept. 18 that serves as the capstone for the second annual OSV Challenge, a multi-round entrepreneurial competition designed to accelerate unique project ideas in any stage from Catholics whose faith has motivated them to make a difference.

After the successful completion of a six-week accelerator program co-facilitated by the University of St. Thomas in Houston, 12 finalists have been selected to

compete for a shot at winning one of three \$100,000 prizes to advance their missions. The three winners will be announced during the livestream event at 3:30 pm Eastern.

This year's 12 finalists are Bendecida XV, Catholic in Recovery, Cycle Prep, Dragon Slayers, FemCatholic, Fiat Project, MyCatholicDoctor, Perfect Love Casts Out Fear, Quo Vadis Catholic, Red Bird Ministries, Springs in the Desert, and Tabella. Springs in the Desert and Bendecida have team members who live in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

More than just a contest, the OSV Challenge is a unique experience for participants who aim to think beyond the status quo and to view the Catholic Church through the lenses of innovation and creativity. "We are not aiming to fund the next good idea, but to invest in people — emerging innovators and seasoned trailblazers — by forming a new generation of entrepreneurs who are not afraid to relook at how we encounter and evangelize through the Truth and beauty of the Catholic Church," said Jason Shanks, president of OSV Institute for Catholic Innovation. "The Church has always been at the forefront of great ideas. I

believe this year's finalists have demonstrated their ability to make a big impact on the Church and the world."

Additional information on the 2021 OSV Challenge finalists can be found at <https://www.osvchallenge.com/2021-finalists>.

## Fort Wayne Red Mass to be celebrated Oct. 5

FORT WAYNE — The St. Thomas More Society of Fort Wayne will offer a Red Mass at 5:30 p.m. Oct. 5 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne. All legal professionals are invited to attend the liturgical celebration.

The first recorded Red Mass was in the year 1245 in Paris, France. The name derives from the color of the scarlet robes worn historically by the judges, as well as the red liturgical vestments worn by the clergy. The Mass is celebrated in honor of the Holy Spirit, the source of all wisdom, understanding, fortitude and good counsel. These gifts are especially needed in the day-to-day labor of the legal profession. Canon lawyers and judges also celebrate the annual Red Mass, seeking the same blessing of wisdom and understanding.

## USF announces logo and monogram contest

FORT WAYNE — The University of Saint Francis announces a competition to redesign the university logo and to create a university monogram. It will award a grand prize of \$5,000 for the winning entry in each category. After 23 years with the current logo, USF welcomes the launch of a new era with this redesign. "This is an exciting time to be part of the University of Saint Francis. We expect to receive a wide range of submissions for the competition, tapping into the creative minds of the USF community and beyond," said USF President Father Eric A. Zimmer. The competition is open to anyone. USF especially encourages students, faculty, staff and alumni to participate. The deadline for submission is Feb. 25. Applicants interested in participating should submit logo and monogram designs in a vector format to USF at [sf.edu/logo-contest](http://sf.edu/logo-contest). Blue, PMS 288, must be the primary color of the logo. Applicants can view complete rules on the USF website. A redesign committee under the leadership of Father Zimmer will review the proposals and determine the winner. USF will retain all rights to the winning logo and monogram. The review and judging process will take place in March and April, with the announcement of the winner(s) in May. For more information, email [marketing@sf.edu](mailto:marketing@sf.edu).

## Join the legacy and mission of a saint

SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS — All single, Catholic women ages 18-42 are invited to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods Oct. 1-3 to see if God might be calling them to life as a Sister of Providence. During the free, in-person weekend retreat, participants can learn about the life and mission of congregation foundress St. Mother Theodore Guerin. Retreat participants will also experience the mission in action today by interacting with the Sisters of Providence.

The retreat begins at 7 p.m. EDT, Friday, Oct. 1, and will conclude at 1 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 3. Food and housing will be provided.

Learn more about what the Sisters of Providence have to offer, including: faithfulness to prayer and total trust in providence, a lived legacy of love, mercy and justice modeled by the foundress, a close-knit community that has called Saint Mary-of-the-Woods home since 1840, a long history of standing up for justice, and ministries that respond to the current needs of today.

Sign up or learn more at [ComeandSee.SistersofProvidence.org](http://ComeandSee.SistersofProvidence.org) or call or text Sister Joni Luna at 361-500-9505.



# ST. THOMAS SCHOOL RECEIVES BISHOP RHOADES



Photos by John Martin

During his homily at a Mass at St. Thomas the Apostle School, Elkhart, Aug. 31, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades spoke about the Gospel reading of Jesus teaching in the synagogue. People were amazed by His wisdom and authority, the bishop said.



St. Thomas offers high academic achievement in faith-based environment

## ST. THOMAS, from page 1

"That was part of Jesus' mission — one reason He came to earth — to save us from evil, conquer the devil. He came to free us, liberate us from the power of evil. He did that by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. We celebrate that at every Mass: the holy Eucharist is the sacrifice of Jesus. Jesus' body, broken for us, becomes present under the form of bread. His blood, which was poured out for us becomes present under the form of wine," he continued.

"So, every time we come to Mass, we remember Jesus' great love for us. We get to participate in that every time we come to Mass, we get to receive the amazing gift of the Holy Eucharist. Our faith is amazing!"

"At St. Thomas School, you learn our beautiful faith. You're reminded every time you come to Mass of Jesus' great love. But not just at Mass: Every time you look at the crucifix in your classroom, you remember how much Jesus loves us. He gave His life for us.

"What a gift it is to have Catholic education. You can come to school at St. Thomas and pray and learn about God's love, learn about Jesus' teaching, His life and miracles, and you'll have that knowledge and faith the rest of your life," he said.

Bishop Rhoades said he thanked the teachers and staff, pastor Father Jason Freiburger and St. Thomas parents for educating the students. He told the students, "I hope you'll always live as children of the light." He also thanked the parishioners for their support of the school. "We wouldn't have a school if not for the support of parishioners. They believe, as I do, that Catholic education

is so important."

Bishop Rhoades then visited each classroom and spoke to the students about what they were learning. In the fourth-grade classes, he asked students which saint they were choosing to dress up as for the upcoming All-School Mass and heard several St. Michaels, St. Francis, St. John Paul, St. Rose of Lima and the Virgin Mary, among others.

The fifth-grade class was learning about state capitals. Bishop Rhoades pointed out how many of the state capitals had Catholic names because they were founded by Catholic missionaries.

Third graders said they were learning how people are all different, but that if they work together, they can build community. The bishop pointed out how the Church exists everywhere, all over the world.

