

# TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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## Get up and follow the Lord, bishop says on feast day of St. Matthew

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Students and faculty at St. Matthew Cathedral School in South Bend celebrated their patron saint's feast day by welcoming Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades for a pastoral visit Sept. 21. Throughout the day, the bishop shared stories of the saints with the students, beginning at Mass.

In his homily, Bishop Rhoades spoke about Jesus calling St. Matthew to become His disciple and explained that priests always wore red vestments on feast days of martyrs, including St. Matthew. Bishops, as successors to the Apostles, have especially close connections to them.

He also gave the students a brief lesson on the history of the diocese, telling them how, in 1960, the Diocese of Fort Wayne became the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. The still-incomplete but newly rebuilt St. Matthew Church was chosen as the diocese's co-cathedral.

Bishop Rhoades explained that in the Gospel reading, Jesus dining with St. Matthew and other tax collectors was scandalous at the time, both because tax collectors worked for the oppressive Romans and because they tended to cheat their fellow Jews to amass their own fortunes. But he spoke of how Jesus came to heal sinners, not those who considered themselves righteous.

He concluded by addressing the students and advising them to listen to God's voice in determining their vocation in life. He admitted he could not say what God would call each of them to, "but what I do know is that God is calling you, and He has a vocation in mind for you. And I pray that you will be open to whatever that vocation is," he said.

"But you know, the most well-known vocation that you share is that we're all disciples of Jesus. Jesus says to every single one of us what he said to Matthew the tax collector. He says, 'Follow me. Follow me.' May all of us, like St. Matthew, get up and follow Him."

At the end of Mass, the bishop bestowed on those present a



Jennifer Barton

During a pastoral visit to St. Matthew Cathedral School in South Bend Sept. 21, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades told students that Jesus calls them to follow Him, just as he called St. Matthew to do.

ST. MATTHEW CATHEDRAL, page 8



### Red Mass

#### open to the faithful

Red Masses will be celebrated Tuesday, Oct. 5 at 5:30 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne and Oct. 26 at 5:15 p.m. at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, Notre Dame

### Bishops call for humane treatment of Haitians

*'It is in the face of each migrant that we see the face of Christ'*

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*Is life still a gift when it's measured in weeks?*

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# Synodal process looks to hear from voices on the margins of the Church



CNS photo/Vatican Media

**Pope Francis greets a child during an audience with the faithful from the Diocese of Rome at the Vatican Sept. 18. The pope is inviting Catholics both in the mainstream of Church life and on the margins to voice their dreams, ideas and concerns in preparation for the Synod of Bishops in 2023.**

BY DENNIS SADOWSKI

Pope Francis is inviting Catholics both in the mainstream of Church life and on the margins to voice their dreams, ideas and concerns in preparation for the Synod of Bishops in 2023.

The process launches Oct. 17 in parishes and dioceses worldwide. The pope is scheduled to formally open the synod process at the Vatican Oct. 9-10.

Under the theme "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission," the pope is calling the Church to practice synodality, that is listening to — and hearing — one another in all facets of Church life, two of the coordinators of the effort at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops told Catholic News Service.

The October opening "is just the first step in a larger, longer-term process of really incorporating the fruits of Vatican II and becoming a synodal Church," said Julia McStravog, a former USCCB employee who is a consultant to the bishops on the process.

"We're going to have consultation. It's also going to be a learning process about how to actually engage in a synodal way," McStravog explained.

The launch begins a two-year process that culminates in the Synod of Bishops in October 2023. The synod is expected to adopt a final document that will guide the continuing development of a synodal Church going into the future.

The pope's call to synodality is rooted in his deep involvement as a cardinal in 2007 in drafting a document for CELAM, the acronym for the Spanish name of the Latin American bishops' council, which met in Aparecida, Brazil. The document issued repeated calls for a "continental mission," a Church that goes out in search of ways to

proclaim the Gospel to all.

Starting in October, dioceses and parishes will be engaged in nearly six months of discussions, or consultations, in which people from across the Church will be invited to participate, said Richard Coll, executive director of the bishops' Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development, who is coordinating the effort for the USCCB.

Each diocese is being asked to submit a summary of local discussions by April 1 to the USCCB, which will then take a month to synthesize in a final written presentation for the Vatican.

Coll said each diocese is being encouraged to let the Holy Spirit guide discussions.



"The Synod of Bishops is saying don't focus on what the ultimate product is going to be. Focus on the process itself and how the Spirit will guide the Church, represented in part through subsidiarity in the work that you are doing at the diocesan level," Coll said.

The diocesan consultations also are an invitation to creativity, McStravog said.

"This is a moment to be co-creators with the Spirit. ... It is a chance for reinvigorating an engaged community through creativity and the call to be open. There's a chance to reaffirm the good and reimagine some things that could be better," she explained.

To facilitate the effort, the Synod of Bishops, under Cardinal Mario Grech, secretary-general, introduced documents Sept. 7 to guide the process in dioceses. The USCCB followed up by quickly developing a supplemental document as well.

The primary document is a "vademecum," or handbook, offering support for diocesan teams "to prepare and gather the people of God so that they can give voice to their experience in their local church."

It also explains the objectives of the synodal process, principles of the process, the timeline for the two-year process, and resources for organizing the process.

A complementary preparatory document offers background to the development of the process, which is rooted in Pope Francis' often-made invitation for "journeying together" in the world.

It states, "This journey, which follows in the wake of the church's 'renewal' proposed by the Second Vatican Council, is both a gift and a task: By journeying together and reflecting together on the journey that has been made, the church will be able to learn through her experience which processes can help her to live communion, to achieve participation, to open herself to mission."

The USCCB document further defines the Vatican's documents. It is a checklist of actions, proposed timeline for dioceses to follow, and a listing of background materials to help walk parishes and dioceses through the initial process and ensure wide participation.

It stresses that during the Churchwide synod that begins in October, and leads

SYNOD, page 3

# Humane treatment for Haitians urged by Catholic leaders

BY JULIE ASHER

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The chairman of the U.S. bishops' migration committee and the head of Catholic Charities USA issued a joint statement Sept. 22 urging humane treatment of Haitians and other migrants as their numbers grow in southern Texas at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Thousands of Haitians have made their way across the Rio Grande from Mexico and illegally entered the United States at the Del Rio Sector of the border, roughly 145 miles west of San Antonio.

The Haitians and other migrants have been living under the Del Rio International Bridge awaiting processing, while coping with temperatures exceeding 100 degrees and limited access to food, water and shelter.

"We call on the U.S. government to reassess its treatment of migrants in Del Rio and elsewhere along the U.S.-Mexico border, especially Haitians, who face life-threatening conditions if returned to Haiti and possible discrimination if expelled to third countries," said Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington and Dominican Sister Donna Markham.

The bishop is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration and Sister Markham is president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA.

"As a Church at the service of all God's people, we embrace Christ's call to welcome the newcomer and accompany them wherever they may be," they said.

During National Migration Week, observed Sept. 20-26, "we are especially mindful of that obligation and saddened to see such a disregard for human dignity," the two Catholic leaders said. "It is in the face of each migrant that we see the face of Christ."

The Biden administration announced Sept. 18 it would quickly begin deporting the Haitians back to Haiti, even though a majority of them did not arrive at the border recently from their homeland. News reports said many have been living in or traveling through Latin America for varying periods of time after fleeing widespread violence, political turmoil, natural disasters and economic stagnation in Haiti.

The Biden administration has been deporting asylum-seekers using Title 42, despite criticism for doing so from advocates for migrants and a court battle over it.

Title 42 is a provision of U.S. public health law that was activated by the Trump administration to expel migrants at the border, with the exception of



CNS photo/Go Nakamura, Reuters

**Migrants are seen at a makeshift camp in Del Rio, Texas, Sept. 21.**

minors, over COVID-19 concerns.

Bishop Dorsonville and Sister Markham criticized policies such as Title 42 and expedited removal because "all too often" they "deny the reality of forced migration, disregard the responsibilities enshrined in domestic and international law, and undermine the vulnerability of those against whom they are applied."

"These are not hallmarks of a 'fair, orderly and humane' immigration system," they said.

Other groups calling for humane treatment of Haitians and other migrants by the Biden administration include the Sisters of Mercy and Network, a Catholic social justice lobby.

"The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas join with people worldwide in expressing outrage over the shocking treatment of Haitian asylum-seekers trying to enter the United States in Del Rio, Texas," the religious order said in a Sept. 22 statement. "Haitian women, children and men are among our most vulnerable sisters and brothers."

"We call on the Biden administration to immediately end deportation flights to Haiti and to undertake measures to assure that all Haitian asylum-seekers have the right to make their case. This right is guaranteed under both domestic and international law," it said.

The Sisters of Mercy noted Haiti in recent months "has experienced a political assassination, a massive earthquake and a fierce hurricane."

"These catastrophic events further burden a nation with a long history of political upheaval and widespread, grinding poverty,

conditions often exacerbated by U.S. policy over the years," the statement said.

The executive director of Network, Mary J. Novak, accused the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents and the Biden administration of abusing Haitian asylum-seekers, calling it "unacceptable."

Novak didn't describe the abuse, but news reports claimed Border Patrol officers on horseback were whipping some of the Haitians as they tried to control the crowd. CBP's Office of Professional Responsibility was investigating the incident, but agents said they were using long reins to control their horses as they tried to control the crowd.

She also criticized "the continued misuse of Title 42," saying it "relies on the false idea that we have to choose between welcoming people fleeing violence and protecting communities from the pandemic. We can do both."

"The Biden administration must end Title 42 immediately and welcome immigrants and asylum-seekers with dignity," she said.

In May, those Haitians who currently reside in the United States under Temporary Protected Status were told they could apply for an 18-month extension of that status so long as they meet eligibility requirements.

TPS grants a work permit and reprieve from deportation to certain people whose countries have experienced natural disasters, armed conflicts or exceptional situations so they can remain temporarily in the United States.



## Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, October 3: 1 p.m. — Walk for the Poor for St. Vincent de Paul Society, Parkview Field, Fort Wayne

Sunday, October 3: 3 p.m. — Mass with Consecration of a Virgin, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne

Monday, October 4: 12:30 p.m. — Speak at Men and Women's Dignity and Vocation classes, Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne

Tuesday, October 5: 5:30 p.m. — Red Mass, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne

Wednesday, October 6: 9 a.m. — Mass for Fort Wayne Seven Sisters group, Mother Theodore Guerin Chapel, Fort Wayne

Wednesday, October 6: 6:30 p.m. — Speak at Notre Dame Club of Fort Wayne Celebration, Fort Wayne Country Club, Fort Wayne

Thursday, October 7: 11 a.m. — Mass and Blessing of Grotto and Altar, Marian High School, Mishawaka

Thursday, October 7: 2 p.m. — Lecture to Master of Divinity Class, DeBartolo Hall, University of Notre Dame

Thursday, October 7: 6 p.m. — Dinner Meeting with Windmoor Study Center Residents, Windmoor Study Center, South Bend

Friday, October 8: 10 a.m. — Meeting with South Bend Jewish Federation and Rabbis, South Bend

Saturday, October 9: 9 a.m. — Inauguration Mass for President Katie Conboy, Church of Our Lady of Loretto, Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame

Saturday, October 9: 5 p.m. — Mass with Dedication of Altar and Blessing of Chapel, Henri de Lubac Jesuit Community, South Bend

## A STATEMENT BY BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES



On Sept. 19, 2021, the Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend became aware of allegations that Father David Huneck engaged in sexual and other misconduct, including that with a minor. Consistent with diocesan policy, the diocese notified the Department of Child Services of the allegations. It was then forwarded to local police. Father Huneck subsequently resigned as pastor of St. Paul of the Cross Catholic Church, Columbia City, and as chaplain of Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort

Wayne. Further, as a precautionary measure, Father Huneck was suspended from all public priestly ministry.

The diocese stands ready to cooperate with civil authorities. The diocese considers it inappropriate to make further comment on this matter at this time.

The diocese is following the Church's required protocols from the 2002 Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People for responding effectively, appropriately, and compassionately to all allegations of sexual abuse of minors. We are committed to providing a safe environment for all people, especially the young and vulnerable.

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend extends our heartfelt prayers to all who are affected by this news and stands firm in its commitment to investigate any allegation of sexual abuse by a member of the clergy and to listen to and support anyone who has been abused. Please contact Mary Glowaski, victim's assistance coordinator and assistant to the bishop in pastoral care, at [mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org) or 260-399-1458.

## SYNOD, from page 2

to the 2023 world Synod of Bishops, "the people of God are called to 'journey together.'"

The document explains that the pandemic "has made existing inequalities explode" and shows that the entire human family is affected, requiring a unified response.

Secondly, the document continues, the pandemic poses logistical challenges for participation in diocesan listening sessions. It calls on dioceses to look for ways such as online gatherings, small group meetings or other safe means to gain insight from Church members.

Once the Vatican receives the synthesized reports of diocesan meetings from bishops' conferences around the world, the Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops will draft by September 2022 the "instrumentum laboris," or working document, to guide continental or regional ecclesial assemblies that will take place by March 2023.

Those assemblies will produce another set of documents that will help in the drafting of a second working document for the Synod of Bishops in October 2023. The synod is expected to produce a final document on synodality throughout the Church.

# Australians: Plenary Council process offers possibilities for world synod

BY PETER ROSENGREN

SYDNEY (CNS) — As the Church in Australia prepares for its first Plenary Council since 1937, Church leaders and theologians speculated on what the extensive parish consultation process conducted over the last two years might offer the wider Church as it prepares for a 2023 Synod of Bishops on synodality.

Daniel Ang, director of the Archdiocese of Sydney's Centre for Evangelisation, said he hoped the process in Australia "might offer to the universal Church — from the 'peripheries' — a recognition that it is in the lives of the ordinary faithful that the Word of God is lived and expressed, and this personal reality brings genuine perspective and insight to the Church's situation."

"Equally, I think we recognize that this personal faith springs from and actually needs to be brought into conversation and challenge with the Church as a whole, as a body of the faithful, as a tradition capable of throwing timeless light on new questions, and a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, who alone can show us how the Church might best serve the presence of God in the world," he told The Catholic Weekly, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Sydney. Ang will serve as a theological adviser to the Plenary Council's first assembly, which begins Oct. 3.

Beginning on Pentecost in 2018, Australian Plenary Council organizers carried out a nation-



CNS photo/Alphonsus Fok, The Catholic Weekly

**Daniel Ang, director of the Archdiocese of Sydney's Center for Evangelization, poses outside St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney May, 27, 2020. Ang is a co-author of the working document for the upcoming Fifth Plenary Council of the Church in Australia, set to begin Oct. 3, and will serve as a theological adviser to the Plenary.**

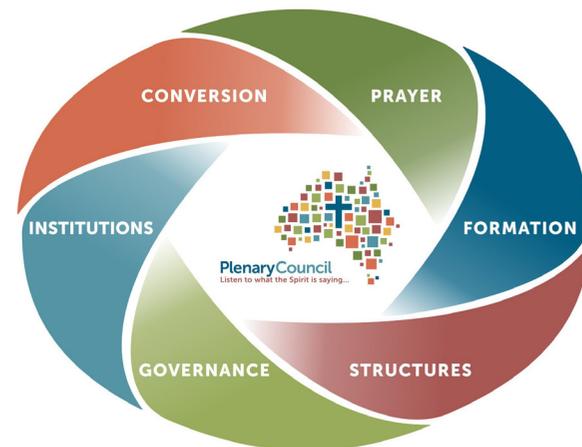
wide consultation designed to crystallize the key themes and issues confronting Church life at every level. About 220,000 people responded to the question "What do you think God is

## FIFTH PLENARY COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AGENDA

As children of God, disciples of Jesus Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit, the Members of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia are called to develop concrete proposals to create a more missionary, Christ-centred Church in Australia at this time.

*'I dream of a "missionary option", that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelisation of today's world rather than for her self-preservation.'*

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 27



asking of us in Australia at this time?"

Ang, who helped write the working document for the Plenary Council that resulted from those consultations, said Australia's process was significant, even if for some "an unsettling conversation" about the way in which the Church can best practice its mission in Christ into the future.

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe of Perth, who serves as Plenary Council president, said the Synod of Bishops "picks up"

on the journey of many local churches, including the Church in Australia.

"We gathered rich and diverse input during the Plenary Council's listening and dialogue and later listening and discernment phases, which can help inform the preparations for the Synod of Bishops," he said.

But Sandra Lynch, director of the Institute for Ethics & Society and professor of philosophy at the University of Notre Dame Australia, said the Plenary Council process suggests that the challenge of engaging as many of the faithful as possible, other Christians, nonChristians and those on the margins of society would be a significant one in preparing for the 2023 Synod of Bishops.

"Mechanisms must be found that make the consultation process as unlabored and effective as possible, despite the difficulties of engaging in dialogue and discernment in the COVID context," she said.

"If the consultation process is to be a genuine catalyst for change, then we must assure the faithful that they will be heard; encourage them to be open, humble and hopeful about the process; and overcome skepticism about processes of consultation within the Church. The support of the clergy and religious is crucial in this regard," she added.

She also said the national facilitation team's method of "spiritual conversation" was "valuable in encouraging deep listening and engaging both the hearts and minds of participants. It will no doubt be equally helpful in relation to the 2023 synod processes if it is widely used."

Archbishop Peter Comensoli of Melbourne, Australia's largest archdiocese, told The Catholic

Weekly that whatever emerges from the plenary, "our mission of sharing Christ faithfully doesn't change; however, the means by which we proclaim him might need serious reshaping.

"In Australia, we need to be humble about the global Church and recognize that different circumstances require different approaches," he said.

"What we've done Under will, I hope, be a great example of listening to the Holy Spirit and acting boldly, but the Spirit may say something different to other parts of the Church as we all enter into paths of synodality," Archbishop Comensoli said.

"In Australia we've done something bold and we've been willing to take some risks, in that we have engaged as many of our people as possible about the future, and that should be a model for all of us," he added.

Brisbane Archbishop Mark Coleridge, a driving force behind the plenary and president of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, said he had recently met with the leadership of the Synod of Bishops office in Rome, and it was clear they have been following the journey of the Australian Plenary Council with interest.

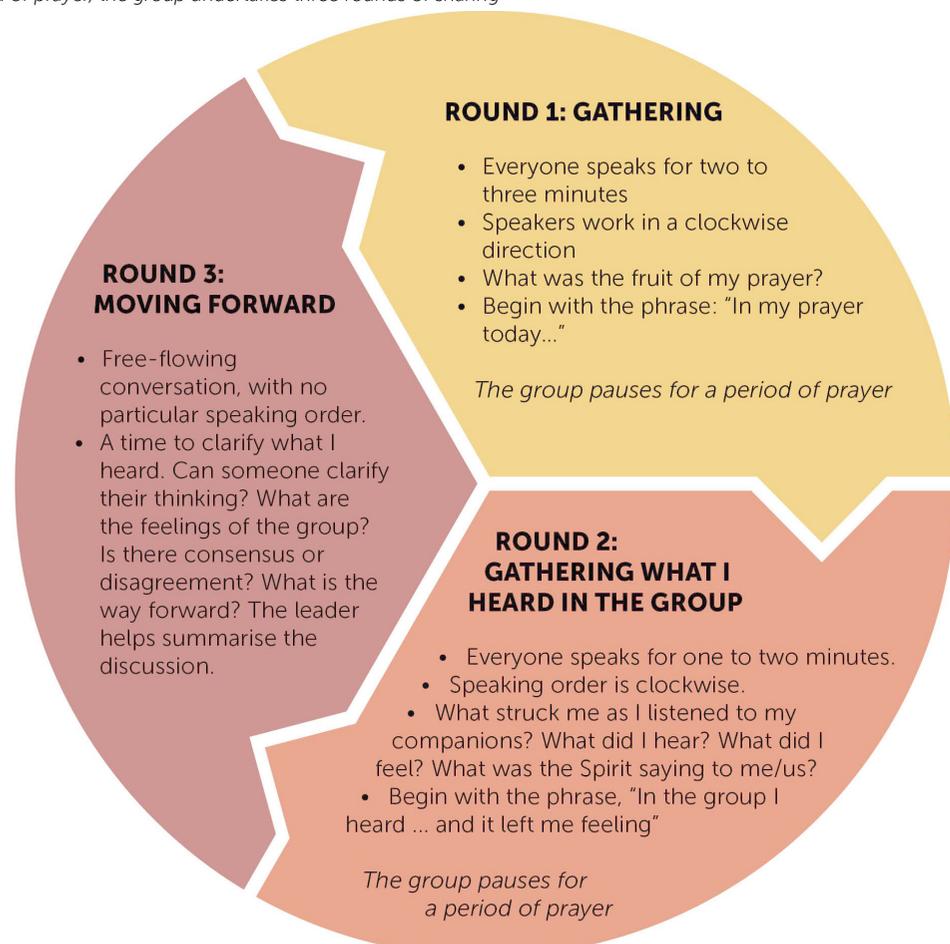
"The preparatory document of the synod speaks well of the Plenary Council here, as Pope Francis did in his book 'Let Us Dream,'" he said.

