

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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BY JENNIFER BARTON

An exceptional event took place Oct. 3: Anne Therese Stephens of Fort Wayne gave her life to Christ as the second consecrated virgin in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades presided over the Mass of Consecration and accepted her vows to a life of perpetual virginity at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

As the candidate entered a bridal union with Christ, several aspects of the consecration ceremony resembled a traditional wedding. She chose to wear a white wedding dress, "guided by the principle that our Lord is the king of kings," she said.

The candidate was accompanied by two women; her sister Mary Clare Stephens, who is currently discerning the consecrated life, and Jessica Hayes, who was consecrated in the same manner in 2015.

Hayes reported that the first time she met with Anne Therese, she thought it was about her desired to better understand the life her sister Mary Clare was considering. Hayes had not realized Anne Therese was also discerning consecrated life.

Several members of the Stephens family assisted in the liturgy: her brothers, Joseph and Peter, served as lectors; her parents, Michael and Jean, brought up the gifts, and her sisters Mary Clare, Bernadette and Reginamarie sang the offertory meditations.

Once the Gospel was proclaimed, Anne Therese came before the bishop in front of the altar with a lighted candle. This candle represents the wise virgins in the Gospel who made ready their lamps in preparation for the coming of the bridegroom.

Bishop Rhoades delivered his homily seated before the altar, in accordance with the prescribed rite for consecration to a life of



Jennifer Barton

Anne Therese Stephens of Fort Wayne kneels as Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades says the prayer of consecration over her at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Oct. 3. Stephens became the second consecrated virgin in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, a separate vocation from the religious life.

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Columbia City pastor added to credibly accused list

BY JODI MARLIN AND
JENNIFER BARTON

Following an allegation of misconduct received Sept. 19 against St. Paul of the Cross pastor Father David Huneck, Father Huneck has resigned from his position at the parish and from his role as co-chaplain of Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne.

Due to the credibility of the allegation — as determined by the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend — Father Huneck has been suspended from all public priestly ministry as a precautionary measure. His name has also been added to a public diocesan list of clergy who have been credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor.

According to a statement issued by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Sept. 28, on Sept. 19 the diocese became aware of allegations that Father Huneck, a priest of the diocese for three years, had engaged in sexual misconduct and that one of the two victims was a minor. Consistent with diocesan policy, the diocese immediately notified the Department of Child Services of the allegations and asked that they be forwarded to the Columbia City Police Department. A criminal investigation is underway.

'No red flags'

At a news conference that took place at the diocesan chancery Sept. 28, Bishop Rhoades said he was disturbed and disappointed by the fact that the alleged misconduct was recent and that it had been committed by a priest who had not been at his ministry for a comparatively long period of time.

"It's devastating to me. After all that's happened in the Church, the rigorous screening that we do before accepting seminarians, the formation they receive in celibate chastity in the seminary ... I'd say that's why it is was such a shock to me," he told reporters.

Extensive psychological tests are conducted during the process of applying to seminary, and ongoing formation during seminary has been overwhelmingly successful giving future priests the spiritual and physical ability to live a celibate and chaste life. But seminarians and priests are not removed from temptation and sin, he acknowledged.

"I can't really think of anything we could have done differently. There were no red flags. It's extremely troubling."

The allegations against Father Huneck constitute the first "active" case of potential sexual misconduct by a priest for Bishop Rhoades. In his 16 years as a bishop, all previous allegations involved incidents that had happened decades earlier, he said.

"Sexual abuse or misconduct by a priest hurts and causes confusion for victims, their families, and the entire Church. We have worked so hard here in our diocese to strengthen a safe environment in our Church for young people and will continue to do so. We will also continue to do our best to provide healing and hope to victims ... the care of the victims is my No. 1 priority."

Diocesan policy is to conduct a preliminary investigation of allegations of sexual misconduct. That investigation revealed that one of the alleged victims was a minor at the time, prompting a report to be made to the Indiana Department of Child Services. The diocese also requested that the department report the incident to Columbia City Police.

A great effort has been made, the bishop said, to reach out to



Photos by Jennifer Barton

Above, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades speaks to reporters Sept. 28 at the Archbishop Noll Catholic Center in Fort Wayne following disclosure of a credible allegation of sexual abuse by a priest of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.



At a Mass celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Oct. 4 at St. Paul of the Cross, concelebrant Father José Arroyo Acevedo was presented as administrator of the Columbia City parish.

both victims and to others who are angry, confused and saddened by the allegations. "My heart goes out the victims and the communities that are deeply affected by this tragedy, which was a shock to us all," he said.

"My heart also goes out to our faithful and devoted priests, who are also deeply hurt in these situations."

A complete outline of the policies and procedures the diocese follows after an allegation of misconduct is made can be found on the diocesan website, diocesefwsb.org/pastoral-care/. The diocese will also reach out to the Fort Wayne parishes at which the priest served as a parochial vicar and, prior to ordination, as a pastoral assistant.

"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. I am committed to purifying this scourge,"

the Sept. 28 statement said.

"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," it concluded.

To report an allegation of abuse, contact Mary Glowaski, victim's assistance coordinator and assistant to the bishop in pastoral care, at mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org or 260-399-1458.

'Rebuild my house'

During a Mass celebrated at St. Paul of the Cross Oct. 4, Bishop Rhoades introduced an administrator for the parish: Father José Arroyo Acevedo, who has ordained a priest in 2019 and has most recently been serving as a missionary in his native Puerto Rico.

"I'm excited to be part of this healing process here at St. Paul of the Cross," he told the many parishioners present. "I love St. Francis and his role of wanting

to rebuild the Church, and I think that's my role — to know you, to love you and to serve you. That's what I'm here for.

The evening Mass was really a Mass of healing, the bishop said, "because when something happens like sexual misconduct by clergy, it hurts a lot of people. First of all, the victims. But also, it hurts others, including parishioners. Therefore, it's important that we gather together in prayer."

"I believe that we're called to trust in the Lord," added Father Arroyo Acevedo. "I think that's the most important thing, to trust in the Lord. He leads us, He has called us to existence, He loves us dearly and He wants us to just trust in Him like children trust in their loving parents."

The feast of St. Francis of Assisi was celebrated the same day and was the focus of Bishop Rhoades' homily.

"Jesus spoke to him from the crucifix when he was in prayer and said, 'Rebuild my house,'" he told worshippers. "That's so important, because the Church is always in need of reform and renewal. St. Francis so many centuries ago helped to rebuild the Church at that time, in the 13th century.

"The other thing is St. Francis received the wounds of Jesus, called the stigmata. And it's through the wounds of Jesus that we're healed. It's appropriate to look at that. I think in our own faith that we are healed by the wounds of Jesus, which are now glorious wounds. And my hope and prayer for this parish is that by the wounds of Jesus the people, the parishioners, will be healed and will be able to move forward with hope."

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virginity. In his homily, he related the story of another young woman named Anne-Therese, born in France 223 years ago, who professed vows of a consecrated life and came to the isolated woodlands of Indiana to establish schools. Her religious name is St. Mother Theodore Guerin.

The date of Anne Therese's consecration coincided with the feast day of the Indiana saint.

"On this feast of St. Theodore Guerin, another Anne Therese resolves to follow Christ in a life of perfect chastity," Bishop Rhoades stated. "The Church consecrates her today to a life of virginity. Mother Theodore was espoused to Christ as a nun. Anne Therese will be espoused to Christ today as a woman living in the world. She does so under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit."

He called her vocation, "a gift to the Church, a surpassing sign of the Church's love for Christ."

Reciting words from the Roman Pontifical, he continued: "God has called Anne Therese to be more closely united to Himself and to be dedicated to the service of the Church. Her consecration is a call to greater fervor in spreading the Kingdom of God and in giving to the world the spirit of Christ. We look forward to the good she will accomplish by her prayers and good works, and the abundant blessings she will obtain from God for holy Church, for human society and for her family."