He spoke to eighth graders about the sacrament of confirmation and gave them suggestions of how to choose a saint's name. The students also showed him a short video of the class shaving their heads in solidarity with classmate Chris Gropp, who had Stage 4 cancer but is now doing well. Later, the bishop had lunch with the teachers and visited pre-school classrooms.

## Growing enrollment

St. Thomas the Apostle School offers pre-school through eighth grade and has an enrollment of 248 students. Principal Chris Adamo said enrollment was up about 10% this year — about 20 new students.

"That was the goal from the time I got hired five years ago. We wanted slow, intentional growth of about 1-2% a year so we could keep our identity of

high academic achievement in a faith-based school," he said. "Christ-centered education comes first."

Adamo said he's in the classrooms all the time, as is Father Freiburger.

"We've seen that outreach be successful in families and in people joining the Church," he said.

Adamo estimated that about 10% of the student body is nonCatholic. He believes those families are attracted to the school because "we have a wonderful building and high achievement in academics, and that's very attractive to families. So, it's a great opportunity and venue to have nonCatholics join. That's our goal, to profess our faith, and we have a wonderful venue for that."

Adamo said Father Freiburger is always finding new ways to engage with families and gave an example of the pastor offering a blessing for pets in the school pick-up line.

"The kids loved it, and even some nonCatholic students brought pets. Everyone was engaged and wanted to know when we'll do it again," he recalled.

Adamo emphasized the school's rigorous curriculum. "Our kids are in the top 10% of the state," he said adding that at Marian High School in Mishawaka, two of the top three students were St. Thomas alumni and that most of their students test out of Spanish 1 at Marian.

"It doesn't matter what high school they go to; our kids succeed. We had three valedictorians at three different high schools," he reported. During the last six years, 100% of third graders also passed the I Read test.

Adamo said they even succeeded during COVID. The school was set up right

away for virtual learning when everything shut down.

"Our kids didn't miss a beat and we had 180 days of school every year," he said.

## Athletics and special programs

Students at St. Thomas have several opportunities to participate in athletics, including soccer for boys and girls, football, basketball for boys and girls, volleyball, cheerleading, track, cross country, tennis, baseball and softball.

There's a yearbook club, and the students take all the photos and decide the general layout. Adamo said the middle schoolers "take point," but the younger students also help and give input.

"They're a fantastic group of kids," Mr. Adamo said.

The computer teacher started a podcast club with students deciding what will be recorded, according to Adamo. "They develop neat topics: One student came up with the topic of the effect the shutdown had on a student's mentality as an athlete, for example."

Students also created a garden in the school courtyard. The southern half is a community garden. They plant seeds in containers in early spring, then they plant them in the garden.

"Father offers a blessing, they tend it through the summer and we harvest it in the fall," he said. The northern half is a reading and reflection area and has a little library stocked with books so at lunch time students can go out and read. There's a big chair in case teachers want to go out or take their class out to read.



# DES FOR PASTORAL VISIT



onment in grades preschool though eight. Enrollment is up this year.

This year, they're looking forward to bringing back a live Nativity in December. Adamo said that during the event, the school is open and Christmas music is playing. There is a live petting zoo in the parking lot and a live Nativity in the church. "It's a really neat event," he said.

## 'Build Us a Table'

The school's theme this year is "Build Us a Table," about volunteerism and acts of service. All the students are included in developing the theme, and they work together on it.

"In the past, we partnered with an organization called Sleep in Heavenly Peace. They build beds for kids that don't have them," he explained.

Students in the older grades stain and cut wood and put the beds together. The younger ones wanted to help, so they thought about what they could contribute and decided they could collect books and stuffed animals for each bed. Students in fourth-sixth grade decided the recipients might like special blankets, so they got fleece material and made blankets with a fun, printed design on one side. "So, with every one of the 75 beds we donated, there was also a blanket, pillow, book and stuffed animal for the child," he said.

They've also held blood drives and, in the past, partnered with ETHOS, a science consortium that promotes hands on science.



Provided by Father Jason Freiburger

**Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades embodied Christ by saying 'Let the children come to me' when he visited the preschool class at St. Thomas the Apostle in Elkhart Aug. 31**

Adamo said he, the pastor and the teachers "listen to the kids and what they want. I eat lunch with the middle schoolers, and if they have a suggestion, I take it to Father Jason and we usually go with it." They encourage the students to figure out

how to make the program that they suggested happen.

"From preschool to eighth grade, our students succeed. We instill a capacity in our students for Christ, compassion and character by educating the mind, body and spirit."



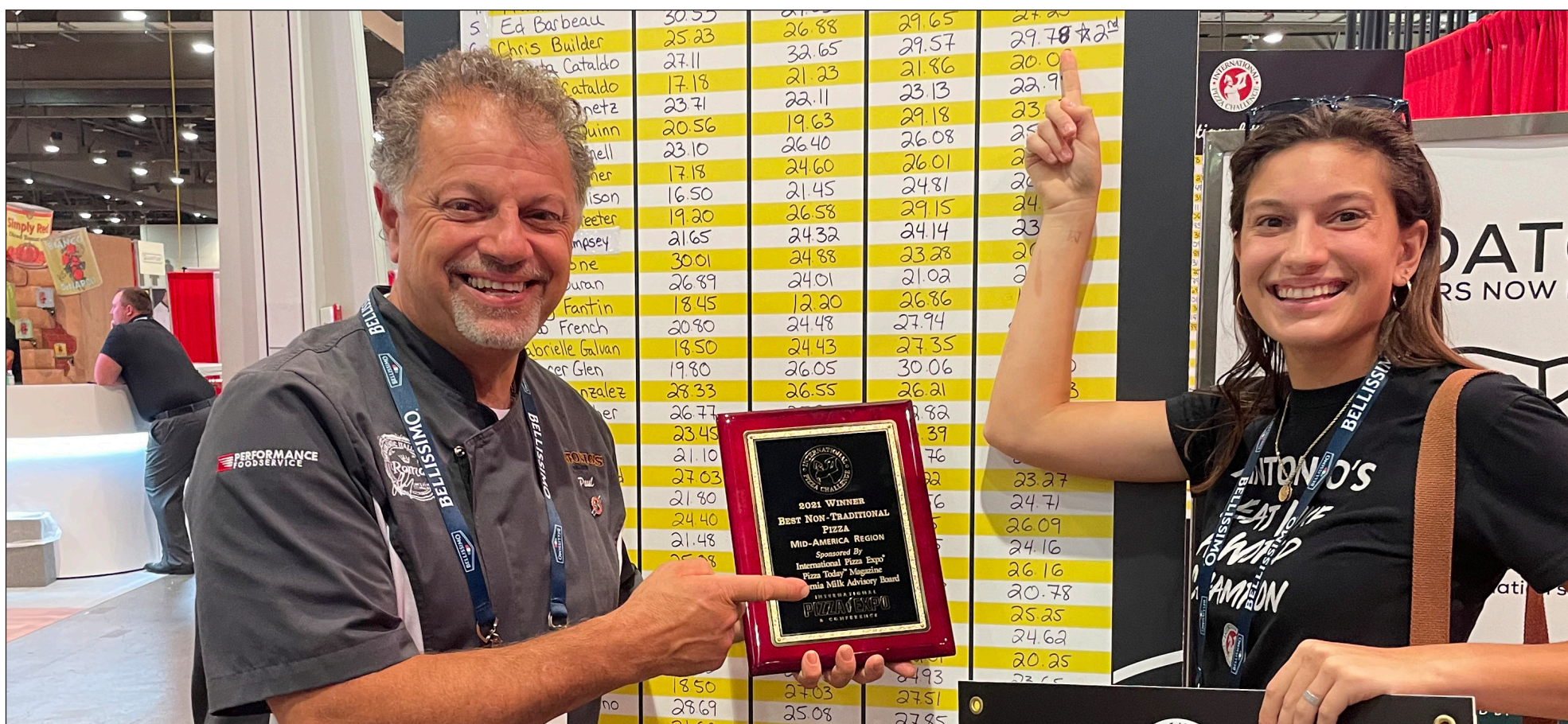
**St. Thomas the Apostle pastor Father Jason Freiburger watches as a student speaks with the bishop.**