"The Holy See can learn from us, and we can certainly learn from them, as we have on the journey of the Plenary Council and will as the synod process unfolds.

"This is itself part of the experience of synodality, with the Church local and universal in a new kind of dialogue," he said.

## How Spiritual Conversation works

After a period of prayer, the group undertakes three rounds of sharing



# Cardinal Gregory seals his relationship with the Diocese of Rome

BY CINDY WOODEN

ROME (CNS) —Ten months after Pope Francis inducted him into the College of Cardinals, Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory of Washington took possession of his titular church in Rome, the Church of the Immaculate Conception of Mary in the Grottarossa neighborhood of northern Rome.

Greeting parishioners Sept. 27, Cardinal Gregory noted how Mary, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, is also the patroness of the Catholic Church in the United States.

"Whenever I recall Our Lady's title, I will be united with you and your families and clergy in prayer," he promised them, reading his text in Italian. "I also hope that you will remember me and the Archdiocese of Washington in your prayers, as we are now joined in devotion and affection through the intercession of her whose son established the church as one family of faith, hope and love."

Cardinals are symbolically priests of the Diocese of Rome, so they are given titular churches in the city, following the practice of ancient times when cardinals were pastors of Rome parishes.

"It's important for me to have a parish here in the city of Rome that binds me, first of all, to the service of the Holy Father but also ties me to the people of this parish," the cardinal told Catholic News Service. "Now when I pray, I will pray first of all for the people of the Archdiocese of Washington and then for the people of this local community: my parish and the family of my parish here in Rome."

Anna Maria Giuliano, one of the parishioners present for the midday prayer service and reception, said having a cardinal associated with the parish on the outskirts of Rome "is very important, especially for this parish, which is like a little family."

The fact that the United States and the Grottarossa parish both are dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, she said, "is something that binds us even more."

Cardinal Gregory does not know exactly how he might help the parishioners, other than with his prayers and an occasional visit.

First, he said, he will need to get to know the parish, its pastor and its community. "It's like appointing a pastor in any diocese — you send him to people, he gets to know the people, the people love him, and they establish a relationship based on that personal knowledge and affection."

Father Valerio Bortolotti, the pastor, welcomed the cardinal to "this little church in the middle of nowhere on the periphery of Rome" more than 4,000 miles from Washington.

"A precious treasure is hidden here," the priest said, since the church is near the site where legend holds that the Emperor Constantine had a vision of a cross in the sky and began his conversion to Christianity. And, he said, the church itself was the gift of a wealthy landowner who wanted the people who worked his land or labored in his brick factory to be under the protection of Mary.

"A cross and a mother — this is the treasure you take possession of today," Father Bortolotti told Cardinal Gregory.

Cardinal Gregory's titular church on the ancient Via Flaminia was built in 1935 -- a very new parish compared to most of the other cardinals' churches.

Until 1958, there were only 70 cardinals in the world. As the number of cardinals increased — there were 217 as of Sept. 27 — the popes gave more Rome parishes the distinction of being a cardinal's titular church. Immaculate Conception was given the honor by St. John Paul II in 1985; the parish has the Latin-language document saying such a "dignity" for the little church was well-deserved because of the community's reputation among parishes of the city.



CNS photo/Paul Haring

Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory of Washington signs documents recording his taking possession of his titular Church of the Immaculate Conception of Mary in the Grottarossa neighborhood of northern Rome Sept. 27.

MASS OF HEALING

IN REMEMBRANCE

OF THE MIAMI TRIBE

Saturday, Oct. 2

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

5 p.m.

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# NEWS BRIEFS

## Vatican: Racial, religious bigotry leads to human rights violations

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — World leaders must commit to rooting out the evil of racism, xenophobia and racial discrimination through meaningful legislation and action, said Archbishop Paul R. Gallagher, Vatican foreign minister. Addressing a high-level U.N. meeting Sept. 21, Archbishop Gallagher also said that violence against religious groups as well as prenatal diagnostics that lead to a denial of the right to life “because of disability, sex, or other traits” must not be ignored. “Universal human rights are indivisible and interdependent and thus cannot exist in opposition. Laws and norms that seek to root out discrimination and intolerance must therefore respect the right to freedom of opinion, thought, religion and conscience,” he said. The high-level meeting marked the 20th anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action, a U.N. document that proposed concrete measures to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The Vatican’s commitment to fight racism, Archbishop Gallagher said, is “rooted in the erroneous and evil claim that one human being has less dignity than another.”

## Pope: Central Europe trip was about honoring roots, moving forward

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A living faith draws strength from remembering the past while continuing to grow in love of God and service to others, Pope Francis said. The pope said he saw that kind of faith on display Sept. 12-15 as he visited Hungary and Slovakia. Reviewing the trip Sept. 22, Pope Francis told people at his weekly general audience that the roots of identity and faith must be “conserved — not like museum exhibits, not ideologized and exploited out of interests of prestige and power (or) to consolidate a closed identity” — but as reminders of what God has done and as inspiration for growing closer to God and to other people. In Hungary Sept. 12, Pope Francis celebrated the closing Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress where, he said, participants were “embraced by the cross that stood above the altar, showing the same direction indicated by the Eucharist, namely the path of humble and selfless love, of generous and respectful love toward all, of faith that purifies from worldliness and leads to what is essential.” With liturgies in the Roman and Eastern rites, ecumenical gatherings, meetings with members of the Jewish community, with Roma and with the homeless, Pope Francis said his trip was “a pilgrimage of prayer in the heart of Europe, beginning with adoration and ending with popular piety.”

## Advocates: Action needed to stop Christians from leaving Lebanon, Iraq



CNS photo/Mohamed Azakir, Reuters

A woman wearing a protective mask pushes a cart past damaged buildings in Beirut Jan. 26. According to the United Nations, 78% of Lebanese now live below the poverty line. Action is needed to stop the hemorrhaging of Christians from their biblical homelands, particularly Lebanon and Iraq, as safety, poor governance and economic crises imperil their future, said Maronite Catholic Bishop Gregory J. Mansour, who heads the Eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn, New York.

## Bill to codify Roe called one of most ‘extreme’ abortion bills seen in U.S.

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Women’s Health Protection Act of 2021, introduced in the U.S. Senate and House June 8 and currently moving through various committees in both chambers, “is nothing short of child sacrifice,” said Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco. The “misnamed” measure, he said, “shows to what radical extremes the supposedly ‘pro-choice’ advocates in our country will go to protect what they hold most sacred: the right to kill innocent human beings in the womb,” he said in a Sept. 21 statement. Denver Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila also weighed in with a statement a day later, echoing the San Francisco prelate in urging the bill be defeated. “Today, the abortion industry and its supporters are pushing one of the most extreme

national abortion bills this country has ever seen, and doing it under the lie that abortion is a form of health care that must be protected and promoted,” the Denver prelate said. If Congress passes the bill and it becomes law, it would invalidate nearly all existing state limitations on abortion. The House and Senate bills — H.R. 3755 and S. 1975 — would codify the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision in law legalizing abortion nationwide. It would establish the legal right to abortion in all 50 states under federal law.

## Amazon conference brings periphery front and center, cardinal says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The establishment of an Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon that involves both the laity and the clergy is a sign of a Church that listens to God through the voice

of his people, Peruvian Cardinal Pedro Barreto Jimeno of Huancayo said. Participants at the 2019 Synod of Bishops for the Amazon had recommended forming “an episcopal organism that promotes synodality among the Church of the Pan-Amazon region.” Instead of creating a regional bishops’ conference, however, the bishops in 2020 formed the “ecclesial” conference to include representatives of all the Church’s membership. The Amazon synod, as well as the upcoming synod on “synodality,” are a manifestation of Pope Francis’ desire of “going from the periphery to the center as an evangelizing criterion,” Cardinal Barreto told Catholic News Service Sept. 22. “The Church is moving from the periphery to the center,” the cardinal said. “The message is clear, and this is not something invented by Pope Francis; this is in the documents of the Second Vatican Council.” The Peruvian cardinal, who serves as president of the Pan-Amazonian Church Network, known as REPAM, met with Pope Francis at the Vatican

Sept. 20 to update him on the work of the organization, which also was involved in establishing the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon.

## Maine bishop calls Blue Mass ‘act of duty’ to honor first responders

LEWISTON, Maine (CNS) — Bishop Robert P. Deeley of Portland, Maine, told the congregation at the diocese’s annual Blue Mass Sept. 19 that “a good thing” brought them all together that morning. They gathered to thank first responders, pray for their safety and remember the fallen, including those who lost their lives during 9/11. “We are here to perform an act of duty. We are here to remember,” the bishop said. The Blue Mass — so named for the blue uniforms that firefighters, law enforcement and other first responders wear — began with the sound of marching heels walking down the main aisle of the Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul in Lewiston. Visible on the street next to the basilica were ladder trucks from the Lisbon and Lewiston Fire Departments displaying a massive American flag high in the air as a multijurisdictional honor guard comprised of members of four different public safety departments solemnly posted the colors in front of the sanctuary. An assembly of hundreds stood in silence, with the pews full of either first responders or those wishing to thank them. Moments later, Bishop Deeley, priests and deacons processed in, starting the 2021 Blue Mass, a tradition that dates to 1934 in the U.S. Catholic Church. The events of 9/11 prompted the Portland diocese to institute the special Mass locally.