Addressing Anne Therese, he continued to read from the Pontifical.

"The life you seek to follow has its home in heaven. God himself is its source," he said. "Our Lord Himself taught us the high calling of such a life, consecrated to God and chosen for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven."

"Make your whole life reflect your vocation and your dignity. Our holy mother the Church sees in you a chosen company within the flock of Christ. Never forget that you are given over entirely to the service of the Church and of all your brothers and sisters," he continued.

"Your joy and your crown, even here on earth, will be Christ, the Son of the Virgin and the Bridegroom of virgins. He will call you to His presence and into His Kingdom, where you will sing a new song as you follow the Lamb of God wherever he leads you."

Anne Therese presented herself before the bishop to demonstrate her dedication to a state of perpetual virginity. The Litany of Supplication was sung while Anne Therese laid prostrate before the altar in a sign of dying to self.

Unique to the ceremony is the prayer of consecration, which sealed Anne Therese's new vocation. She was then presented with a veil to symbolize her new life as a bride of Christ in service of the Church.



Photos by Jennifer Barton

Laying prostrate before the altar, Anne Therese Stephens gives her life to Christ in a visible sign of surrender to the will of God while Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and those present sing the Litany of Supplication during a Mass Oct. 3.



A veil is placed on Stephens, signifying that she belongs to the Lord alone.

Another similarity to a wedding is the presentation of the ring, which Bishop Rhoades bestowed upon Anne Therese, again to mark her union with Christ and a reminder to "keep unstained fidelity to your Bridegroom." She was given a book of the Liturgy of the Hours to maintain a strong and dedicated prayer life.

At the close of the Mass, Bishop Rhoades bestowed a blessing upon Anne Therese. Because Mary serves as the greatest example of perfect vir-

ginity in the Catholic faith, the "Ave Maria" was sung as all assembled faced the cathedral's central stained-glass window that depicts the Immaculate Conception.

Anne Therese felt a personal theme for her special day was her devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, she said. "I think one thing that draws me to the Sacred Heart is the physical element of this."

She chose the artwork for the worship aids, as well as for the bishop's chasuble and miter for the occasion. All were adorned with a beautiful image of the Sacred Heart. Through this image, she said, "We can see His love beating for us ... the love that God has for us and the love that He seeks from us ... He lowers Himself to such an extent that He wants to have this intimate relationship, this intimate friendship with us."

By providence, Bishop Rhoades chose the Sacred Heart to use on Annual Bishop's Appeal mailings earlier this fall. Anne Therese saw it as unexpected connection and said she believed that the bishop also recognized God working in the small details. She remarked, "For him, I think it was kind of a beautiful moment."

It was a beautiful moment, too, when family, friends and priests gathered outside the cathedral after Mass to congratulate Anne Therese and wish her joy as she stepped into her new life, now mystically espoused to Christ Jesus.



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

- Sunday, October 10: 11 a.m. — Confirmation Mass, St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend
- Monday, October 11: 10:30 a.m. — All Schools Mass, Purcell Pavilion, University of Notre Dame
- Tuesday-Thursday, October 12-14: Continuing Education Days for Priests, Potawatomi Inn, Pokagon State Park, Angola
- Friday, October 15: 5 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, Sacred Heart Church, Fort Wayne
- Saturday, October 16: 9:30 a.m. — Mass for Kingdom Builders Women's Conference, Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne
- Saturday, October 16: 5 p.m. — Opening Mass for Synod of Bishops, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne



Priest appointment

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

Reverend José Arroyo to Administrator of St. Paul of the Cross Parish, Columbia City, effective October 4, 2021.



Priest appointment

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

Reverend Luke Okoye to Priest Chaplain of Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne, effective October 4, 2021.

'Why would I not give God an opportunity?'

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Throughout much of her life, Anne Therese Stephens anticipated a future that included marriage and children. Yet, as it is for many who come to the religious life, God had something else in mind for her. She credits a conversation that she had with a religious priest that first set her on the path to considering a distinctly different vocation.

Speaking with her spiritual director about whether he thought she might be destined for something outside of marriage, he suggested "this particular kind of vocation" and advised her to pray about it. However, it



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wasn't until she asked her pastor, Father Andrew Budzinski, to pray for her while on a pilgrimage to Rome years later that things were fully set into motion. "He prayer for me at the tomb of St. Clare ... and I can definitely pinpoint that time as a source of grace, that actually opened my heart to this vocation," Stephens revealed.

She had tried the dating scene with no success, and decided it was time to look deeper. "If I'm giving men an opportunity, why would I not give God an opportunity – God, who I already love and who is the most perfect and who has my best interests at heart?"

Although letting go of the plans she had in mind for her life was not an easy feat, she gradually became responsive to the idea of consecrated virginity. She would not be the first to follow this path, however, and therefore would not need to explain her unique vocation to everyone. She met with Jessica Hayes, consecrated to perpetual virginity in the diocese in 2015, to determine what her life might be like if she was called to it.

In speaking with Hayes, Stephens said she "saw that she was living a very full life, in love with our Lord, that there was a spousal relationship that she shared." Her concerns melted away. Instead of a life of loneliness, Stephens said, "I go home and enter into this deep intimate union with the Lord, so it isn't a life of loneliness ... There's definitely a beauty in just the freedom to spend time with God."

The idea of giving up a typi-



Jean and Michael, the parents of Anne Therese Stephens, journeyed from Wisconsin to witness their daughter begin a life of consecrated virginity and to pray for her vocation.

cal life with a husband filled her mind. "But God definitely fills the place. I tell Him my car's broke and things, and I can definitely see God working in ways that a husband would work," Stephens commented. She compared these ways to gifts that a husband might give his wife. "He's not giving me a wrapped gift, but if you look, it's definitely there, His presence. It's

awesome."

Stephens, a native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, moved to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend about five years ago and has been employed in the Marriage Tribunal since. As the second oldest of nine children, she grew up in a faith-filled family.

"My mom and dad, I think, were very influential in pass-



Photos by Jennifer Barton

Accompanied by Jessica Hayes and her sister Mary Clare, Stephens brings a candle to the sanctuary of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, answering the call to consecrated life. The candle represents the wise virgins in the Gospel who made ready for the coming of the bridegroom.

ing on the faith to us, which I'm grateful for," Stephens said. She noted that homeschooling strengthened her mother's relationship with God, as well as her own. With the exception of a sister who lives in Alaska, Stephens' entire family attended her consecration.

Stephens said she sees the beauty in the complimentary nature of married life and consecrated life and how her vocation "points toward heaven, points toward eternity. It's a simple love reminding everyone that we're not here on this earth forever, that there's an afterlife, and that our goal is heaven."

To commemorate her consecration, Stephens gifted those present with a booklet written by St. Alphonsus Ligouri, "Visits

to the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin Mary." In a note enclosed within it, Stephens wrote, "Anecdotally, it was through this booklet that my prayer life blossomed and intensified."

Through spiritual direction, she began dedicating a half hour to adoration, but, as she states in the note, "As the 30-minute mark approached, I was meditating on the Eucharistic reflections from this booklet. It struck me that there was no task more important, more worthy or more a privilege than spending time with Our Lord in the Eucharist. Even my hunger pains diminished in light of the breathtaking gift God has given us in the Eucharist."

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Migrants, advocates gather at border, call on Biden to help

BY TONY GUTIERREZ

(CNS) — More than 200 supporters gathered on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border near Nogales, Arizona, Sept. 25, the eve of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, to accompany 25 families seeking asylum in the United States.

The Kino Border Initiative — a Jesuit-run organization that promotes border and immigration policies that affirm the dignity of the human person — is supporting the families, who are fleeing violence in various parts of Latin America.