**Bishop Rhoades and Thomas the Apostle principal Chris Adamo visit classrooms at the school. The bishop asked questions from students about what they are learning and fielded questions about his role as bishop.**







Photos provided by Carmela Cataldo

Paul Cataldo, owner of Antonio's Italian Ristorante in Elkhart, holds the award given to his daughter, Carmela, after she won first place in the Mid-America Pizza Challenge, Midwest Region, Aug. 17. Carmela points to what happened the next day: She and her pizza, the Calabrese, moved on to international-level competition, at which they took second place in the nontraditional category.

## Pizza champion lets her faith lead

BY JODI MARLIN

*"I was like, 'Lord, if you want this to happen, just give me the peace.'"*

— Carmela Cataldo

Holy Cross College sophomore Carmela Maria Faustina Cataldo is named for her Italian grandmother, her father's mother. And for St. Faustina Kowalska, the nun who shared the image and message of the Divine Mercy. And for Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

The theology major, who goes by "Carmie," has qualities of all three holy women. She honors her namesakes. But the influence of one of them, more than the others, might be responsible for the international honor bestowed on Carmie last month.

Carmie's grandparents brought the Cataldo family to the U.S. when her father, Paul Cataldo, was just 5 years old. Judging by their legacy, they instilled in their family two great earthly loves: a love for each other and a love of cooking. At age 15, Paul began working in his uncle's pizzeria in Elkhart. A few years later, he and a brother started their own business featuring the universal Italian staple. Not long after that came Antonio's Italian Ristorante, which he opened with his wife, Erin.

It's no wonder why Antonio's is a local hotspot: Paul's heart and soul are baked into every pizza and pasta dish served at the Elkhart restaurant. The business is doing so well that it's hard to get a reservation on just about any night of the week.

All six of Paul and Erin's children grew up in the restaurant's kitchen. They wanted to be there,

they would say, helping Dad simmer sauces, stretch dough and fold pizza boxes. Most of them still staff the restaurant a few days a week to keep the family business running smoothly. Carmie's there too when she's not at school.

She's also following her dad into the pizza spotlight. The pizzaiolo's skills have earned him national and international recognition at pizza competitions, and sometimes Carmie completes an entry as well. At the Aug. 17-19 international Pizza Expo Competition in Las Vegas, the protégé won her U.S. regional category for creative pizza and missed a first-place overall win by a mere 13/1000 of a point.

### Up and coming

"I remember when I was 8 or 9 — really, it felt like every birthday I had up until I turned 10 was at the restaurant," Carmie said of her early forays into the culinary art. "My grandma, she would be there to make the lasagna early in the morning, my dad was always there, and both of my grandpas were involved. I always remember thinking, 'When will I be old enough to go work at the restaurant?'"

The answer was 10. From that age on, Carmie was on the salad line, bussing tables or filling the servers cups with sodas.



Carmela and her pizzas pose before being turned in for judging.

She prepared pasta, and by the age of 13 was working in the pizza kitchen area.

Her one-evening work week became two, then three. "By high

school it was pretty much every night of the week."

Carmie first accompanied her father to a competition, the World Pizza Championships in

Parma, Italy, when she was 13. "She was too young to compete, but I think that fueled the fire a little bit," Paul said. Three years later, she entered a national pizza competition in Columbus, Ohio, and took fourth place in the Midwest category by making the family's Italian Stallion pizza — missing third place by a single point.

"Then, she came back the next year and beat everybody," the proud father noted. "She was the youngest competitor ever to win the Mid-America Pizza Challenge."

"And the first girl to ever win," noted Carmie.

Las Vegas was the site of this year's Mid-America Pizza Challenge. She entered again, this time with a modification of a family pizza — the Vegas Fortuna — which had already won twice for Paul, once in 2019 in the Traditional Division and again in the 2020 Mid-America Pizza Pizzazz competition. Carmie added roasted red and green peppers, Parmesan cheese, Calabrese peppers and a honey-infused olive oil and called it the Calabrese. It won again, this time in the nontraditional category and with a new chef.

She couldn't have hoped for each of the steps to have gone better than it did, she said, so she wasn't nervous while waiting all day for her results. "Everything about it was exactly as I wanted it to be," she recalled.

Carmie and the Calabrese bested all Midwest region Mid-America Pizza Challenge competitors and the next morning moved on in the competi-



tion to the International Pizza Challenge. At 6 p.m. another surprise came; that they had beat all but one of the international participants for the top award in the nontraditional category and missed first place by a fraction of a single point. Her pizza had won second place in the world.

## Facing the future

As a theology major, Carmie's career path leads toward becoming a teacher in a diocesan high school and maybe a Catholic school administrator. Her father suggests — lovingly, but none too subtly — that she could do both: teach while running the family business.

But pizza has always been more of a hobby for the well-spoken young woman.

"I appreciate working in the restaurant more now than I did before, because I'm not doing it every day," she said. And she's keenly aware of the challenges of running a restaurant.