## Catholics should debate issues, not debate each other, cardinal says

ROME (CNS) — Honest and open debate about different points of view in the Catholic Church are fundamental, but Catholics should not be demonizing the individuals with those views, Cardinal George Pell said. Asked about the different polarized positions among Catholics that can be found online, he said that many of the issues being discussed are “very important, and I don’t think there can be any compromise on the fundamental issues of what is the apostolic tradition.” The Church’s stance on issues should be clearly explained, but there is “a hierarchy of truths, not everything is equally important,” which means Catholics “should not be disagreeing violently over too much at all but certainly not over matters which are of less importance,” he said in an interview in Rome streamed live Sept. 23 and uploaded the next day by the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross.

## OSV Challenge winners announced

HUNTINGTON — OSV Institute for Catholic Innovation awarded three \$100,000 prizes to Catholic In Recovery, FemCatholic and Red Bird Ministries Sept. 18 at the OSV Challenge Showcase, the culmination of an eight-month contest designed to incubate project ideas that will make a profound impact on the Church and the world.

The OSV Challenge Showcase was hosted virtually and attended by more than 400 fellow entrepreneurs, investors, mentors, Catholic thought leaders and many supportive family members and friends. A total of 12 finalists presented their pitches to a panel of five expert judges followed by the long-awaited announcement of the three winning organizations.

Beginning this past February, nearly 600 Catholic entrepreneurs submitted applications for their "napkin idea" to be considered for the OSV Challenge, now in its second year. The OSV Challenge was an incubator experience for participants who aimed to think beyond the status quo and to view the Catholic Church through the lenses of innovation and creativity.

The competition narrowed down to 12 finalists at the end of August, and the initiatives were selected to receive funding to advance their missions and build the Church.

Catholic In Recovery is a non-profit organization that offers hope and healing to those recovering from addictions, compulsions and unhealthy attachments, blending the wisdom of 12-step recovery with the sacramental life of the Catholic Church.

FemCatholic, a platform that combines feminism and Catholicism, was founded under the patronage of St. Edith Stein and the belief that women are not only the greatest untapped resource in the Church but also the world, FemCatholic strives to promote women through education, encouragement and empowerment.

Red Bird Ministries guides individuals and couples through the complexity and trauma that happens with the loss of a child from pregnancy through adulthood. It was formed when founders Ryan and Kelly Breaux felt called to help others navigate the pain and unexpected challenges that result from the loss of a child after finding a lack of uniquely Catholic bereavement support during their own personal journey of suffering.

For more information about the OSV Challenge, visit [www.osvchallenge.com](http://www.osvchallenge.com).

## Mass for the sick at St. Felix Catholic Center

FORT WAYNE — St. Felix Catholic Center, 1280 Hitzfield St., Huntington, will host a Mass for the Sick, tours of the former

# AROUND THE DIOCESE

## Catholic Camporee



Provided by Carl Loesch

The Catholic Committee on Scouting of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend hosted the annual Catholic Camporee at the University of St. Francis, Fort Wayne, Sept. 10-12.

University faculty assisted scout leaders in a combination of scout and Catholic activities.

In addition to camping, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts went on hikes, fished, did science experiments, learned about astronomy and performed service hours in the Lawson-Wiedman native prairie. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrated Mass in the St. Francis Chapel and presented several religious emblems to the scouts.

fraternity and a eucharistic exposition 12:30-3:30 p.m. Oct. 16.

The afternoon will begin with a rosary in the chapel, followed by Mass at 1 p.m. The Mass for the Sick will be celebrated by Father Joseph Tuscan, OFM Cap.

Refreshments will be provided following the Mass. Worshippers will be welcome to take a tour of the center and view an exposition on eucharistic miracles, and at 2:30 p.m. Father Tuscan will give a presentation. All events are free and are sponsored by the Praying with Father Solanus group in Huntington.

For more information about Praying with Father Solanus, visit [www.prayingwithfrsolanus.org](http://www.prayingwithfrsolanus.org).

## USF to celebrate St. Francis of Assisi with four events

FORT WAYNE — The University of Saint Francis will celebrate its patron saint, Francis of Assisi, with upcoming events on campus, 2701 Spring St. These events are free and open to the public, and USF will accept donations of personal care items for adults, children and infants to benefit Vincent Village.

A blessing of pets will take place Sunday, Oct. 3 at 4 p.m. Pets and their owners are welcome to

gather near the St. Francis statue in front of Brookside Mansion for a brief service commemorating St. Francis' love for animals and all creation. USF Chaplain Father John Sheehan, S.J., will bless each pet at the end of the service.

The *Transitus* will be read and sung Sunday, Oct. 3 at 7 p.m. at St. Francis Chapel. Participants will recall the night of St. Francis' passage with Sister Death into eternal life. The *Transitus* will be followed by Mass at 7:30 p.m. Parking is accessible from entrances on the east side of campus.

A Mass for the feast of St. Francis will be celebrated Monday, Oct. 4 at 11 a.m. in St. Francis Chapel. People of all faiths and persuasions are invited to join in this celebration of St. Francis' life and birth into heaven with Scripture readings, songs and the sacrifice of the Holy Mass. USF president Father Eric A. Zimmer will be celebrant for the Mass, and USF chaplain Father John Sheehan, SJ, will concelebrate.

"Environmental Sustainability, Social Justice and St. Francis" is the topic that will be presented Monday, Oct. 4, at 7 p.m. in the North Campus Auditorium, 2702 Spring St. New Community Project director David Radcliff will discuss NCP's goal to change the world through partnerships that heal the earth and support

women, girls and native communities in Africa, Asia and the Americas. A model for NCP's work is USF's medieval, but strikingly relevant, patron saint.

Born in 1182, Francis Bernardone's dramatic reversion to the Christian faith, his imitation of Christ through a life of poverty, and his service to the needy sparked a spiritual and social movement that continues to inspire and impact society and the Church today through the three religious orders he founded. He became known as St. Francis of Assisi.

For more information, contact Assistant Vice President for Mission Integration Sister Anita Holzmer at 260-399-7700, ext. 6705 or [aholzmer@sf.edu](mailto:aholzmer@sf.edu).

## St. Jude Parish Mission

FORT WAYNE — St. Jude Parish, 2155 Randallia Dr., will host a parish mission "Gather Us In" beginning Sunday, Oct. 24, and concluding Wednesday Oct. 27.

Father Peter Schavitz, a Redemptorist priest from St. Louis, will lead the mission each night beginning at 6:30 p.m. There will be an adult program and a children's program for students in grades kindergarten through fifth each night.

## Black Catholic Theological Symposium to convene at Notre Dame

NOTRE DAME — The University of Notre Dame will host the 31st annual meeting of the Black Catholic Theological Symposium Oct. 7-9, featuring two public lectures and an inculturated Mass led by Cardinal Wilton Gregory, archbishop of Washington, D.C.

Sponsored by the University's Department of Africana Studies and Department of Theology, the event also includes two days of private meetings for symposium members and an invitation-only listening session for Black Catholic students, community members, faculty and staff.

The Black Catholic Theological Symposium, founded in 1978, seeks to foster an ethical community of scholarly dialogue characterized by a commitment to the fundamental humanity of all people; a regard for plurality of cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds; and the development of an authentically Black and Catholic theology.

The annual meeting shines a light on this often overlooked segment of the Catholic community, said Father Paulinus Odozor, CSSp, a professor of Africana studies and theology and member of the symposium.

"This is an exciting opportunity to celebrate and to engage academically with the Black Catholic Church in the United States," Father Odozor said. "It is wonderful to bring people to Notre Dame who will address what is happening theologically, pastorally and socially within that Church and highlight its contributions to the worldwide communion of Catholicism."

The annual meeting will open with a public lecture, "#BlackLivesMatter as Public Theology," by M. Shawn Copeland, professor emerita of theology at Boston College, at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 7,

in McKenna Hall. At 4:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 8, in McKenna Hall, Bishop Emeritus Edward Braxton will present a lecture for the Department of Africana Studies' Colloquy on Black Church Studies, "The Catholic Church and the Racial Divide in the United States."

A public celebration of the Eucharist led by Cardinal Gregory at 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9, at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart will conclude the event.

All three events will be livestreamed at [theology.nd.edu/bcts](http://theology.nd.edu/bcts).



M. SHAWN COPELAND



CARDINAL WILTON GREGORY

## ST. MATTHEW CATHEDRAL, from page 1

special blessing reserved for the feast days of the Apostles. Afterward, principal Sister Gianna Marie Webber led him on a tour of the school, stopping in at almost every classroom in the building.

## The classrooms of future saints

In both first-grade classrooms, the bishop asked students if they knew who he was. In one classroom, a little girl enthusiastically answered, "Father!" He went on to explain what a bishop does, as well as show them the pectoral cross and ring that indicate his office. The children were shocked when he told them he was married – to the Church.

The kindergarteners eagerly welcomed Bishop Rhoades and sang a song about the Holy Family for him. He was pleased to see that they knew how to say the name of Jesus in American Sign Language.

He reminded the second-graders of their upcoming sacraments of reconciliation and First Communion. When they told him that they were currently studying the idea of friendship, he replied that God is his best friend and reminded them to speak to God every day.

Each classroom at St. Matthew is dedicated to a different saint, with that saint's picture posted outside the room. As Bishop Rhoades entered the middle school classrooms, he took note of the saints and recounted stories about those whom he had personally met, telling the seventh and sixth-grade classes about his encounters with Pope St. John Paul II and St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata, respectively. He related to the seventh-grade students that, as a young seminarian, he had served at Mass for the great pope on Corpus Christi Sunday and again as a deacon exactly two years later, assisting him in a eucharistic procession through the streets of Rome. In the sixth-grade classroom, he told of how his mother had made a pilgrimage to Rome and he introduced her to St. Mother Teresa, who thanked her for giving her son to the Church.