“President Biden, save our asylum!” chanted marchers in English and Spanish as they gathered at the border fence for a rally at which several migrants shared their testimonies.

Christopher Kerr, executive director of the Ignatian Solidarity Network — of which the Kino Border Initiative is a part — told Catholic News Service from the Mexican side of the border that the migrants were not trying to cross the border illegally, but were trying to assert their legal right to asylum.

“We need to be aware that our country isn’t upholding the legal right to asylum,” said Kerr. “People are facing grave danger in their home countries, in places like Guatemala or Honduras or Mexico. We’re not upholding that right — to have their story heard.”

During the 2020 campaign, President Joe Biden promised to roll back “on Day 1” a Trump administration policy known as the Migration Protection Protocols policy, or “Remain in Mexico,” requiring those seeking asylum to await their hearing in Mexico. He also promised to stop the use of Title 42.

Title 42 is a provision of U.S. public health law activated by the Trump administration to expel migrants at the border, with the exception of minors, over COVID-19 concerns.

Biden did end the “Remain in Mexico” policy immediately, though the U.S. Supreme Court recently ordered the administration to reinstate that policy — which it has not done.

But under Biden, Title 42 remains in place, despite criticism for continuing it and a court battle over it.

One speaker at the rally said most, if not all, of those migrants present were vaccinated against COVID-19 and were willing to take a test to prove it. The remark was followed by a resounding “Sí!” or “Yes!” from the crowd.

“President Biden campaigned on how we’d treat asylum-seekers and other immigrants. He’s the first U.S. president to talk about the situation of migrants and asylum-seekers at our border ever. Yet, look where this Biden policy is — it’s no different than

what the Trump administration was doing for four years,” said Kerr.

“President Biden needs to be held accountable for what he campaigned on, and we need to be held accountable for how we treat someone coming to our border, seeking safety from grave danger, from torture, threats of violence,” he told CNS.

“As Catholics,” he added, “we need to be the conscience in our communities, we need to be the conscience to our elected officials, and we need to carry the vision of the Gospel into the halls of Congress.”

During the rally each testimony was followed by a bilingual litany, with the leader crying “Respect their right” followed by “The right to asylum!” from the crowd.

Karla, who used only her first name, said she fled Guatemala with her two children after her husband was killed because the family couldn’t pay an extortion fee.

Even after arriving in Mexico, she said, she continued to face a danger of her children being kidnapped or of herself being assaulted. When she went to the border in Tijuana, Mexico, seeking asylum, she said the Border Patrol agents denied her entry and humiliated her.

“I cried along with my children, pleading and asking for help to ask for asylum. As I cried pleading to them for help, they laughed at me and my children,” she said in Spanish, adding that she had a similar experience in two other border cities.

Andrés, a migrant from the Mexican state of Guerrero, said some organized crime members tortured and humiliated him, threatening to kill him and his family if he didn’t cooperate.

“My house was guarded by those people. I decided to run away with my family because I don’t want them to live in fear that something might happen to them. That is why we are now requesting asylum, because I want a better future for my children,” he said.

Even in Nogales, however, Andrés, who also used only his first name, and his family are still facing insecurity. Migrants are unable to find work because they are considered “delinquents,” he said, and they also face extortion.

Lucia had been waiting with her husband and two children for two months. She noted that there are other migrants who have been waiting a year and half for Biden to end the asylum waitlisting.

“The simple fact that Title 42 is still in place shows that Biden is continuing the same racist policies from the Trump administration,” she said in Spanish. “We see that he really isn’t interested in restoring asylum, because if that were the case, he would have ended this policy



CNS photo/courtesy Ignatian Solidarity Network

Women religious walk with migrants during the “Restore Protections for Holy Families: Prophetic Action to #SaveAsylum” demonstration in Nogales, Mexico, Sept. 25.

and would have taken steps to restore asylum.”

From the Mexican side of the border, Bishop Edward J. Weisenberger of Tucson, Arizona, offered a prayer and blessing in Spanish for all those participating in the march, comparing the experience of the migrants with that of the Israelites facing persecution in Egypt.

“God of wisdom, who gave Moses the words he needed to inspire his people, even when he doubted himself, calm the anxieties of these families and inspire in them the words they need in their encounters with Customs and Border Protection officers,” the bishop said.

Supporters on both sides of the border wall headed toward the DeConcini Port of Entry at Nogales, Arizona, marching in solidarity with the 25 families requesting asylum. Kerr told CNS that all of them were not only denied entry, but were completely ignored.

“Asylum-seeking families were hoping they’d be heard today by CBP (Customs and Border Protection). The first family that went to the port of entry with the bishop, they wouldn’t acknowledge them, they wouldn’t even respond, even when the bishop made a request of them verbally,” he said.

CBP “shut the border point,” he said, as well as “the steel door in front of the pedestrian entrance to the border point.”

“The door was shut. It was kind of biblical, in a way,” Kerr added, reflecting on the story of the Holy Family seeking shelter before Jesus was born.

One migrant woman from Guatemala, Nuvia, marched with her two children, ages 4 and 11.

She told CNS that a 3-year-old girl where she was from was raped and murdered. As a mother, she put herself “in the place” of that youngster’s mother, she said, and “of the mothers that have lost their children in this way.”

“That’s why we can’t return to our home country,” she said.

“We’re not criminals,” she added. “We’re fleeing from the crime and fighting for better protection for our children.”

During the march, Lucia also said she and her family had previously lived in a city in south Mexico that had become overrun with crime. Criminals had abducted her husband, and when they released him, the family fled to Morelos, a state in south central Mexico, but even there,

criminal elements tried to forcefully recruit her 17-year-old son.

“I decided for my family that we would come here and look for protection here in the United States, but, unfortunately, they don’t want to let us pass,” she said.

The uncertainty also has affected her children, Lucia said. They haven’t been in school since they fled their home, and they can’t enroll in school in Nogales because they don’t have a home there.

“They’re worried about their education. They ask me what’s going to happen with their school (and) how much longer they’ll have to be here,” she said. “They’re nervous all the time ... we’re not living a normal life. We’re totally adrift.”

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NEWS BRIEFS

Preparations underway for global celebrations of World Meeting of Families

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, said diocesan celebrations coinciding with the World Meeting of Families 2022 will allow Catholic families to be in “spiritual communion” with Pope Francis and delegates in Rome. The event, which will be in Rome June 22-26, “will always be a worldwide event, as in the past, only this time it will be lived in all the local churches all over the world,” Cardinal Farrell told journalists during a news conference Sept. 30. “We cannot think of sustaining family ministry if we do not involve in these important moments of ecclesial encounter families, who not only are ‘soil to be cultivated,’ but also ‘the seed to be sown in the world’ in order to fertilize it with real and credible witnesses of the beauty of love within the family,” he said. The theme chosen by the pope for the meeting, which was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic, is: “Family love: A vocation and a path to holiness.”

‘There is dignity in selecting your own groceries,’ says pantry official

GREEN BAY, Wis. (CNS) — For Deacon Bob Hornacek, “the beautiful things” he sees at Paul’s Pantry in Green Bay “is not just what we do, but the way we do it and why we do it.” Paul’s Pantry, founded in 1984, operates as a free grocery store for people in need. It relies on support from the community and does not receive any government funds. Deacon Hornacek, of St. Matthew Parish in Allouez, Wisconsin, has been the pantry’s assistant director since 2019. He describes his job as “half administrative and half on the ground in the pantry every day.” The pantry, with its motto “Neighbors Feeding Neighbors,” has remained open throughout the pandemic. “With COVID, so many places went away (eliminating) any contact. At Paul’s Pantry, we doubled down,” the deacon told The Compass, newspaper of the Diocese of Green Bay. “We are going to stay open because we want to serve people and build relationships with them. We are going to do it as safely as possible, socially distance, extra sanitizing and cleaning, have gloves and masks,” he said. “There is dignity in selecting your own groceries. I don’t want to give you a box of food and have you throw half of it away because you don’t like it. We are here to rescue food and save it from the dumpster, not fill dumpsters.” The pantry is “a grocery store,” he explained.