Working in pizza "has been great for the family, and I think it's been great for her," said Dad. "I think it's teaching her how to handle pressure situations, be humble and accepting, and competitive."

"I tend to overthink and stress out about things before they even happen," Carmie admitted. "Before I left for Las Vegas, my mom said, 'Listen ... You just have to ask the Holy Spirit for help.' Not to make me win, but to allow me to be calm and at peace so I can perform to the best of my ability, whether that's winning or losing. Just give me the grace to be calm. And I did that. I was like, 'Lord, if you want this to happen, just give me

the peace. Basically, I asked Him to help me so I don't freak out and get nervous.' And it turned out that I wasn't nervous! I wasn't nervous making my pizza or presenting it. I talked to Him multiple times that day."

Carmie is also this year's retreats and pilgrimages intern for Holy Cross College, a responsibility that also may prepare her for a theology-related career path. She likes the idea of providing educational ministry and has experience planning and carrying out high school retreats.

"I didn't see myself as having the patience and the dedication my dad has," she said about his encouragement that she consider taking over the business. "I appreciate everything the restaurant has done for him and for all of us ... I feel like it has prepared us for life pretty well. But eventually I want to be a mom and have a family, which is really difficult to do in a restaurant environment unless your entire family's fully into it. Maybe that will change later in life."

That is, if she doesn't wind up on a reality show first. Paul and Carmie are in conversation with producers in Los Angeles regarding a reality show called "Pizza Competition," planned by the people who produced "Top Chef" and "Nailed It!" If it comes to fruition, both father and daughter feel it would be fun and a good experience.

In the meantime, if Dad has his way, she'll come back and make an occasional appearance in the restaurant she grew up in. "You can be a guest chef or do celebrity walk-through," he laughed. If she does, the Calabrese will make a special appearance too.

# CRS chapters: a movement to change the world, first, locally

BY MOLLY GETTINGER

More than 250 million children globally are at risk of failing to thrive. Factors such as poverty, poor nutrition, limited access to education, disease and regional unrest prevent the development of critical brain architecture in children, especially from birth through age 3 when development is most vital.

This global issue has been addressed in part recently because of dedicated, compassionate volunteers in parishes and dioceses across the United States who spent two years

*CRS chapters are comprised of lay leaders committed to learning about global issues and taking meaningful action.*

across the United States. CRS chapters are comprised of lay leaders committed to learning about global issues and taking meaningful action.

CRS chapters mobilize volunteers in the mission to end global poverty and foster a more just, peaceful world. Chapters are local, uniting volunteers in each community who are a catalyst for global change.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades has invited parishioners across the diocese to consider found-

ing or joining a CRS chapter at their parish, living out the call as missionary disciples and making a real difference in the world.

CRS chapter members receive training, support and education from CRS staff. This includes education on global issues, leadership skills, how to engage town halls and members of Congress, how to foster community giving, and a monthly national conference call with leaders from across the country during guest

speakers offer ongoing training and best practices. Each chapter has one or two leaders who serve as the primary point of contact between the chapter and CRS, receiving additional training and mobilizing chapter members.

Beth Knobbe, community engagement manager at CRS, shared that each chapter is comprised of local lay leaders.

"Chapter members build relationships with their members of Congress to advocate for public policies that reflect our Catholic values," she shared, as was the case championing the Global Child Thrive Act. This advocacy begins with education and prayer and ends in action, such as visiting Congress members' offices, advocating to local news sources and more, all to raise awareness of fundamental global challenges.

Chapter members also foster giving activities, such as the CRS Rice Bowl and other community giving programs.

"Our faith calls us to care for the least among us, and CRS chapters give people tangible ways to respond with hope to the issues of global hunger, migration, poverty, and disease," shared Knobbe. "There is a sense of community among CRS

CRS, page 14



Lynzy Billing, CRS

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Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades invites you to get involved with a CRS Chapter at your parish.

Learn more and attend an info session:  
[diocesefwsb.org/CRS](http://diocesefwsb.org/CRS)

Lynzy Billing, CRS



## Trapped in the self

Recently I've seen television footage of two protests against vaccine and mask mandates. In my home state of Washington, a protester held up a large sign saying, "My Body My Choice." A protest in Louisiana featured the slogan "Freedom of Choice."

These, of course, have been mantras of the pro-abortion movement: Whatever I choose regarding myself is valid and beyond reproach, simply because it's my choice.

Of course, one's choices about abortion and the pandemic affect more bodies than one's own, devastatingly so in the former case. But some protesters were probably staunchly pro-life, objecting to vaccines that were developed or later tested using a cell line from an abortion performed decades ago. How must they have felt, seeing those slogans?

For me, that question leads to political, cultural and even spiritual reflections.

Libertarianism — emphasizing individual freedom and some distrust of government power — has always been part of American politics. In recent decades, both major parties have embraced it to some extent, applying it differently: Democrats favored a strong government in economic matters but maximum freedom on moral issues of life and sexuality; Republicans favored the free-market economy but defended traditional norms on the "social issues."

That seems to be breaking down. Corporate America promotes the freedom to choose one's sexual orientation and

even one's gender; and formerly "pro-choice" Democratic politicians work to force others to fund and even perform abortions.

Culturally this has been a long time coming. Social commentators once called the baby boom generation, born during the prosperity after World War II, the "Me Generation." But some of the boomers' descendants make them look socially responsible by comparison.

In the 1980s, sociologist Robert Bellah and philosopher Charles Taylor called the dominant worldview of our time "expressive individualism." It sees persons as atomized individuals, who fulfill themselves by expressing their inner truth so they can invent their own destiny and even identity. Personal autonomy is the core of the person.

Law professor O. Carter Snead points out in his impressive new book "What It Means to Be Human" that on matters of life, death and procreation, this tends to reduce human relationships to contracts for mutual benefit, discarded when they no longer serve one's personal goals.

Even the human body becomes a mere instrument for achieving those goals — and vulnerable people at the beginning and end of life who cannot freely express and pursue such goals may not be persons at all.

Snead shows that this ignores fundamental aspects of the human condition. We are embodied beings, not sovereign wills trapped in prisons of flesh. Our very existence depends on the love and care of others, beginning with our parents, and our



### A MORE HUMAN SOCIETY

RICHARD DOERFLINGER

flourishing depends on our learning to give and receive love.

What does expressive individualism make of religion? It can accept being "spiritual but not religious" — spiritual way-faring can be yet another way to advance oneself, and there is no religious authority to contradict that. But it has a serious problem with the Judeo-Christian claim that human flourishing comes from my loving God above all, and my neighbor as myself.