Bishop Rhoades taught another seventh-grade class the Italian phrase "Verso Alto." This means "to the heights," a phrase that is typically associated with Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. Verso Alto, he explained, holds significance not only for mountain climbers, but also for faithful Catholics who should strive for the heights of heaven.

## Building community

Operating for about 90 years, St. Matthew Cathedral School currently meets the educational needs of approximately 325 students. As principal, Sister Gianna Marie said she believes that what makes her school special is the community, a richly diverse society made up of "people from all walks of life" that "come together very well."

With communal life having been disrupted by the COVID-19 restrictions, Sister Gianna Marie is focused on strengthening the community at

St. Matthew this year through various means.

Two programs she is especially proud of build the Catholic mission of the school. One is the pilgrimage program. Every grade from kindergarten to eighth takes a different trip during the school year to a religious site, as is appropriate for the grade level. Sister Gianna Marie explained that the younger grades "church-hop" to various churches in the area, view the creche scenes at the University of Notre Dame or spend a day at the convent of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Mishawaka, the order to which she and some of the other teachers at the school belong.

Older grades visit the Shrine of Christ's Passion in St. John, Indiana, Our Lady of Mount Carmel monastery in Munster or the Noll Building and University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne. The eighth-grade class makes a special trip for their last year of elementary school. They spend the day in Chicago at the Mission of Our Lady of the Angels packing groceries for needy families, then visit the Maximilian Kolbe Shrine in Marytown, Illinois.

"They've been learning about Auschwitz all through their junior high curriculum, so that's a neat experience for them," she shared. "The pilgrimage program has been very successful."

New to St. Matthew this year is Mission Fridays, a program that Sister Gianna Marie said "has been in my mind for a while, but this year it all came together with the right people and the right places." On Fridays, grades five through eight finish their typical lessons by lunchtime and are then divided into four groups by gender and grade level. These groups then complete two of four stations per week: adoration, youth ministry, learning life skills and career planning.

Connecting students with the saints comes around again in the career stations. "We learn careers through them," Sister Gianna Marie said. "For example, St. Matthew — they'll learn how to make a budget, we'll maybe have a parent who's an accountant come give a talk about their career. The kids love it."

Fridays at St. Matthew end with all-school devotions. Younger students spend time in adoration in the morning, and in the afternoon Father Terry Fisher, rector of St. Matthew Parish, leads the entire school body in benediction. On first Fridays, students recite the rosary together and pray the Stations of the Cross during Lent.

Father Fisher concelebrated Mass in the morning with Bishop Rhoades. He recalled the bishop's previous visit to the school about five years ago and expressed his excitement over this year's visit.

"It's always good to introduce the kids to the bishop," he remarked. "They see him from afar when he's here for Mass on Sundays, but they don't get up close to him. It's a little different; it's so much nicer for them to see who he is, up close and personal. It's always an honor to have him here, because he really cares so much about the school."

# Apostles and saints recalled during pastoral visit to St. Matthew Cathedral School



Photos by Jennifer Barton

**Above:** While on a pastoral visit to St. Matthew Cathedral School in South Bend Sept. 21, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades gives a special blessing for the feast of an Apostle. Concelebrating the Mass is, at left, Father Terry Fisher.

**Bishop Rhoades addresses a third-grade student in Gisella Mancini's class.**



Students make the Sign of the Cross before reciting the guardian angel prayer with Bishop Rhoades in the first-grade classroom.



In Susan Richter's seventh-grade class, Bishop Rhoades writes the Italian phrase "Verso Alto" on the board before teaching the students about Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati.



Kindergarten students were eager to meet the bishop and show him the cross artwork they had made.



Bishop Rhoades, St. Matthew Cathedral School principal Sister Gianna Marie Webber and Father Fisher pose in front of a reproduction of Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio's painting, "The Calling of St. Matthew," before heading out on a tour of the school's classrooms.



CNS photo/Vincenzo Pinto, Reuters pool

Young people from Portugal are pictured with the World Youth Day cross and their country's national flag following the cross' handover from their Panamanian peers at the end of Pope Francis' Mass Nov. 22, 2020. Pope Francis chose several verses that reflect on the call to "arise" and "stand up" as the themes for World Youth Day 2020-22 in dioceses around the world, leading up to the international gathering in Lisbon, Portugal, in 2023.

## Be prophets of 'hope-filled future,' pope tells young people

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The world needs prophets and true witnesses of hope in a time of uncertainty and trial, Pope Francis told Catholic young people.

In his message for World Youth Day 2021, which will be celebrated at a diocesan level Nov. 21, the feast of Christ the King, the pope said the experiences wrought by the pandemic not only brought to light the problems plaguing the world, they also were an opportunity for many, especially young people, to help save lives and sow "the seeds of hope."

"If our world is to arise, it needs your strength, your enthusiasm, your passion," he said.

The message, released by the Vatican Sept. 27, centered on a verse from the Acts of the Apostles: "Stand up. I appoint you as a witness of what you have seen."

Pope Francis chose several verses that reflect on the call to "arise" and "stand up" as the themes for World Youth Day 2020-22 in dioceses around the world, leading up to the international gathering in Lisbon, Portugal, in 2023.

The question asked by St. Paul -- who was known as Saul at the time -- to Jesus on the road to Damascus, "Who are you, Lord," is not just a question, but a prayer that young men and women today must ask Christ, the pope said.

*"If our world is to arise, it needs your strength, your enthusiasm, your passion."*

— Pope Francis, Message for World Youth Day 2021

"Prayer means talking directly with Jesus, even though our heart may still be confused and our mind full of doubts or even contempt for Christ and Christians," the pope said. "I pray that every young person, in the depths of his or her heart, will eventually ask the question: 'Who are you, Lord?'"

Christ's response to Saul, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," was a profound response that revealed to the future apostle that he had already encountered Jesus in the Christians he persecuted, the pope said.

This revelation, he continued, is also a word for Christians today who proclaim, "'Jesus, yes, the Church, no!'" as if one could be an alternative to the other."

"One cannot know Jesus if one does not know the Church. One cannot know Jesus apart from the brothers and sisters in his community. We cannot call ourselves fully Christian unless we experience faith's ecclesial dimension," the pope explained.

When blinded after his encounter with Christ, Saul's

"certainties and pride dissipate," which serves as a reminder for Christians today to be humble and to be aware of one's own limitations, he said. "Those who are convinced that they know everything about themselves, other persons and even religious truths, will find it hard to encounter Christ."

He also warned that pride can also lead young people to lose themselves "in fighting meaningless and even violent battles" that may have begun as fights to uphold just causes, but "once carried to extremes, turn into destructive ideologies."

"How many young people today inspired, perhaps driven, by political or religious convictions, end up becoming instruments of violence and destruction in the lives of many others!" the pope wrote. "Some, moving with ease in the digital world, use virtual reality and social networks as a new battlefield, unscrupulously employing the weapon of fake news to spread venom and to wipe out their adversaries."

Pope Francis encouraged

young people to learn from St. Paul, a once scrupulous follower of the law who, despite his past

persecution of Christians, was entrusted by God with spreading his word.

"Today Christ speaks to you the same words that he spoke to Paul," the pope said. "Arise! Do not remain downcast or caught up in yourself: a mission awaits you! You, too, can testify to what Jesus has begun to accomplish in your lives."



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October 2021

# RESPECT LIFE MONTH

*St. Joseph, defender of life, pray for us!*



## What do you do with a gift?

BY MELANIE LYON

If God offered you a gift but you could only keep it for a little while, would you take it?

For Mike and Jess Witous, the answer is a resounding 'yes.'

When they conceived their second child last year, Mike and Jess knew there was a chance they would only have their baby for a little while.

The couple has a form of dwarfism known as achondroplasia. Their children have a 25% chance of having a terminal form of that condition, where typically babies live for hours to a couple of days.

They opted to not undergo genetic testing. The results didn't matter. They were going to give their baby a shot no matter what.

Their little girl was born with the fatal condition, known as Double Dominance dwarfism. They named her Margot (a form of Margaret) which means "pearl" or "rare." They only learned later that St. Margaret of Costello is not only the patron saint of the pro-life movement and those with disabilities, but she also had a form of dwarfism.

Margot miraculously lived for two and a half months. Her life may save many more lives in the future because doctors were able to study her. Because termination of such children is so frequent, there is very little research available.

The team at St. Joseph Health System gave Margot unparalleled care. They never pressured

the couple to terminate and they fought hard for Margot's health.

Msgr. William Schooler of St. Pius was able to baptize and confirm the little girl in the neonatal intensive care unit despite the pandemic.

Mike and Jess brought Margot home from the hospital for the last three weeks of her life.

"Margot taught us a lot," Jess said. "She was a fighter. She taught us that we are not in control, and to appreciate the little things."

They hope Margot's story encourages other couples facing difficult prenatal diagnoses to choose life.

"I can't imagine not getting to hold Margot," Jess said. "Or kiss her. Or tell her I loved her." The couple agrees choosing life made it easier for them both to heal. It gave them closure.

"Why make life and death decisions for your children when you can choose life?" Mike said.

"She was a gift," Jess summarized. "It was gift to have her. We're so grateful our world had the precious gift of Margot for

even a little while."

There is life-affirming support available in the local community for anyone who has received a similar prenatal diagnosis. Reach out to Lisa Everett at [leverett@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:leverett@diocesefwsb.org), or for more information on Miriam's Blessing ministry, visit [diocesefwsb.org/miriams-blessing/](http://diocesefwsb.org/miriams-blessing/).

**If God offered you a gift but you could only keep it for a little while, would you take it? The Mike and Jess Witous family said "yes." Knowing there was a chance their second child could be born with a terminal form of dwarfism, they carried her to term. Margot died from the condition after 2-1/2 months of life.**



Right to Life Michiana



*Welcoming Dr. Emily Krach, D.O.  
to our Credo Family  
Joining us September 2021!*




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- Dr. Emily M. Krach, DO
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## The lethal tenderness of the death doctors

By the time Dr. Jack Kevorkian was put in prison for second-degree murder, he had helped an estimated 130 patients kill themselves.