‘Awakening of the silent majority’: Pro-lifers take to streets in Mexico



CNS photo/Jose Luis Gonzalez, Reuters

Protesters wave a Mexican flag, rosaries and a blue bandanna as they take part in a pro-life march in Mexico City Oct. 3 protesting the Mexican Supreme Court decision to decriminalize abortion. Thousands took to the streets in marches in at least 89 cities that were promoted as “pro-woman and pro-life.” Auxiliary Bishop Alfonso Miranda Guardiola of Monterrey, secretary-general of the Mexican bishops’ conference, helped promote the protests. “We hope this is the start of an awakening in our population,” Bishop Miranda told Catholic News Service. “(It’s) the defeat of the spiral of death and silence; the awakening of the silent majority in favor of life.”

Pope to begin synodal process with Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican announced that Pope Francis will formally launch the process of the Synod of Bishops with a Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica. The Oct. 10 Mass, which officially opens the synodal process, will be preceded by a day of reflection in the synod hall, the Vatican said in a statement published Oct. 1. The Oct. 9 day of reflection, the statement said, will include “representatives of the people God, including delegates of the bishops’ conferences and related bodies, members of the Roman Curia, fraternal delegates, delegates of consecrated life and ecclesial lay movements, the youth council, etc.” According to the schedule released by the Vatican, the day of reflection will begin with a meditation followed by an address by Pope Francis. It will also feature testimonies by people present at the synod hall, including a

young woman from South Africa, a bishop from South Korea, and the head of a religious community from France. Participants will also listen to video testimonies from a nun in the United States, a family in Australia and a priest in Brazil.

Nuncio, on behalf of pope, urged Missouri governor to halt Oct. 5 execution

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (CNS) — Archbishop Christophe Pierre, nuncio to the United States, urged Missouri Republican Gov. Mike Parson to respect “the humanity” of death-row inmate Ernest Lee Johnson and “the sacredness of all human life” and stop his Oct. 5 execution. Writing to Parson on behalf of Pope Francis, the nuncio asked that he halt the scheduled execution and grant him “some form appropriate form of clemency. This request is not based upon the facts and circumstanc-

es of his crimes; who could not argue that grave crimes such as his deserve grave punishments?” Archbishop Pierre said in a Sept. 27 letter to Parson. “Nor is this request based upon Mr. Johnson’s doubtful intellectual capacity. Rather His Holiness wishes to place before you the simple fact of Mr. Johnson’s humanity and the sacredness of all human life.” Johnson, 61, who is African American, was scheduled to die by lethal injection at the state prison in Bonne Terre at 6 p.m. local time Oct. 5. He was convicted of first-degree murder in 1995 and sentenced to death for killing three employees of a Columbia, Missouri, convenience store — 46-year-old Mary Bratcher, 57-year-old Mable Scruggs and 58-year-old Fred Jones — with a claw hammer. His lawyer and advocates for clemency argued that his execution would be unconstitutional because a 2008 operation for a brain tumor left him with a diminished intellectual capacity.

Vatican launches prayer campaign for Laudato Si’ goals

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Groups and individuals who have accepted Pope Francis’ invitation to step up their commitment to caring for creation are encouraged to prepare for their journey with a new prayer campaign. Special prayers have been developed for each day of the week for different communities, like parishes, dioceses, religious orders, families, hospitals, schools, businesses and others, that have joined the Laudato Si’ Action Platform. The 40-day prayer campaign began Oct. 4 — the feast of St. Francis — and concludes Nov. 14 — the World Day of Prayer for the Poor. The Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development announced the campaign Oct. 1. The Laudato Si’ Action Platform is “a seven-year journey that will see our communities committed in different ways to becoming totally sustainable, in the spirit of integral ecology,” the pope said in a video message launching the platform May 25. “We need a new ecological approach that can transform our way of dwelling in the world, our lifestyles, our relationship with the resources of the earth and, in general, our way of looking at humanity and of living life,” he said.

Priest says Father Kapaun’s example buoyed his morale as military chaplain

WICHITA, Kan. (CNS) — When serving troops in the U.S. Army, Father Ned Blick asked himself a simple question, “What would Father Kapaun do?” A Catholic chaplain from 2008 to 2012, Father Blick spent a year deployed in Iraq and a year in Afghanistan. “Once I was celebrating a Mass, and rockets came and machine gun fire came in,” said Father Blick, who like the late Father Emil J. Kapaun is a priest of the Wichita diocese. He remembered a story about Father Kapaun presiding over Mass amid bombs and rocket fire. “I thought of Chaplain Kapaun, and how he finished the Mass. I continued celebrating the Mass, gave each soldier holy Communion, and they would run out the door after they received,” Father Blick told Catholic News Service. In 1944, Father Kapaun was granted permission to enter the U.S. Army Catholic Chaplain Corps, where he served for two years. He rejoined in 1948, and in 1949 was sent to Japan, then to South Korea with the troops. In June 1950, communist North Korea invaded South Korea, and the U.S. entered the war. Father Kapaun was captured and sent to a prison camp in North Korea, where he continued to serve the men. He died May 23, 1951, and in 2013 was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions on the battlefield. It is the United States’ highest military honor.

White Mass to be celebrated Oct. 18

FORT WAYNE — All Catholic medical workers are invited to celebrate a White Mass that will be said by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne Oct. 16 at 7 p.m.

Following the Mass, the Dr. Jerome Lejeune Catholic Medical Guild of Northeast Indiana will host a banquet at nearby St. Mary, Mother of God Parish. Jason Shanks, president of OSV Institute for Catholic Innovation, will be the special guest speaker. Shanks will share his story of recovery from a nearly fatal case of COVID-19.

The dinner will begin at 8 p.m. Cost to attend is \$15. Reservations are requested by emailing fortwayne.cathmed.org or calling 260-222-6978.

USF receives grant to address violence against women

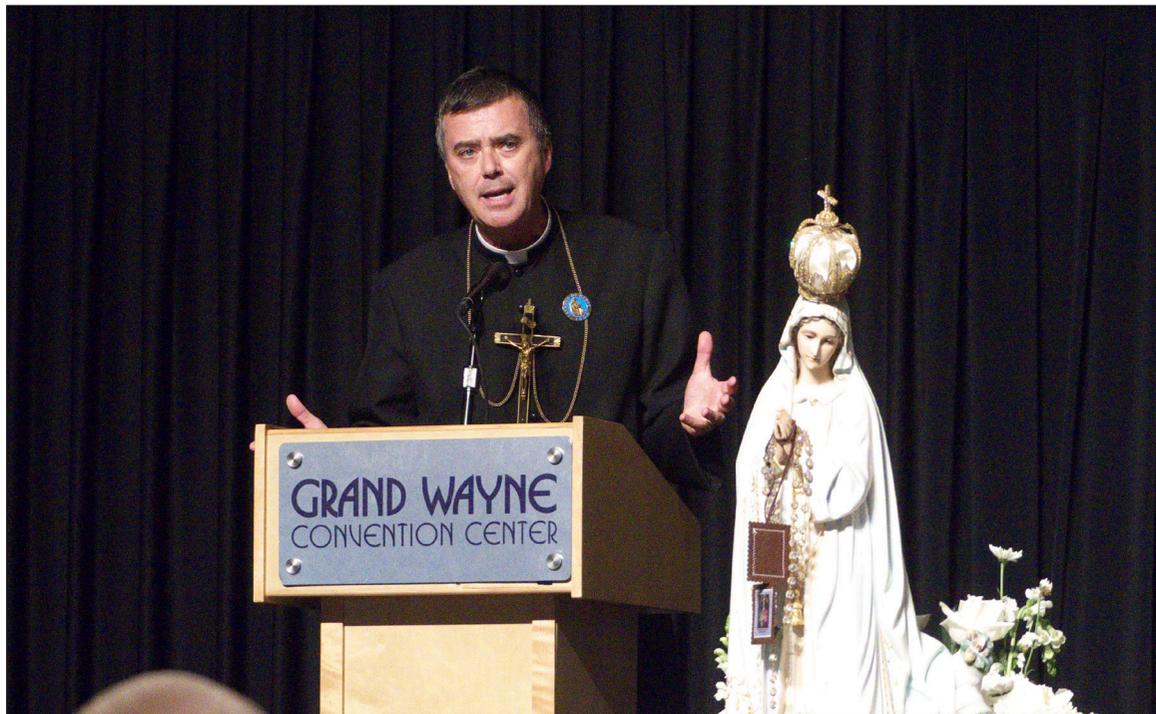
FORT WAYNE – The Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women awarded a \$300,000 grant to the University of Saint Francis to initiate a new program to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.