As Bishop Robert E. Barron says, "Your life is not about you" is a central Christian message. Jesus says to take up our cross and follow him, that we must lose our life to save it. Explaining the sign of the cross, Msgr. Ronald Knox used to say that its vertical gesture spells "I" — and its second gesture crosses that out.

Nothing could be more alien to the self-absorption typical of our culture. Which means that nothing is more desperately needed.

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

## The hidden power of play: how to be young at heart

Every fall the push to do more intensifies. Sharpen your pencil and dig in.

Produce more, study more, socialize more, exercise more, volunteer more. The calendar becomes the battlefield, its squares squeezed ever tighter. If summer is for vacation, fall is for achievement.

But we are forgetting something. The very thing we consider the opposite of productivity — play — is, in fact, an accelerator of it. And more importantly, it is central in the Christian path to wellness.

I was reminded of this when I read about Reform, a Catholic wellness practice based in Islip, N.Y. with online programming. Their skilled team includes nutritionists, a priest and a doctor. And in their wisdom, they declared play one of the nine pillars of wellness, right alongside sleep, movement, community and faith.

No pillar is more important than the other, and each one enhances the other — movement helps with a good night's sleep, a good night's sleep allows for greater community involvement and so on.

Play is the most overlooked pillar, dismissed as a matter reserved for kids — something you graduate from around the time you abandon stuffed animals and mac and cheese.

"But if we take life seriously



### TWENTY SOMETHING

CHRISTINA CAPECCHI

all the time," the Reform team writes on its blog, "we miss what God calls us to be: childlike. As his children, we were all designed for play — no matter our age."

What a profound statement! As God's children, we are designed for play. At 7 or 70.

The blog post goes on to cite the many benefits of play: It encourages both movement and sleep, it nourishes our bodies, it stimulates personal growth and reduces stress. It also strengthens our relationships, bonding us to others and enabling us to get to know them on a new level.

A powerful spiritual benefit of play is the way it reconnects us with ourselves, the post notes. "It is easy to get bogged down by the worries and expectations of the world — and lose our true selves in the process. When we play, we remember that we are first and foremost beloved children of God. We are human beings, not human doings. Play

CAPECCI, page 13

## Discipleship means denying oneself and taking up the cross



### THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

### Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Mark 8:27-35

The last and third section of the Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for this weekend in Ordinary Time.

This passage is one of several similar sections in Trito-Isaiah called the Songs of the Suffering Servant. Poetic and expressive, they figure in the liturgies of Holy Week and Good Friday because Christians historically have applied them to Christ, the Lamb of God.

Who was in the mind of the author of Trito-Isaiah as these songs were written? The author? Another loyal and devoted follower of the Covenant who faced

many difficulties? The Chosen People, the servant being a collective symbol for them?

The answer is unknown, but the picture is vivid. The servant is steadfast. Hardships and obstacles abound in the servant's path to fidelity, but God unfailingly provides strength and guidance.

Assured of God's help, and resolute in faith, the servant is undaunted in obeying God.

For its second reading this weekend, the Church gives us a passage from the Letter of James. This reading affirms the classic Roman Catholic interpretation of Revelation. God gives us the healing and empowering grace so we can believe and bear witness.

God reveals to us the way to salvation and the purpose of life, but we must ratify our belief in our worthy Christian conduct. It is not a question simply of following rules and regulations. Rather, it is to conduct ourselves so that in everything we replicate Christ.

St. Mark's Gospel furnishes the last reading.

In this story, Jesus and the Apostles have gone to the region of Caesarea Philippi. This region even today is visited by tourists

and locals. At the origin of the Jordan River, it is picturesque and placid.

Such was the beautiful setting for this powerfully revelatory reading. Jesus questioned the Apostles.

His identity was the issue. They responded by reporting the various proposals people put forward as to the Lord's identity. "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, others one of the prophets."

Then Jesus bluntly asked the Apostles about their thoughts as to the identity of the Master. Note that Peter spoke for the group, not out of turn. He was the head of the community, as, ever since, his successors have been heads of the Church in their day.

Also note Peter's firm answer. "You are the Messiah!"

The Twelve heard from Jesus lessons not given to the rank and file. They were special. They were to be commissioned, so Jesus prepared them.

When Peter interjects his own, human thinking into the discussion, Jesus reprimands him. Then He tells the crowd

that discipleship means carrying personal crosses, the willingness to sacrifice.

### Reflection

Sacrifice has been the story of Christianity, giving anything to imitate the Lord. It can be hard, as the martyrs knew well.

The presidential election of 1928 was especially bitter. New York Governor Alfred E. Smith, a devout Catholic, was the Democratic candidate. Not only he, but all Catholics, were targeted and insulted, their patriotism and integrity questioned.

A prominent Republican arrived in Memphis to speak against Smith. He always attacked Smith's Catholicism.

At the station meeting this politician was the most influential politician in town, a former mayor.

He welcomed the visitor and offered to show him the sights of Memphis. They drove immediately to Calvary Cemetery. There the Memphis politician pointed out the graves of the many priests and nuns who died, serving the sick, in the yellow fever epidemic

several decades before.

He said, "In Memphis, when we hear 'Catholic,' we think of these priests and nuns who sacrificed their lives for desperate people."

"You are a bigot. Get out of town."

The visitor boarded the next train leaving Memphis. The Memphis politician, an Episcopalian, knew Christian sacrifice when he saw it.

### READINGS

**Sunday:** Is 50:4c-9a Ps 116:1-6, 8-9 Jas 2:14-18 Mk 8:27-35

**Monday:** 1 Tm 2:1-8 Ps 28:2, 7-9 Lk 7:1-10

**Tuesday:** Nm 21:4b-9 Ps 78:1b-2, 34-38 Phil 2:6-11 Jn 3:13-17

**Wednesday:** 1 Tm 3:14-16 Ps 111:1-6 Jn 19:25-27

**Thursday:** 1 Tm 4:12-16 Ps 111:7-10 Lk 7:36-50

**Friday:** 1 Tm 6:2c-12 Ps 49:6-10, 17-20 Lk 8:1-3

**Saturday:** 1 Tm 6:13-16 Ps 100:1b-5 Lk 8:4-15



# Connecting communities in Christ

*Responding to editors' requests for a regular sampling of current commentary here is a column provided to Catholic News Service.*

Ever since Jesus told His disciples to take his message to all nations, the Catholic Church has done so using the best communications methods of the day. Early Christians pioneered new communications technology when they switched from scrolls to booklets.