The first person he “helped” was an Oregon teacher suffering from Alzheimer’s disease. It was hardly “death with dignity.” With a suicide machine he had rigged up inside his rusty Volkswagen van, he enabled Janet Adkins to take her life.

“My ultimate aim is to make euthanasia a positive experience,” he told the press. Despite being put on trial repeatedly, he usually won acquittal. His lawyer, The New York Times 2011 obituary recounted, “based his winning defense on compassion and mercy,” the man called Dr. Death had reportedly shown his patients.

The legal strategy brought to mind the acerbic words of Father Smith in Walker Percy’s final novel “The Thanatos Syndrome.”

“Do you know where tenderness always leads?” Father Smith asks. “To the gas chamber. ... Tenderness is the first disguise of the murderer.”

The world has grown exceedingly tender since Kevorkian’s campaign for death. Oregon legalized “physician-assisted suicide” 25 years ago, but now eight more states and the District of Columbia have followed suit. California just amended its law to allow people only a two-day waiting period when it had originally been 15 days, and even allowing the two days to be waived, ironically, if death is imminent.

Euthanasia, the active kill-

ing of the “patient” by a “doctor” (I put these words in quotes because neither seems appropriate in this context) is today allowed in Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Spain — all countries with significant Catholic populations.

Now England is considering allowing the same. In a remarkable presentation before members of Parliament, doctors from Oregon, Canada — where euthanasia is also legal — and Belgium tried to warn the English lawmakers that however carefully they craft the law, it will inevitably be amended and made more available.

“It is not a slippery slope, it is a logical progression,” said Canada’s Dr. Leonie Herx, as reported by Catholic News Service.

Herx summed up the grim finances of euthanasia: “Administering death is cheaper and easier than providing care, and it will quickly become the solution for any form of human suffering.” Tenderness leads to the gas chamber.

Countries that have legalized euthanasia, the doctors said, inevitably broaden the conditions that qualify, with the death lobby seeking permission for the mentally ill, handicapped and even children to opt for it.

The doctors told the politicians that euthanasia or assisted suicide end up damaging palliative care and putting enormous burdens both on doctors and on those who feel pressured to end their lives. “I would call it elder abuse and disability abuse,” said an Oregon doctor. “It is substan-



### AMID THE FRAY

GREG ERLANDSON

“dard care and it discriminates.”

“Once the door of assisted suicide/euthanasia opens, it will always open more,” warned Timothy Devos, a Belgian doctor.

Pope Francis recently asked two questions about abortion that apply equally to assisted suicide and euthanasia: “Is it right to eliminate a human life to resolve a problem?” “Is it right to hire a hitman to resolve a problem?”

The lethal tenderness of euthanasia turns doctors into assassins and human beings into burdens to be disposed of.

The disability rights organization Not Dead Yet, which has fiercely opposed euthanasia and assisted suicide laws, sums up succinctly what the Church advocates as well: “Regardless of our abilities or disabilities, none of us should feel that we have to die to have dignity, that we have to die to be relieved of pain, or that we should die to stop burdening our families or society.”

Greg Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at [gerlandson@catholicnews.com](mailto:gerlandson@catholicnews.com).

## A meditation on time from an old hymn

My blog is usually posted in the evening at about 21:00 (9:00 PM) U.S. Eastern Time. But in Sydney, Australia, it is 1 in the afternoon of the following day. As I prepare for bed, they are eating lunch on a day that has not even begun for me. And proceeding farther west from there, in the Philippines and Japan the afternoon is winding down and the workday is coming to an end.

Time. What could be simpler than for me to look at the clock and say that it is, say, 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 17? But on the other hand, what could be more mysterious? Time is a human reckoning of a mysterious passage.

And yet the mystery is also beautiful. At any given time, some people are asleep in the night, while others are at midday. There is a wonderful verse in an old English hymn, “The Day Thou Gavest, Lord, is Ended” that says,

The sun that bids us rest is waking  
Our brethren ‘neath the western sky,  
And hour by hour fresh lips are making  
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.

Here are two other beautiful verses from the same hymn:

We thank Thee that thy Church  
unsleeping,  
While earth rolls onward into light,



### COMMUNITY IN MISSION

MSGR. CHARLES POPE

Through all the world her watch is keeping,  
And rests not now by day or night.  
As o’er each continent and island,  
The dawn leads on another day,  
The voice of prayer is never silent,  
nor dies the strain of praise away.

Magnificent lines. The hymn contains a beautiful and poetic description of the Church: always praising, always singing, always at worship. Although some are asleep, the praises continue. One of the Psalms says, “Let the name of the Lord be praised, both now and forevermore. From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is to be praised. The Lord is exalted over all the nations.” (Psalm 113:2-4) The praises never end, for the sun is always rising somewhere even as it is setting somewhere else.

Malachi, prophesying the glory of the Mass celebrated worldwide says, “My name will

POPE, page 13

## Marriage is a manifestation of the kingdom of God



### THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

### Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Mark 10:2-16

The Book of Genesis is the source of the first reading for this weekend. Among the first five books of the Bible, Genesis reveals great facts. God is the creator of all. He gives life.

God also created humanity, in the genders of male and female. Further, it was God’s will that the two genders, united in one male and one female, complement each other and live with each other.

The Scriptures at times are accused of belittling women. Certainly, the Scriptures were all developed within varying cul-

tural contexts. To an extent, they were influenced by these cultural contexts.

The culture surrounding the development of Genesis was not strictly Hebrew. Rather, it was enveloped by paganism. In this paganism, women were little better than animals.

Genesis, however, takes pains to declare the dignity of women as equal to that of men. This is the meaning of the story that Eve was created from Adam’s rib. Adam and Eve, man and woman, were one in their nature.

It was a revolutionary, fundamental basis for looking at both men and women. Both genders possess an equal dignity because all are created by God and infused with an eternal soul.

Finally, every person, regardless of everything else, holds the supreme dignity of being God’s own, God’s created beings, a physical, earthly sign of God.

This reading is a powerful testament to the historic Jewish and Christian concept of marriage. Ordained by God, marriage should never be defiled by exploitation, selfishness or insincerity.

For its second reading, the Church offers us a passage from the Letter to the Hebrews that also reaffirms the dignity of each human.

According to the reading, humans who love God and are faithful to God one day will rejoice in His presence. They will be with God. The key to attaining a place in God’s presence is Jesus.

Because Jesus is human as well as God, Jesus loves all people as brothers and sisters.

St. Mark’s Gospel provides the third reading. Its question centers upon the legality before God of divorce itself, not the grounds for divorce.

Often it is assumed that this question put to Jesus opened an entirely new debate, and that in replying, Jesus set aside the Law of Moses.

In fact, many debated the true meaning of the Law of Moses. By settling the question, by ending the discussion, Jesus appeared in the role of the divinely constituted and divinely empowered representative of God the Father.

He also put marriage in its proper context. Marriage is God’s

creation, subject to God’s plan. Of course, it involves individual commitments and all the variables of living lives together.

It hopefully provides spouses with opportunities to be better Christians, worthy of their dignity as children of God.

In the same passage, though on another occasion, Jesus blessed the children. Like children everywhere and always, these children were innocent and vulnerable, but with great potential, not simply “to succeed” in this life but to live with God in the eternal life.

### Reflection

Most of the time, weddings are great events. Festivities precede the wedding itself, and they can be many and elaborate.

In 2004, Pope St. John Paul II beatified the last Austrian emperor and Hungarian king Karl I, for whom, incidentally, the pope was named.

Karl was married when he was the heir to the thrones of Austria and Hungary. Everyone was celebrating. He and his fiancée, who became the Empress

Zita, interrupted their celebrating to make spiritual retreats.

They said that retreats would cause them to focus on their chief responsibilities as husband and wife, helping each other to be true disciples.

Being created by God destines every human for heaven. Spouses display the greatest love when they assist each other in reaching eternal life.

### READINGS

**Sunday:** Gn 2:18-24 Ps 128:1-6

Heb 2:9-11 Mk 10:2-16

**Monday:** Jon 1:1\_2:2, 11 (Ps) Jon 2:3-5, 8 Lk 10:25-37

**Tuesday:** Jon 3:1-10 Ps 130:1b-4b, 7-8 Lk 10:38-42

**Wednesday:** Jon 4:1-11 Ps 86:3-6, 9-10 Lk 11:1-4

**Thursday:** Mal 3:13-20b Ps 1:1-4, 6 Lk 11:5-13

**Friday:** J1 1:13-15; 2:1-2 Ps 9:2-3, 6, 8-9, 16 Lk 11:15-26

**Saturday:** J1 4:12-21 Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 Lk 11:27-28

# SOS for catechists in this pandemic

Nearly 11 million job opportunities remain unfilled in the United States of America. Take a stroll through downtown in your city or town; maybe walk by a small business or a factory. The ubiquitous "Help Wanted" sign is everywhere.

Where are the workers? Why are people not flocking to fill these job opportunities? Analysts say that some people are not ready to return to their jobs. Others are reinventing themselves to respond better to the demands of a new economy. Others have safety concerns associated with the pandemic.

A version of this larger phenomenon seems to be unfolding in our own Catholic catechetical world. We cannot ignore it. I first noticed this when the director of religious education in my multicultural parish shared that she was struggling to recruit catechists for this year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been ruthless on catechetical programs at all levels. I contacted friends who oversee catechetical programs in dioceses and parishes elsewhere to learn how they were doing. I heard similar stories from leaders in Texas, Florida, California, Illinois, Maryland, Ohio and Washington, among other states.

Catechetical leaders have been engaged in an exercise of managerial gymnastics to keep their programs running and thus offer faith formation to Catholics of all ages: in-person meetings with small groups, virtual sessions, self-guided programs, hybrid initiatives, no programs at all, act as if nothing is happening, etc. Name it.