With the grant, USF will create Cougars H.O.P.E. (Healing, Outreach, Prevention and Education). The grant will be awarded over the course of three years.

"I encouraged our Student

AROUND THE DIOCESE

World Apostolate of Fatima recalls Our Lady's message



Seth D. Ball

The World Apostolate of Fatima, Fort Wayne – South Bend division, held its annual holy Mass and breakfast in Fort Wayne Oct. 2. For the first time, WAF sponsored a bus to bring pilgrims from the South Bend area of the diocese to the events. At the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, Deacon Brian Isenbarger led the pilgrims in meditating on the mysteries of the Holy Rosary. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades was the celebrant of the Mass, and following a procession to the Grand Wayne Center Father Wade Menezes, CPM, above, gave a talk on the importance of attaining holiness.

Affairs division to investigate this grant opportunity because the health and safety of USF students is a top priority," said USF president Father Eric A. Zimmer. "We are extremely grateful for this grant. Cougars H.O.P.E. will help USF continue to maintain a safe environment, further educate our community on how to prevent these crimes and ensure compassionate assistance for victims if a crime occurs."

Grant funds will be utilized to build a response infrastructure composed of campus and community resources, coordinated by a dedicated program director. The overarching goal of Cougars H.O.P.E. is to provide prevention/education, bystander intervention training and trauma-informed, comprehensive victim services for the campus community.

The Department of Justice's letter announcing the awarding of the grant stated the following: Through this initial award, the collaborative partnership will: 1) create a coordinated community response team to oversee all planning and implementation activities; 2) provide prevention programming, including bystander intervention to all students on domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking; 3) provide ongoing training to all law enforcement on how to effectively respond to these crimes; 4) provide access to 24-hour confidential victim services and advocacy; and 5) conduct ongoing training to all personnel in the campus disciplinary process. The timing for performance of the award is 36 months.

Bishop Luers comes out on top of Fort Wayne 'Battle of the Bishops' rivalry



Joshua Schipper

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades waves to students before saying a prayer at the annual meeting of the two Fort Wayne Catholic high schools at Shields Field, Bishop Dwenger High School, Oct. 1. During this year's game Bishop Luers broke a five-year "Battle of the Bishops" losing streak and defeated the Saints 41-38.

Walk for the Poor brings community together for common cause: St. Vincent de Paul Society



Joshua Schipper

Walkers participate in the fifth annual Friends of the Poor Walk, which began at Parkview Field in Fort Wayne the afternoon of Oct. 3. The event raised awareness and funding for programs of the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Fort Wayne.

Mass brings recognition, healing on 175th anniversary of Miami Tribe members' removal from Indiana

BY KEVIN KILBANE

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades spoke of repentance, respect and love during a Mass of Healing and Remembrance marking the 175th anniversary of Miami Tribe members' forced removal from their homeland to land in the West.

"We are called to be agents of healing and peace in a divided and conflict-ridden world," Bishop Rhoades said during the Mass, which took place at 5 p.m. Oct. 2 in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. "Today we stand in love and solidarity with our Miami brothers and sisters as together we mourn the removal of their ancestors 175 years ago."

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend scheduled the Mass after being told of the removal anniversary by Dani Tippmann, a Miami Tribe of Oklahoma member who lives in the Fort Wayne area and who attends St. Patrick Parish in Arcola.

The Miami people, who are called "Myaamiaki" in their own language, have lived in the Wabash River Valley area since long before French explorers, traders and missionaries first came in contact with them in the 1600s.

The Miami removal followed decades of wars and treaties with the U.S. government that gradually stripped the Miamis and many other tribes of their land. In fall 1846, U.S. soldiers rounded up about half of the approximately 600 Miami people in Indiana and forced them to board canal boats in Peru. The boats departed Oct. 6 on a nearly month-long journey to the Miamis' new land in what became eastern Kansas.

Seven Miamis died on the trip, and about 30 more survived the journey but died by the end of the year. About 20 years later, many of the surviving Miamis had to move again to their current reservation in northeast Oklahoma.

Today, the federally recognized Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has more than 6,000 members, including about 820 in Indiana, Diane Hunter, tribal historic preservation officer, said previously.

At the Mass of Healing and Remembrance, Catholic social teachings on the dignity of every human life and love and respect for people of all cultures guided the evening.

Miami Tribe members participated in planning and celebrating the Mass. Images of Miami ribbon work patterns and flying sandhill cranes, the latter of which are a symbol of the Miami people, decorated the cover of the program for the Mass.



Photos by Joshua Schipper

After the conclusion of a Mass of Healing and Remembrance of the forced removal of the native Miami Tribe from the Fort Wayne area in 1846, two Miami women in attendance sing a song in the Miami language. The Mass was celebrated Oct. 2 by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne. Find Bishop Rhoades' homily from the Mass at diocesefwsb.org.

Tribe members and their families, who totaled a combined 50 to 60 people, sat in reserved pews at the front of the Cathedral. More than 100 other people attended the Mass, which took the place of the Cathedral's usual 5 p.m. Saturday vigil Mass.

Tribal historic preservation officer Hunter, who lives in Fort Wayne, read the first and second Scripture readings and the prayers of the faithful. When it came time to say "The Lord's Prayer," her son, John Bickers of Columbus, Ohio, recited it in the Miami language.

During his homily, Bishop Rhoades described the Miami and Potawatomi peoples as some of the first Catholics in what is now this diocese. The Miamis lived mainly in the Wabash River Valley, and the Potawatomis resided in the South Bend area, northwest Indiana and Michigan.

French missionaries introduced the Catholic faith to Great Lakes tribes in the 1600s.

Priests serving in the Wabash River area respected the language and culture of the Miamis and admired the people's respect for the land and nature, Bishop Rhoades said. Many Miamis became Catholics after hearing the missionaries' teachings about the salvation offered through faith in Jesus Christ.

Despite Pope Paul III's proclamation in 1537 that native

people shouldn't be deprived of their freedom or possession of property, many Catholics and Christians exploited indigenous people, Bishop Rhoades said.

"We must ask forgiveness, our recent Popes have said, for the offenses and crimes committed against the native peoples during the so-called conquest of America," he said. The Bishop also reminded his audience of the words of Pope Francis, who urged people to oppose colonialism but to say yes to encounters

between peoples and cultures.

"At this Mass, we say NO to what happened to the Miami peoples here in Fort Wayne 175 years ago," the bishop continued. "We say YES to the encounter between peoples and cultures that takes place with mutual respect, justice and love."