The founder of my own tradition, St. Francis of Assisi, used the popular media of the Middle Ages when he spread the Gospel by entertaining in village squares.

Today, the Catholic Communication Campaign, supported by a national collection of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, promotes Catholic messages of faith, hope and healing, using current popular media. This collection will be taken in most parishes the (weekend of Sept. 12 in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend).

Half of your gift will stay in your home diocese, supporting local projects to inspire, enlighten, and draw people closer to Jesus. The other half will fund Catholic communications projects that are national in scope or that aid Catholic outreach in developing nations.

Never was this campaign's motto more true than during the COVID-19 pandemic: We are connecting communities in Christ.

When limitations and restrictions on group gatherings prompted churches to close their doors, your gifts to this collection enabled Catholic ministry

to continue in places with little communication infrastructure. The USCCB used campaign funds to help dioceses and parishes livestream the Mass. The USCCB also launched its own redesigned, mobile-friendly website — [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org) — where Catholics can find daily readings and reflections on Scripture.

COVID-19 is not the only crisis to which this collection responds. Campaign funds also have enabled bishops to lead virtual roundtables on racism, gun control, and care for creation in order to engage the faithful on pertinent moral and social issues.

The reach of the collection is far and wide — it also is helping the Archdiocese of Blantyre in Malawi to launch a radio station

that can reach the faithful in rural areas. A grant to Renew International, which produces small group study materials, will underwrite videos in which Sister Helen Prejean, a Sister of St. Joseph of Medaille, explains Catholic teaching against the death penalty and proposes a better vision of criminal

justice. Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Inc., a Vatican-chartered organization that St. John Paul II founded to promote Catholic social teaching, will use a CCC grant to improve its social media outreach and to produce animated videos on Catholic social principles.

Several recent grants highlight people whose ministry placed them on the path to sainthood.

The forthcoming documentary "Mother Saints" will examine the lives of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-

## CATHOLIC COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

ARCHBISHOP GREGORY J. HARTMAYER

1821) and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini (1850-1917), whose service to and advocacy for people on the peripheries still inspires the church's social ministry. Another documentary will tell the story of sainthood candidate Sister Thea Bowman (1937-1990), a "Servant of God" and the granddaughter of a slave who became a joyous advocate for faith in Jesus and for racial justice.

In addition, a forthcoming film led by the Diocese of Savannah will share the moving story of the five Georgia martyrs who gave their lives in witness to the Christian faith as Franciscan missionaries in what is now Georgia.

Your gift to this collection will bring the message of Jesus and the stories of saints who have followed him to your community and to communities on the other side of the world. Please give generously, knowing that you are continuing the work of the apostles.

*Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer of Atlanta, a Conventual Franciscan, who is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Subcommittee on the Catholic Communication Campaign. More about the Catholic Communication Campaign can be found at [www.usccb.org/cc](http://www.usccb.org/cc).*

*The founder of my own tradition, St. Francis of Assisi, used the popular media of the Middle Ages when he spread the Gospel by entertaining in village squares.*

### CAPECCHI, from page 12

helps us remember what truly makes our spirits come alive and the unique gifts God has given us."

Play keeps us young at heart, a fact my mom ably demonstrates at 65. She is not the grandma parked on the bench. She's the one who hula hoops. She goes down slides with her grandkids and encourages them to play in the rain, pulling out her own rain boots to jump in puddles.

She is inspired by her faith. Her mantra comes from St. Irenaeus: "The glory of God is man fully alive."

For my mom, play unlocks her

creativity. "It takes me out my world," she said.

Indeed, play is the brain's favorite way of learning, and to ditch it at adulthood is to dramatically limit your intellectual growth.

My friend Stephanie enrolled in a Reform program to help process the death of her 18-month-old. Learning to embrace play has been a surprising step forward in her long journey with grief.

This summer Steph played with her kids — running through the splash pad with them, baking, going on one-on-one dates. She also pledged to take up a hobby of her own. Creative engagement can be a

playful outlet, so Steph decided to learn how to knit. She hopes the clacking needles soothe her heart.

As I write, a thunderstorm is rustling through, dimming the streets. It shifts me into a state of observing. I can step away from the to-do list. I don't have to outrun the clock. I can simply let autumn unfold. And if I find a good leaf pile, I will jump.

**Christina Capecci** is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota.

## SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for September 12, 2021  
Mark 8: 27-35

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B: Who Jesus must be. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

DISCIPLES	VILLLAGES	CAESAREA
ASKED	JOHN	THE BAPTIST
ELIJAH	PROPHETS	DO YOU SAY
CHRIST	REJECTED	PETER
REBUKE	BEHIND ME	SATAN
TAKE UP	HIS CROSS	FOLLOW ME
LOSE IT	MY SAKE	GOSPEL

### LOSE AND SAVE

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



EMILY DE RODAT  
1787-1852  
FEAST: SEPT. 19

Described by one French contemporary as "a saint, but a headstrong saint," Emily was brought up by her grandmother. From the age of 17, she practiced charitable works and entered three different convents but did not stay in any of them. With support from Abbe Marty, in 1815 she opened a free school to teach poor children at Villefranche-de-Rouergue; the Congregation of the Holy Family and 38 additional foundations grew from this first one. Mother Emily, outwardly dour and intensely prayerful, led her congregation for 30 years.



## CRS, from page 11

chapter members who work to bring this vision to life. Becoming a member of a CRS chapter is an outward expression of missionary discipleship – calling forth leaders who have encountered Christ in the face of the poor, compelling them to share the good news with others, becoming prophetic advocates for justice and the common good.”

Pastors and parishioners are also invited to an information session to learn more about CRS chapters and consider getting involved.

The South Bend-area information session will take place Thursday, Sept. 23, from 7 – 8 p.m. in the Community Education Center Library at St. Pius X Parish, Granger. Participants may park in the east parking lot and enter through door 8. The library is up the stairs.

The Fort Wayne-area information session will take place Thursday, Sept. 30, from 7 – 8 p.m. at St. Mary, Mother of God Parish, Fort Wayne in Msgr. Oechtering Hall.

Registration is encouraged but not required. For more information, visit [diocesefwsb.org/crs](https://diocesefwsb.org/crs).