## POPE, from page 12

be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations," says the Lord Almighty." (Mal 1:11) At any given time, Mass is surely being offered somewhere on this earth. The Liturgy of the Hours, too, always uttering forth from the lips of the faithful

The successes and struggles of catechetical programs seldom make the headlines compared to, say, those of Catholic schools. Remember that for every Catholic young person in a Catholic school, two are enrolled in parish catechetical programs.

Catechetical leaders often lack the resources and the infrastructure that could make their efforts yield better fruits. In fact, it is scandalous that in recent decades many dioceses and parishes have been dramatically reducing, even eliminating, budgets for catechetical offices and programs.

Catholic catechetical leaders largely run bare-bone operations. Nearly every catechetical program relies heavily on small armies of volunteers, mostly women, under the helm of one or two leaders. Lots of goodwill, for certain, but not enough resources and, sometimes, not enough support and appreciation.

The pandemic has scared thousands of catechists away. Thousands more remain apprehensive about safety measures and sometimes about being overwhelmed as their numbers dwindle.

Who can blame them? Many are older people; others take care of frail relatives at home; others are parents with children ineligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Vulnerability among our catechists is real.

The adverse effects of the pandemic upon our catechetical programs, their quality and the overall evangelizing efforts in our church may be irreversible if we don't do something. We need catechesis to make the headlines, locally and nationally, during

somewhere. Yes, in the mystery of time, this planet of ours is a place of perpetual praise. And our praises join the perpetual praises of heaven, for as the liturgy proclaims, in the words of the new translation, "And so, Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the host and Powers of heaven, as we sing the hymn of your glory, without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts ..."



## JOURNEYING TOGETHER

HOSFFMAN OSPINO

this time of pandemic.

Usually in September and October, church bulletins call for new catechists — all volunteers. The call does not seem to be attracting the desired response these days. Where are the catechists? They are there, ready to respond. However, they seem to want more than the usual.

Catechists need training to share their faith with new technologies and using fresher pedagogies. With this training, they will feel more comfortable serving in our programs while safeguarding their health and that of their loved ones. They want quality resources and learn new ways of passing on the faith effectively. They deserve support and affirmation.

We must invest amply in catechetical programs. Catechists may hold the key to keeping the faith among millions of Catholics at this historical moment. This is not the time to limit resources. If anything, it is a time to double, even triple, our investment in catechesis.

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

Yes, the mystery of time and our praises caught up in the ever-moving sweep of time. What St. Paul says to us as individuals is fulfilled by the worldwide Church. His advice is so simple and yet so profound. St. Paul says, "Pray always." (1 Thess 5:17)

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

# SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for October 3, 2021

Mark 10: 2-16

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B: A question about divorce. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

LAWFUL BEGINNING FEMALE MOTHER HOUSE ADULTERY ENTER	WRITE CREATION REASON BE JOINED MARRIES TOUCHED BLESSED	COMMANDMENT MALE SHALL LEAVE NO LONGER COMMITTS COME TO ME HANDS
---	---	--

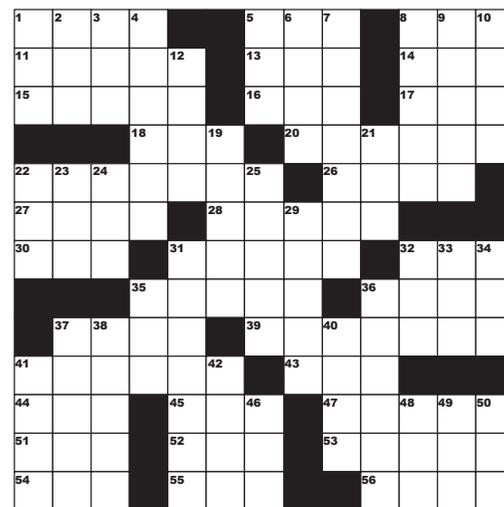
## MARRIAGE

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

# The CrossWord

October 3 and 10, 2021

- 53 Adam gave these to animals
- 54 Thief's hideout
- 55 Long-term memory
- 56 Void



- DOWN**
- 1 Central nervous system
  - 2 Electric shock
  - 3 Precedes an alias
  - 4 Pull back
  - 5 IOU part
  - 6 Soft cheese from Greece
  - 7 "Good \_\_\_\_\_"
  - 8 Thailand dwellers
  - 9 Grassy areas
  - 10 Horsefly
  - 12 Snack counter
  - 19 French "Mrs."
  - 21 Not hers
  - 22 Bullfight cheer
  - 23 Computer memory unit
  - 24 American Football Conference (abbr.)
  - 25 "Wreak \_\_\_\_\_"
  - 29 Rounded part
  - 31 \_\_\_\_\_ government
  - 32 \_\_\_\_\_ Lanka
  - 33 Pastry
  - 34 Easter month
  - 35 Tiny mark
  - 36 (2 wds) Adam
  - 37 Guess
  - 38 Constellation
  - 40 In the near future
  - 41 Spur
  - 42 Absorbed in prayer
  - 46 Wisdom is like a precious one
  - 48 Flightless bird
  - 49 Hair stuff
  - 50 American sign language

Readings: Gen 2:18-24; Heb 2:9-11; Mk 10:2-16 and Wis 7:7-11; Heb 4:12-13; Mk 10:17-30

- ACROSS**
- 1 Russian ruler
  - 5 Often poetically
  - 8 Tender loving care
  - 11 "Everything is \_\_\_\_\_ and exposed"
  - 13 Small
  - 14 Nickname for Henry
  - 15 Outer \_\_\_\_\_
  - 16 Terminal abbr.
  - 17 Reverence for God
  - 18 Shade tree
  - 20 Painful
  - 22 6th century B.C. prophet
  - 26 Serpent's voice
  - 27 Inherit eternal \_\_\_\_\_
  - 28 Small valleys
  - 30 And so forth
  - 31 Act of kindness
  - 32 Hotel
  - 35 Demobilize
  - 36 Journey
  - 37 "No one is \_\_\_\_\_ but God"
  - 39 Teller
  - 41 Type of snake
  - 43 Fish eggs
  - 44 French "yes"
  - 45 Cleaning cloth
  - 47 "I am the Alpha and the \_\_\_\_\_"
  - 51 Gone by
  - 52 Chimpanzee



## OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

FEAST: OCTOBER 7

Dominicans and local rosary confraternities began celebrating a feast honoring Our Lady of the Rosary in the 15th century. As Christian and Turkish forces met in battle in the Gulf of Lepanto (near Greece) on Oct. 7, 1571, Pope Pius V asked Mary to protect Catholic lands and Catholics to pray the rosary. The ensuing Christian victory was attributed to Our Lady of the Rosary. In 1572, the pope allowed some celebrations of Our Lady of Victory on the first Sunday in October; in 1573, the feast was changed to Our Lady of the Rosary, and in 1716, the feast became universal. The Oct. 7 date was fixed in 1913.

# God-centered nature documentary meets crowdfunding goal

BY MARK PATTISON

WASHINGTON (CNS) — It's full steam ahead for "The Riot and the Dance," a nature documentary series more God-centered than what host and executive producer Nathan "N.D." Wilson calls the typical nature show on television.

"I think He (God) is implicit in every single thing you ever see," Wilson said in a Sept. 22 phone interview with Catholic News Service before the crowdfunding goal of \$1 million was met five days ahead of schedule.

As for the typical nature fare on TV, "in their narration, His absence is implicit. His nonexistence is implicit," Wilson said. "They don't come out and say there is no God, but they don't acknowledge, they ignore His purpose and design completely. They treat all birds and animals as if it were all chaos."

It would have been chaos if "The Riot and the Dance" hadn't met its funding goal, said Wilson, who teaches at New St. Andrews College, a small Christian college in Moscow, Idaho.

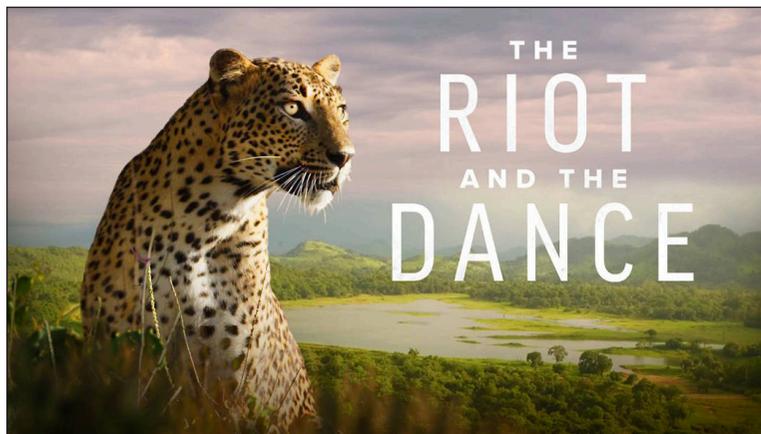
He thinks the campaign will get to \$1.5 million before the end of September. Even so, production is on a shoestring.

"I would love for Season 1 to end up in the eight-to-10-episode range," Wilson said. "In order to get to 10, we'll have spent around \$5 million," which happens to be the new funding goal without a new deadline.

Wilson said he gets his footage "with aggression and a lot of times by asking for forgiveness and not permission. One of the ways we can do it is we send crews out in very lean groups that can function like tourists, then we can license footage from them after the fact if they get good stuff."

He added, "That enables us to bypass, depending on where we are, some of permitting process. But one of the ways, we just have to be aggressive ... and put small crews in the field often." With that approach, "we're definitely out in the wild trusting God. That's one of the biggest things — for Him to give us what we need."

With this approach, Wilson and his skeleton crew got some great shots for the pilot episode



CNS photo/courtesy Carmel Communications

**This is the artwork for God-centered nature series "The Riot and the Dance." More information about the series and a trailer can be found online at [Angel.com/riot](http://Angel.com/riot).**

of humpback whales cavorting in Monterey Bay — even though the time of year had come for the whales to make their journey southward to Mexico.

"We thought, why not give it a shot and see what God gives us?" he said.

But the wait for a water bug to attack and kill its prey wasn't nearly as speedy.