Bishop Rhoades praised the efforts of the good Catholic priests, bishops and laity who shared the Gospel with native peoples and stood by them, sometimes at the cost of their



Bishop Rhoades took the opportunity after Mass to meet and talk with many of the Miami who had been present — including John Bickers, right, who prayed the Our Father in the Miami language during the Mass.

own lives.

Those priests included Father Julian Benoit, who built the Cathedral and is buried beneath it. A friend and adviser to the Miamis, Father Benoit opposed the use of military force to make them move west. Some reports say he traveled with them on the removal trip and, after they arrived on their new land, stayed with them for two weeks before returning home, Bishop Rhoades said.

The bishop said he has a personal devotion to Father Benjamin Petit, who is buried under the log chapel at the University of Notre Dame. Father Petit loved and was loved by the Potawatomi people he served in the South Bend area. He traveled with them on their removal, a journey that became known as the "Trail of Death" because 42 Potawatomis died along the way. Father Petit became ill during the trip and died while traveling back to Indiana.

"We should never forget these heroic priests, and we should never forget the Native Americans who called the land of our diocese their home," Bishop Rhoades said.

"We remember the battles, the violence, the injustices and the betrayals of the past," he said. "We pray for healing, peace, reconciliation and justice."

As he concluded the Mass, the bishop invited those present to stop afterward at the Diocesan Museum next door to view its exhibit about the Miami removal. The exhibit runs through Oct. 30.

Miami Tribe members expressed appreciation for the Mass and the recognition of this traumatic event in their history.

"It was very touching. It was very emotional," tribe member Catherine Nagy Mowry of Fort Wayne said. "It is touching to have a recognizing of our family's pain."

She and several tribe members sang a Miami honor song after Mass to honor their ancestors.

Fort Wayne-area Miami member Paul Strack described the Mass as a "great gesture."

"It acknowledges the shortcomings where sometimes politics overruled the morality of the situation," Strack said.

Bickers described the Miami removal as "very personal" for himself and his mother. Thus far, the Miamis have been able to determine the names of only two of the tribe members who died during removal. One is their ancestor, Thomas Godfroy.

The removal is such a sad time for Miamis to think about, Tippmann noted. The Mass of Healing and Remembrance, she said, lifted people up and showed us the value of love.

“Forgiveness always comes up in my work, no matter who I'm with, an individual or a family. Forgiveness shows its face...”

Joseph Enos, Tohono O'odham, Gila River Reservation, Ariz.

ENDURING FAITH

THE STORY OF
NATIVE AMERICAN CATHOLICS

A documentary in the spirit of dialogue, understanding and faith formation.

Watch it today at kofc.org/enduringfaith



CNS photo/courtesy Knights of Columbus

This is an image for the documentary “Enduring Faith: The Story of Native American Catholics.” After airing this spring and summer on ABC-TV affiliates through a partnership with the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission, the Knights of Columbus-produced documentary was made available to all, according to a Sept. 16 news release.

Knights of Columbus documentary ‘Enduring Faith’ now available to all

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (CNS) — After a successful run on ABC affiliates throughout the U.S., “Enduring Faith,” a Knights of Columbus documentary on the legacy of the Catholic faith among Indigenous communities in North America, is now available to all.

“As Catholics we’re called to build bridges, listen and love — firstly based on our relationship with Jesus,” said a news release announcing the film’s wide availability. “In all of these areas, Indigenous Catholics have an important lesson and message to share with the world.”

“Enduring Faith: The Story of Native American Catholicism,” it said, “offers a missing piece to the greater story of Catholicism in North America and a beautiful example of how Christ reveals himself through the uniqueness of every culture.”

The film is available to view at www.kofc.org/enduringfaith. The site also has a “Facts & Discussion Guide” to facilitate discussion or reflection by families, parish groups and community groups on topics touched upon in the documentary. DVDs of the film can be purchased at Knightsgear.com.

“This film will inspire in viewers a deeper appreciation for the spiritual and cultural gifts of Native American Catholics, a greater awareness of the wrongs inflicted upon them by

“This film will inspire in viewers a deeper appreciation for the spiritual and cultural gifts of Native American Catholics, a greater awareness of the wrongs inflicted upon them by the unjust policies of the British and American governments, and a sense of hope at how Native American Catholics continue to live out their faith in fully enculturated ways today.”

— “Enduring Faith” news release

the unjust policies of the British and American governments, and a sense of hope at how Native American Catholics continue to live out their faith in fully enculturated ways today,” the news release said.

Narrated by actor Larry Omaha, the movie reaches back to the Age of Exploration to examine the impact the Catholic faith has had on Native people

from Mexico northward to Canada. It also celebrates the contributions their dedication has made to the Church.

Filmmakers David Naglieri and Tim Moriarty examine the varied attitudes displayed by colonists from Spain, France and Britain. Catholic newcomers from the first two countries tended to have a greater interest in evangelizing Indigenous North

Americans, a fact which also led them to treat those they sought to convert with greater dignity than did the British.

The film highlights the work of the Franciscan, Dominican and Jesuit orders in bringing the Gospel to the Western Hemisphere.

It also showcases the trailblazing role played by such individual missionaries as the indefatigable Flemish-born Jesuit Father Pierre-Jean De Smet (1801-1873).

Former Supreme Knight Carl Anderson and others discuss the legacy of Our Lady of Guadalupe and her contemporary significance as a patroness of the new evangelization.

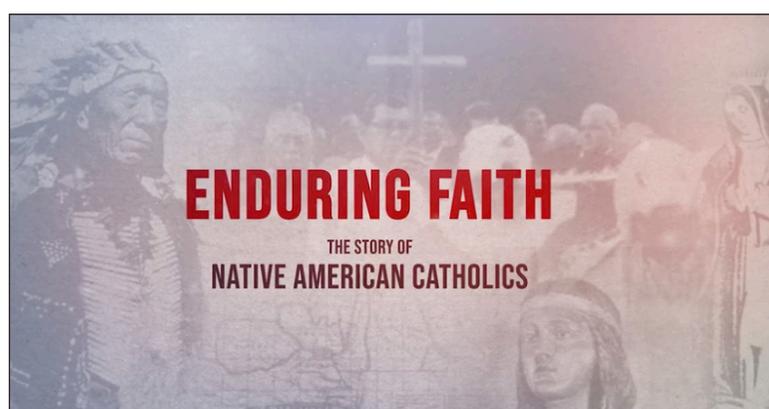
Her appearances in 1531 and her miraculous image left on St. Juan Diego’s tilma, or cloak, had a significant impact on the Indigenous people, drawing them to the Catholic faith.

“The program, which is unlikely to be of interest to youngsters anyway, includes artistic representations of ethnographic nudity. For teens and adults, nonetheless, it constitutes not only acceptable viewing but a historically, culturally and — most importantly — spiritually rich experience. It can also serve as a valuable catechetical tool,” Catholic News Service’s John Mulderig wrote in a review.

He reviewed the film in May when it was released to air on ABC stations through a partnership with the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission.

“‘Enduring Faith’ does not shy away from some of the more disappointing episodes in the history it recounts,” he said. “These include the way in which at least some Catholic Americans of European descent adhered to the misguided policy of the U.S. government that sought to ‘civilize’ Native Americans by rooting out their languages and traditions.”

“Yet,” Mulderig added, “the overall tone remains optimistic. Summing up his hopes for the future of the relationship between Native American Catholics and the Church at large, Anderson, who also served as the film’s executive producer, looks forward to ‘a true reconciliation, a true incorporation and a true unity.’”



Three groups hope to have a million people say rosary for life in October

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The leaders of three U.S. Catholic organizations hope to have a million people pray and promote the daily rosary during the month of October for “the end to legal abortion in America and an outpouring of support for expectant mothers,” according to their announcement on the joint effort.