Catholic Charities, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is in search of a dynamic, results-oriented **Chief Executive Officer** to increase the existing connections between Catholic Charities and the community it serves. If you are interested in finding out more, please call

**Rhona Dove, Executive Recruiter at KB Search Team** 260.489.3350 x 303  
or email her: [rdove@kbsearchteam.com](mailto:rdove@kbsearchteam.com)



DIOCESE OF  
**FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND**  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has an opening for a full-time Executive Assistant who will act as assistant to the Superintendent of Schools. A qualified candidate should hold a minimum of a college or university degree, have exceptional computer and technology skills including knowledge of Microsoft Office, organizational skills, ability to work in a team environment, have previous experience as an assistant to an administrator, be dedicated to the Church and see the position as a ministry and be committed to Catholic education.

**Application Process:**

Visit <https://diocesefwsb.org/careers>

Deadline for consideration is Friday, Sept. 17, 2021



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Saint Anne Home is looking for a qualified candidate as a Human Resources Specialist. A qualified candidate holds a bachelor's degree, has experience in the area of employee benefits, has three to five years management experience in a Human Resource Department preferably in a health care facility, has the ability to communicate effectively with co-workers, residents and families both written and orally, and is able to work effectively with the Administrator.

To apply, go to <https://sacfw.org/careers>



**SHARATHON**

**SCHEDULE!**

	Tuesday, September 14	Wednesday, September 15	Thursday, September 16	Friday, September 17
8a	TBD	Women's Care Center Fort Wayne	Sisters of St Francis of Perpetual Adoration South Bend	Catholic Community Foundation of Northeast Indiana, Fort Wayne
9a	Franciscan Center Didier Meats Turkey Giveaway FW	St Matthew Cathedral South Bend	St Joseph South Bend	St Therese Little Flower South Bend
10a	TBD	Our Lady of Good Hope Fort Wayne	Double your Dollar Tippmann Hour	St John the Evangelist Goshen   South Bend
11a	St Thomas the Apostle Elkhart   South Bend	St Charles Fort Wayne	St Jude Fort Wayne	St Elizabeth Fort Wayne
12p	St Joseph Hessen Cassel   Fort Wayne	Bishop Rhoades' Hour	St John the Baptist Fort Wayne	St Vincent Fort Wayne
1p	St John & Holy Family South Bend	St Louis Besancon New Haven   Fort Wayne	Queen of Angels Fort Wayne	St Monica Mishawaka   South Bend
2p	TBD	Sacred Heart Warsaw   South Bend	St Aloysius Yoder   Fort Wayne	St Paul of the Cross Columbia City   Fort Wayne
3p	St Anthony de Padua South Bend	Most Precious Blood Fort Wayne	TBD	St Anthony Angola Campus Ministry   Fort Wayne
4p	St Vincent de Paul Elkhart   South Bend	Corpus Christi South Bend	St Adalbert & St Casimir South Bend	St Therese & St Henry Fort Wayne
5p	Holy Cross Parish South Bend	St Joseph Mishawaka   South Bend	TBD	St Peter Fort Wayne

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106.3<sup>fm</sup>  
NE Indiana

95.7<sup>fm</sup>  
Michiana





# 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.

**Sacred Heart of Jesus drive-thru fish fry**  
SOUTH BEND — Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, 63568 Old US 31-South will have a drive-thru-only autumn fish fry Friday, Sept. 17, from 3:30-7 p.m. Two drive-thru stations will be available. \$10 pre-sale tickets encouraged. Children's tickets (ages 12 and younger) available on a pre-sale only basis for \$5. Call 574-291-3775 for information.

**Cathedral Artists Music Series 9/11 concert**  
FORT WAYNE — On the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, 1105 S. Calhoun St., will present a concert in memory of the victims of 9/11. The main

work of the program will be Jake Heggie's "Pieces of 9/11" based on the memories of those with firsthand experience of the tragedy. Artists will include violinist Marci Trentacosti, cellist Martyna Bleke, guitarist Dr. Daniel Quinn, flutist Janet Galbraith, baritone Stephen Stachofsky and soprano Emily Bird. This program is free and open to the public. Contact Mike Dulac at 260-424-1485 or [mdulac@cathedralfw.org](mailto:mdulac@cathedralfw.org).

**St. Joseph Missions golf outing**  
FORT WAYNE — The first St. Joseph Missions Golf Outing will be Friday, Sept. 17, at Brookwood Golf Course, 10304 Bluffton Rd., and includes an 18-hole

scramble, four-person teams, golf cart, lunch and snacks. Check-in begins at 11 a.m., with welcoming remarks at 12:15 p.m., and tee time at 12:30 p.m. Proceeds benefit St. Joseph Missions Women's Shelter, the first 24/7/365 emergency shelter expressly for single homeless women in Allen County. Visit [www.stjosephmissions.org](http://www.stjosephmissions.org). Contact Geanie Edgington at 260-493-8116 or [geanie.edgington@michelin.com](mailto:geanie.edgington@michelin.com).

**Golfing 'Fore' the Seminarian Education Fund**  
NEW HAVEN — The St. Jude Knights of Columbus Council 16065 is sponsoring a charity golf outing Sunday, Sept. 19, at 7:30 a.m. at Whispering

REST IN PEACE


<b>Bristol</b> Darlene Frey, 88, St. Mary of the Annunciation	Marie Jordan, 96, St. Jude  Colleen F. Makovic, 80, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	<b>South Bend</b> Geraldine Bandera, 78, St. Adalbert  Eddy Knight, 87, St. Casimir
Richard Mackey, 92, St. Mary of the Annunciation	Robert Shaw, 88, St. Jude	Kenneth Kozinski, 83, Christ the King
<b>Fort Wayne</b> Mickie A. Becker, 69, St. Jude	<b>New Haven</b> Peter F. Ball, 58, St. Louis, Besancon	

Creek Golf Club, 216 N. Rufus St., to support the Seminarian Education fund. Enter as a team, an individual or become a sponsor. For more information or to register, contact Chris Mettler at 260-609-5413 or [cmmettler@frontier.com](mailto:cmmettler@frontier.com).

**Rest in the Storm: young adult retreat**  
HUNTINGTON — Young adults ages 18-35 are invited to join St. Charles Borromeo Parish for a retreat at St. Felix Catholic Center, 1280 Hitzfield St., from Friday evening through Sunday morning, Sept. 24-26. The retreat will focus on how to find rest


amidst the chaos of life. It is a time to withdraw from everyday hustle, to spend time with God, and to build a stronger community of faith. Check-in window is Friday, 6-7:30 p.m. The St. Felix Catholic Center, formerly a Franciscan friary and decade-long home of Blessed Father Solanus Casey, is now a beautiful retreat center tucked away from the bustle. Visit [www.stcharlesfortwayne.org/ya-retreat](http://www.stcharlesfortwayne.org/ya-retreat). Contact Stacey Huneck 260-484-7307 or [youngadults@scbfw.org](mailto:youngadults@scbfw.org).