"That took a while," he said, but it was in the pond where Wilson himself had played as a

child, so the expense of filming wasn't nearly as large. "Thus far, God has been very kind" in supplying animals he can film given his budget and schedule.

The mission of the team creating the series "is to teach our children to love God and nature," according to the project's crowdfunding site. "The beauties of this world are boundless. ... Connecting with nature draws us closer to God."

Wilson thinks he's got a

ready-made audience for "The Riot and the Dance," which — if all goes well — will make its streaming debut on the Angel Studios platform before the end of next year, before it is offered elsewhere.

Angel had commissioned some polling that found "66% of Americans watch nature documentaries, and 74% (of those who watch) are religious," he said.

"And so you look at numbers like that, you say currently, of the nature documentary consumer, 74% of them are receiving 0% of the faith-based nature documentary" Wilson explained. "Our audience is that 74%; if the other 26% want to watch it, that's OK, too."

God has given man dominion over all creation, so how has man been doing with it so far?

"I think not great," Wilson told CNS. "But there's ways in which there's nothing wrong, and there's ways in which we need to do so much better. We need to do better because we understand that we belong here, we're in charge and we're going to answer for how we tend to it. And to answer to God."

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

**Blessing of the animals**

**ANGOLA** — St. Anthony de Padua Parish, 700 W Maumee St., will have a blessing of the animals by Father Robert Showers, OFM Conv. and Father Bernard Zajdel, OFM Conv., Saturday, Oct. 2, from 11-11:30 a.m. underneath the portico of the church. There will be a prayer and a special blessing in honor of St. Francis of Assisi. Contact Patti Webster at 260-665-2259.

**Sensory-friendly Masses planned**

**FORT WAYNE** — A sensory-friendly Mass will be Tuesday, Oct. 5, first Tuesday of the

month, at 6 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, 10700 Aboite Center Rd. Livestream: [facebook.com/belongingFWSB](http://facebook.com/belongingFWSB). A sensory-friendly Mass will be celebrated on Friday, Oct. 8, second Friday of the month, at 5:45 p.m. at St. John the Baptist Church, 4500 Fairfield Ave. Contact Allison Sturm at 260-399-1452.

**Trivia night**

**COLUMBIA CITY** — A night of exciting trivia and games will be Saturday, Oct. 9, from 6-8 p.m. at St. Paul of the Cross, 315 S Line St. Prizes for trivia winners, best-decorated table, most spirited table, random prizes, best celebrity look-alike, games and more! Crock pots are welcome. Doors open at 6 p.m. and trivia begins

at 6:30 p.m. Cost: \$100/team of 10 or \$15/person. Contact Stephanie Hamilton at 260-610-3777 or [youthministry@saint-paulcc.org](mailto:youthministry@saint-paulcc.org).

**Retreat on Penance, Conversion and the Message of Fatima**

**HUNTINGTON** — A retreat on penance, conversion and the Message of Fatima with Father Joseph Tuscan, OFM Cap, as retreat master will be at St. Felix Catholic Center, 1280 Hitzfield St., Wednesday, Oct. 13. There will be daily Mass, prayer, confessions, talks, meals and free time for walking the retreat center grounds. Cost: \$75 or \$210 depending on commuter or overnight option. Open to all desiring an immersion in

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October 3 and 10, 2021



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## REST IN PEACE

**Bristol**

Robert Richardson, 91, St. Mary of the Annunciation

**Fort Wayne**

Richard Anderson, 57, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Karl E. Baatz, 82, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

James Falloon, 81, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

David Hoevel, 82, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Samuel J. Talarico, 91, St. Jude

Gary Walker, 63, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Edward Woehner, 92, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

**Granger**

Christopher C. Garboden, 52, St. Pius X

Richard V. Macys, 51, St. Pius X

**Huntington**

Carolyn J. Ruppert, 80, SS. Peter and Paul

**South Bend**

Loretta Ciesielski, 91, St. Adalbert

Joseph G. Goralski, 93, St. Casimir

Lillian Riffel, 78, Holy Family

Mary Ann Wood, 87, Holy Family

**Wabash**

Georgia Hanneken, 96, St. Bernard

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**St. John the Baptist parish festival**  
**FORT WAYNE** — The St. John the Baptist parish festival is Saturday, Oct. 16 at the church,

4500 Fairfield Ave. Fun for the whole family from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. featuring games, bounce houses, wagon rides, concessions and more. Food trucks from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Participants 21 and older may stay for Casino Night and live music from 7:30-10:30 p.m. Contact AnnMarie Hall at 260-744-4393.

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# 'We all can do something' to foster culture of life, love, says archbishop

LINCOLN, Neb. (CNS) — The chairman of the U.S. bishops' pro-life committee told a Nebraska pro-life conference that "there is legitimate reason to hope" the U.S. Supreme Court may allow states "more authority to protect the lives of unborn children."

"We are at a moment of great promise and opportunity in our efforts to rebuild a culture of life in our society," Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, said in an evening keynote address Sept. 17 at the conference in Lincoln.

On Dec. 1, the high court will hear oral arguments in an appeal from Mississippi to keep its ban on abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy, and supporters of the law are urging the court to reexamine its previous abortion rulings.

If the nation's high court upholds the Mississippi state law, it could overturn the court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade* that legalized abortion nationwide. The issue would return to the jurisdiction of the states, as was the case before *Roe*.

While there is reason for hope, at the same time "advocates of abortion are more extreme in their demands," Archbishop Naumann said.

"They celebrate abortion as a right," he added. "They are not satisfied with abortion as a choice. They seek to compel doctors, nurses, Catholic hospitals to participate in abortion. They want to force every taxpayer to fund abortion."

So "the stakes are high," he said. "Our nation and our Church need all of us to be fully engaged with fostering a culture of life and building a civilization of love."

No one can do this alone, "but as Christians we are never on our own," Archbishop Naumann said. "We need to be praying and calling upon the Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds and give

courage to our hearts."

"We all can do something or somethings," he continued. "We can and must pray. We must make our families sanctuaries of life where true love is experienced and virtues are cultivated."

"The most important pro-life education does not happen at big events, but person to person through conversations over the kitchen table or the backyard fence, conversations in the workplace or the soccer field sideline."

Archbishop Naumann, who is in his third year as chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, addressed a number of issues related to abortion in his keynote address, including Communion being received by Catholic politicians who support legal abortion.

He discussed Pope Francis' remarks on politicians, abortion and the Eucharist made during his return home after his trip to Hungary and Slovakia. The Kansas archbishop also explained why the U.S. bishops are focusing on the Eucharist with a planned document and a National Eucharistic Revival initiative.

This revival idea was prompted in part by a 2019 Pew Research study that found 69% of Catholics don't believe the Church's teaching that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist.

The archbishop talked about a "cultural confusion" that allows abortion and gender reassignment, tolerates a "pornography pandemic" and rejects traditional marriage. This confusion, he said, "has enveloped our society in recent years" and has "resulted in a distressing and even ominous cloud of darkness in our nation."

"Our government permits the killing of close to a million of our own children annually with our current president vowing to place the full weight of the federal government to preserve the



CNS photo/Emily Elconin, Reuters

**Pro-life advocates in Warren, Mich., collect new and gently-used items for babies and their mothers Oct. 16.**

right to kill children," he said, referring to President Joe Biden, a Catholic, and his calls to codify *Roe v. Wade* in federal law.

"Some deny the biological reality of their gender and assert gender is just a social construct," the archbishop said. "We are confused about something so fundamental as the nature of marriage."

"We are facing a pornography pandemic that attempts to addict children to alluring explicit visual sexual content at ages when they are ill-equipped and defenseless to resist, while at the same time there are forces that want to classify teaching chastity and allied virtues as hate crimes. Evil is called good and good is portrayed as evil."

But he urged Catholics "not to be intimidated" by such "forces of darkness," but "to continue to proclaim the truth of God's amazing love with both boldness and tenderness," especially to those who do not share their respect for life.

"Develop messages that will attract the attention of those who identify as pro-choice and surprise them with the irresistible beauty of the truth of God's love and mercy revealed in Jesus," he explained.

Regarding Catholic politicians who support legal abortion, he quoted Pope Francis as saying in an interview during his flight back to Rome that "Communion is for those who are in community and politicians who support abortion are outside of the community."

"However, he also said that in these cases, it's a pastoral matter that must be addressed by the individual's pastor," Archbishop Naumann said.

He agreed that bishops and priests "must act as pastors not as politicians" in these cases.

"However, part of being a good pastor is the willingness to have difficult conversations with individuals for their own spiritual welfare and the welfare of others," he said. "A pastor has an obligation to have a conversation with someone that is acting in a very public way contrary to fundamental moral teachings of the Church."

He added, "We must try to help them understand the seriousness of what they are doing and encourage them to reconsider their reasoning and change their actions."

But if after a period "of honest dialogue" and time for them

"to reflect and to reconsider" their stand and these individuals "remain obstinate in their objectively immoral actions," they should no longer present themselves for holy Communion, he said, adding that "integrity demands" this.

He said Catholics in public life "have the opportunity both to positively and negatively influence the understanding by others of our Catholic faith. When their public actions conflict with fundamental Catholic moral teaching, they confuse and mislead many people both within and outside the Church."

The archbishop also emphasized that public policy "is just one element" of the Catholic Church's pro-life pastoral plan and that whatever happens with regard to *Roe*, "the need to surround with love those considering abortion remains of paramount importance."

One such effort is an initiative launched by the bishops' pro-life committee called Walking with Moms in Need.

He also pointed to Project Rachel, a healing ministry for "those who have been involved in abortion and now deeply regret it." The archbishop said he has been involved in this ministry since 1984.

Archbishop Naumann said the U.S. bishops' planned document on the Eucharist will address topics such as the Real Presence, eucharistic consistency, and the unity, beauty and identity of the Eucharist as the "fount and apex of the whole Christian life."

The aim of this document, now being drafted, and a eucharistic revival with parish and diocesan events is "to motivate Catholics to ponder the great miracle that occurs at each and every Mass, when the Lord of lords and King of kings makes himself present to us under the humble appearance of unleavened bread and wine," he said.

project rachel

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