The three leaders — Michael Warsaw, CEO of EWTN; Father Francis J. Hoffman, CEO of Relevant Radio; and Tim Busch, CEO of Napa Institute — launched the joint effort on their organization’s respective websites.

In the U.S. Catholic Church, October is observed as Respect Life Month and the first Sunday of the month is Respect Life Sunday, which this year was Oct. 3.

In addition, the month of



People pray the rosary in this illustration photo.

CNS photo/Bob Roller

October each year is dedicated to the rosary. The feast of Our Lady of the Rosary was celebrated Oct. 7.

“With the Supreme Court of the United States taking up the Dobbs case in December that could lead to overturning Roe v. Wade, the justices will need the grace of wisdom and courage to confront the issues honestly,” said the announcement from Warsaw, Father Hoffman and Busch.

On Dec. 1, the Supreme 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, including 1973’s Roe v. Wade ruling legalizing abortion nationwide.

The CEOs said they hope many other Catholic organizations “will join this effort by praying and promoting the daily rosary in October for this intention, and thus mobilize millions of Americans in prayer.”

This year’s Respect Life Month, promoted by the U.S.

Conference of Catholic Bishops, highlights the example of St. Joseph as part of the Year of St. Joseph declared by Pope Francis.

“As the faithful protector of both Jesus and Mary,” St. Joseph is “a profound reminder of our own call to welcome, safeguard and defend God’s precious gift of human life,” said Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, who is chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

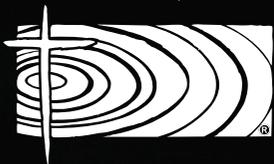
Editor’s Note: For more information on the effort to have a million people pray the rosary, go to EWTN.com, RelevantRadio.com, and Napa-Institute.org. Various resources for celebrating Respect for Life Month can be found online at www.respectlife.org/respect-life-month.

RESPECT LIFE

HELP END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Awareness is key, talk to your children.

Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ



Partners in the work of the Spirit

**“Each of us is the result of
a thought of God.
Each of us is willed,
each of us is loved,
each of us is necessary.”**

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

God, author of all life,
bless, we pray, all unborn children;
give them constant protection
and grant them a healthy birth
that is the sign of our rebirth one day
into the eternal rejoicing of heaven.

Adapted from the Rite of Blessing of a Child in the Womb

**Christ the King Catholic Church
52473 State Road 933
South Bend, Indiana 46637**



October 2021

RESPECT LIFE MONTH

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



Pro-life with confidence: Homeschool apologetics course developed

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

As the oldest of the six homeschooled Murphy children of St. Pius X Parish in Granger, Bonita Pratt has always been a committed Catholic and passionately pro-life. Now, she has used her communications degree, her counseling experience and her in-depth research to create a year-long course for other homeschooled upperclassmen who want to be better prepared to defend their convictions when they enter college.

While she was a student at St. Mary's College in South Bend, Pratt noticed how loud the pro-choice voices are today; they easily push around those who are nominally pro-life, she determined. She became more and more interested in helping those who are pro-life answer the tough arguments and articulate what they believed.

After graduating in December 2019, Pratt did some counseling at the South Bend Women's Care Center. This fall, her full-time work has become offering a Pro-Life Apologetics course she developed for homeschooled high school juniors and seniors.

The objectives of the course, Pratt stated, are to "become confident in your ability to answer the pro-choice side's hardest questions; learn how to use charitable words, tones and body gestures to reduce the tension

and stereotypical negativity of debates; and understand how the Catholic Church's teaching of the sanctity of all human life is complementary to the scientific facts regarding the unborn."

Classes are taught virtually an hour a week from the end of August through the end of May. Course texts range from the papal encyclical "Humanae Vitae" to the decision and arguments surrounding Roe v. Wade. Topics include logic, winsome conversation, moral relativism, biblical roots, the history of abortion, contraception and consideration of the hard cases often used to justify abortion.

Besides class attendance and reading, students write essays, take exams, create PowerPoint presentations and participate in prayerful pro-life activities. Each student writes a compassionate letter to an imaginary pregnant friend.

Two weeks into the course, local student Lexie Kloska said, "Issues like abortion that show a blatant disregard for the sanctity of human life are so prevalent right now; I'm looking forward to learning how to do my part in confronting them. After only a couple weeks of class I have already learned so much, and I can't wait to watch my confidence grow as I continue to learn more."



Provided by Bonita Pratt

Currently a parishioner at St. Monica, Mishawaka, Pratt has been married for a year. Her husband, a mechanical engineer, is proudly pro-life and very supportive of her work.

Pratt's biography includes the fact that she has over 100 first cousins. At SMC she ran the pro-life club, which advocated for pregnant students, did fundraising and hosted Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades for a talk.

Pratt has always enjoyed teaching and working with youth, she said. She loves seeing her students' reactions when something "clicks" in a new way for them. Besides developing and teaching this course, Pratt is available to give talks at high schools, colleges, churches and youth groups. Her new business' mission statement says, "Pro-life Apologetics is dedicated to providing young adults with the necessary knowledge, tactics, and confidence to best share the beauty of the pro-life movement with those whom they encounter."

Bonita Pratt of South Bend teaches a virtual Pro-Life Apologetics course she developed for homeschooled high school juniors and seniors. She developed the course to help those who are pro-life answer the tough arguments and articulate what they believe.

STAY CURIOUS

Like us on Facebook!

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

*It was you who created
My inmost self; and put
Me together in my
Mother's womb; for all
These mysteries I thank you,
For the wonder of myself, for
The wonder of your works.*

Psalm 139, 13-14

Corpus Christi Catholic Community
SOUTH BEND

RESPECT LIFE

"Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God's creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect."

—Pope Francis

St. Patrick Church
ARCOLA

Thinking about the heartbeat law

Most public issues these days seem to provoke angry dispute and mutual recrimination. Those divisions can tempt people to misstate or exaggerate facts, to persuade others — or even themselves — that they are right and their opponents are not worth thinking about.

Abortion is one topic where emotions run high and create that temptation, which brings me to the new Texas “heartbeat law” that is in the news. The most remarkable things have been said about this law by people who apparently have not read or understood it.

The law requires a physician, before performing an abortion, to determine whether the unborn child has a heartbeat detectable by usual medical standards. If so, the abortion is allowed only if there is a “medical emergency” that “places the woman in danger of death or a serious risk of substantial impairment of a major bodily function.”

The law does not say this is “when life begins.” It says a fetal heartbeat has become “a key medical predictor that an unborn child will reach live birth,” and a woman should have that information in deciding about her pregnancy.

One column in a Texas newspaper calls this the state’s “latest attack on women,” which “criminalizes abortion after six weeks, before most women realize they’re pregnant.” In a major medical journal that should have standards for accuracy, a law professor accuses the law of “prohibiting even the earliest

abortions.”

But the Texas law has no criminal penalty for anyone, and no legal liability of any kind for women seeking abortions. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control says 40% of abortions in the U.S. (39% in Texas) are performed at or before six weeks, about half of them by drugs rather than surgery. Over-the-counter pregnancy tests show a positive result well before this point.

The wildest rhetoric is reserved for the law’s mode of enforcement. A private citizen may bring a civil suit against the abortion practitioner and others who helped make sure an illegal abortion was performed.

U.S. attorney general Merrick Garland says this makes citizens “bounty hunters.” The aforementioned journal article, titled “Vigilante Injustice — Deputizing and Weaponizing the Public to Stop Abortions,” likens Texas to “the East German Stasi” that used private informants to help imprison dissidents. A Yale law professor says Texas has created a “private army,” a “militia” that undermines government’s obligation to “monopolize the use of force.”

I know litigation attorneys have been called “hired guns.” But this equating of lawyers with an armed paramilitary force is a ridiculous way to trivialize actual violence.

The fact is that, for many years, laws against abortion as well as assisted suicide have been enforced in whole or in part through such civil suits. So have environmental laws. A competent law professor should know this.