**Holy Smokes — Men's Bourbon and Cigar Benefit for A Mother's Hope**  
FORT WAYNE — Holy Smokes will take place on Tuesday, Sept. 14, at 6:30 p.m. at The Charles, located at 3127 Carroll Rd. Tickets are \$60 per gentleman and include dinner, soda/beer, two bourbon tastings, and one cigar. All this plus a dynamic talk from former NFL player and founder of Life Athletes, Chris Godfrey. To purchase tickets or sponsorships, visit [e.givesmart.com/events/myW/](http://e.givesmart.com/events/myW/). Contact Natalie Kohrman at 260-207-4476 or [natalie@amhfw.org](mailto:natalie@amhfw.org).




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In exchange for a gift of cash or appreciated stock, you will receive immediate tax savings and a guaranteed, partially tax-free income stream for life. Best of all, while you're doing something good for yourself, you'll be doing something wonderful for our sisters.

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[PlannedGiving.SistersofProvidence.org](http://PlannedGiving.SistersofProvidence.org)

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# Catholic School Mission Days enrich teachers

BY JENNIFER MILLER

“From Joseph Pearce to Bishop Rhoades to our numerous breakout presenters, Catholic School Mission Day was a great day for all of us to be formed more deeply in the true, the good, and the beautiful,” Jonathan Kaltenbach, director of the Office of Catechesis shared. “Our Catholic Faith is truly the ‘pearl of great price’ and seeing the fellowship of our teachers who are united in handing on this faith to the next generation was truly inspiring, especially after all of their heroic sacrifices since the beginning of the pandemic. Bishop Rhoades’ celebration of Mass for us tied the whole day together around the Eucharist: great literature, great art, and beautiful witness call us out of ourselves and help us offer ourselves to Jesus and serve His people.”

Catholic School Mission Days, for both sides of the diocese, took place Sept. 2-3, allowing teachers to come together as a faculty, pray and grow in their professional and spiritual development. Joseph Pearce, author and director of book publishing for the Augustine Institute, was the keynote speaker for the masked, in-person event at Marian High School, Mishawaka and Bishop Luers High School, Fort Wayne.

After a welcome from Carl Loesch, Secretariat for Pastoral Ministries and Catechesis, and opening prayer with a litany of Catholic school saints led by Dr. Joseph Brettnacher, superintendent, Pearce focused his talk on the true, the good and the beautiful, each in relation to education. He asked a series of essential questions, which through reason and logic led the listener from the virtue to the overall purpose of education.

“What is truth?” is “the most famous question ever,” Pearce explained. Asked by Pontius Pilate to Jesus, He answered once in silence and only His presence. Earlier he had stated, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life,” as recorded in the Gospel of John, highlighting the shift from the secular school’s focus on “what”



Photos by Jennifer Miller

**At the annual Catholic Schools Mission Day gathering in Mishawaka Sept. 2, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrates Mass, calling Catholic schools “the most effective institutions in the Church for the task of the new evangelization. Father Glenn Kohrman and Father Geoffrey Mooney, CSC, from left, concelebrate, with Deacon Mel Tardy assisting.**

He was to the Catholic school’s focus on “Who.” And it is precisely the “who” of Catholic education that changes everything. A real relationship with Jesus Christ, the Master Teacher, Son of God, is the center of every Catholic school.

Through both testimony and reason, Pearce narrated life experiences that confirmed the routes of the good, the true and the beautiful, explaining for teachers the richness of Catholic education and point of it.

“Goodness, truth and beauty cannot be separated; they are triune, like our God. Sometimes distinct, goodness will always lead to truth and beauty and the like, but it is perilous to separate them. Goodness is rooted in love, truth in reason and beauty in the beautiful. God is love, He is the reason, He is the beautiful.” Prayer, explained Pearce, can be understood as “the heart and mind lifted up to divine, where an experience of true beauty can lead a person closer to God.”



**A few Catholic schoolteachers of the diocese talk during one of the day's breakout sessions.**

These three transcendentals then are essential parts of a true education, an essential part of the Christian life, a matter of life and death.

Seeing through a Catholic lens, for example, of how the different courses are intended to work together and complement one another, can then naturally demonstrate how well intended popular programs such as science, technology, engineering and

math are actually misguided and far from the Catholic ideal of the unity and connection of all subject matters, as they “de-humanize education.” With a dynamic speaking style and engaging personality, Pearce gently but firmly offered to the educators a renewed vision of Catholic education. He reminded them of what Catholic schools can and should be like; far from the secular, Protestant-led mindset he grew

up with in England.

Breakout sessions in the afternoon reinforced the values Pearce outlined in the morning. He led ones focusing on prominent Catholic writers and literature in education, while a wide variety of presenters offered their expertise in different fields — several diocesan ministry leaders and charitable organizations included.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, during Mass, preached on true Catholic education as well.

Commenting on St. Paul’s words in the first reading, “We do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord,” Bishop Rhoades stated, “everything in the Church is really about this: declaring the lordship of Jesus. This is also the purpose of Catholic schools. I am strongly committed to Catholic schools because I believe they are the most effective institutions in the Church for the task of the new evangelization, for the formation of our children and young people as intentional disciples of Jesus Christ.

“Of course, our schools are only effective in this mission if they are true to their Catholic identity, if the Catholic vision of reality is infused throughout the curriculum and in the life and community of the school. A Catholic school is not simply a secular school with a religion class tacked on and a monthly Mass in the gymnasium. A Catholic school is a community of disciples of Jesus Christ with educators who, like St. Paul, do not preach themselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord.”

He spoke directly to the educators present and those joining virtually from home.

“Brothers and sisters, I see you, along with our priests, as being on the frontlines of the Church’s mission and of the new evangelization. I want our schools to be unabashedly and vibrantly Catholic and to resist the secularism that dominates public education today.”

“In some places, Catholic identity has been watered down to a quite secularized version of Catholic social teaching,” the bishop said. “Students educated and formed in such a way are not deeply rooted in the truth, goodness, and beauty of our faith and will often join the increasing numbers of the religiously unaffiliated, the religious ‘nones.’ This can also happen among graduates of Catholic high schools if they do not discover or experience there or in their homes the beauty of Catholicism.”

Offering solace and comfort, as well as inspiration, he encouraged, “As Catholic school educators, you are called to look to Christ the Teacher as your teacher and Christ the Servant as your model.... I thank you today not only for your teaching with your words, but also for your self-giving service through your love for your students.”

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