A MORE HUMAN SOCIETY

RICHARD DOERFLINGER

And since 2013, a bill in Congress has endorsed this approach as a way to promote abortion throughout the nine months of pregnancy. Pro-life legislators in Texas simply borrowed their opponents’ idea.

This Women’s Health Protection Act, endorsed by President Joe Biden and now approved by the House of Representatives, authorizes lawsuits and collection of damages by “any individual or entity” who claims to be “adversely affected” by even a modest limit or regulation of abortion.

The House-approved version adds suits against those who try to sue illegal abortionists in Texas. Should we call this Mr. Garland’s private army?

Amid the false and disingenuous accusations, what is at risk of being forgotten is that little heartbeat, trying to survive against some powerful forces that want it stopped.

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

Bedtime stories of saints: comfort and companionship

We never really outgrow the desire for a bedtime story. It just takes different forms when we’re older: Netflix, the evening news, Instagram stories.

But the original cannot be improved upon, the bare-bones version told in the dark. When it doesn’t come with special effects, it flips on more lights in the listener’s imagination.

Claire Ellendson understood this in a fundamental way when she was serving on NET Ministries, an evangelization team for Catholic young adults. After an exhausting, exhilarating day of talking to teens about Jesus, she and a teammate would collapse in the house of a kind stranger — a spare couch in the basement, parallel twin beds in a corner bedroom. Her teammate would ask a simple question, a Catholic twist on that universal childhood request: “Tell me a story about a saint.”

She knew there was a deep reservoir of saint stories in Claire, a cradle Catholic from Faribault, Minnesota, and the third of 10 children.

“We are naturally drawn to a good story,” said Ellendson, now 25, who belongs to the Church of St. Mark in St. Paul, Minnesota, and works as a nanny. “The power of storytelling is a gift from God, and it’s innately human.”



TWENTY SOMETHING

CHRISTINA CAPECCHI

Ellendson’s bedtime stories gave rise to late-night conversations about zeal for the Gospel and love of Christ and holding onto truth in the midst of trial. Eventually, they turned into a weekly podcast she titled “Dead Friend,” which is how Ellendson sees the saints: like older sisters and wiser friends in heaven.

Each podcast features one saint and results from considerable research and prayer. Ellendson records the podcast in her pajamas, nestled in her apartment in the Minneapolis neighborhood Uptown.

“Maybe it’s to get into the spirit of bedtime stories,” she said, laughing. “I’m chilling.”

The goal was to fill an unmet niche: conversational podcasts — not academic — that highlight the humanity of the saints. Her voice is unpretentious. She’s both

CAPECCHI, page 13

Our salvation is possible only through following the Lord



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time Mark 10:17-30

The Book of Wisdom is the source of this weekend’s first reading. As the name implies, this ancient book was designed to insist that believing in the one God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, was not ridiculous but in fact the ultimate in wisdom and human logic.

In this weekend’s reading, an interesting literary technique occurs. Wisdom is presented not as an abstract virtue or reality of the mind, but as a person. Possibly as a result, Christians long ago came to identify the most profound wisdom with the

Holy Spirit.

Jewish scholars realized at the time that in the last analysis gold was of no greater value than sand. Realizing this fact, it was easy to look either with scorn or pity upon people who spent their earthly lives and even acted criminally just to obtain gold. The lust for gold was the supreme idiocy.

Understanding the inevitable worthlessness of gold is true wisdom.

For its second reading, the Church presents a section from the Letter to the Hebrews. Drawing upon the ancient Jewish notion of material wealth, accompanied by ignoring God and God’s law, the letter declares that knowing what God has revealed, and living accordingly, result from the greatest wisdom.

St. Mark’s Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is very familiar to Christians. It is the story of the rich young man.

Asked what is essential to possessing eternal life, Jesus answered that the person truly wishing to have life must obey the Ten Commandments, the great gift of God to the people of

Israel through Moses.

Questioned further, Jesus replied that a person must disregard their personal thirst for material things — a thirst strong among humans — and in turn give to the poor.

The man asking the questions could not accept this last admonition. Greatly disappointed, he turned and walked away from Jesus. He could not remove himself from the belongings he had acquired.

Obviously, this man was wealthy and comfortable, but he is a sad figure. Obviously, he felt the impulse to follow God’s plan. He asked Jesus what was required for salvation, but he was unwilling to give his riches to the poor, as Jesus counselled. He was unhappy in this decision. In other words, holding onto his wealth brought him no joy or peace of mind.

Reflection

The French Navy, over the years, has named four warships the “Richelieu,” surely the only vessels of warfare named to honor a Catholic cardinal.

Each ship honored one of the most famous figures in French history, Cardinal Armand Jean de Plessis, Duc de Richelieu, (1585-1642), not remembered for his religious piety but for his skill as a politician.

For many years prime minister to the French king, Louis XIII, the cardinal made France mighty, glorious and rich. He himself was one of the most powerful people on earth.

Finally, he neared death. He supposedly said, “If I had exchanged my cardinal’s red for the Carthusian white (monk’s habit), my palace for a (monastic) cell, I would not be afraid to die.”

The coming of death opened his eyes. He saw what truly mattered.

Cardinal Richelieu was not the only person mighty in earthly accomplishments to look back upon life and regret that so much energy was spent on obtaining things and gaining control.

He never was an immoral man. He went through the motions of being a priest and bishop. He firmly upheld authen-

tic Church teaching. His goals, however, were askew.

In these readings, the Church tells us that being a faithful disciple is everything. Pursuing discipleship at times means facing facts bluntly.

Look at the rich and powerful, unfulfilled in life, dry and troubled at death, and then look at the joy of the faithful.

READINGS

Sunday: Wis 7:7-11 Ps 90:12-17 Heb 4:12-13 Mk 10:17-30

Monday: Rom 1:1-7 Ps 98:1bcde, 2-4 Lk 11:29-32

Tuesday: Rom 1:16-25 Ps 19:2-5 Lk 11:37-41

Wednesday: Rom 2:1-11 Ps 62:2-3, 6-7, 9 k 11:42-46

Thursday: Rom 3:21-30 Ps 130:1b-6b Lk 11:47-54

Friday: Rom 4:1-8 Ps 32:1b-2, 5, 11 Lk 12:1-7

Saturday: Rom 4:13, 16-18 Ps 105:6-9, 42-43 k 12:8-12

Decisions of consequence

I recently watched a compelling video prepared by a group called “Heartbeat International.” They provide women who regret having taken an abortion pill the chance to reverse their decision through a treatment involving progesterone. The protocol, though not yet officially “peer-reviewed,” appears to work well if the woman doesn’t wait too long, and the video includes pictures and rescue dates of many beautiful babies who have been saved this way.

What also caught my attention were the stories of several nurses working at Heartbeat International.

“I wanted to help out in a meaningful way,” one of them, named Amanda, said. “I was very excited to hear about abortion-pill reversal for the first time... I thought: God just brought that in front of me, and I think that’s what I’m meant to do.”

She went on to share a follow-up from two mothers whom she had recently assisted.

“They sent me pictures on WhatsApp after they had their babies. ... I’m so thankful for their courage and their bravery. They talked about how much they love their babies and I’m just so happy for them. I’m just so grateful God gave me that opportunity to speak with both of them.

“I’ve never had this kind of fulfillment in any previous nursing job that I’ve had — that feeling of ‘Yes!’ — I’m making a difference in someone’s life, ... a difference in eternity.”

Every child saved this way is someone who now enjoys the opportunity to grow up, go to school, get married, have kids, grandkids and great-grandkids. It clearly makes an incalculable difference for that child, as well as for untold others. An “eternal difference.”

Each of us would like for our lives and our work to “make a

difference,” and especially to make a lasting, impactful, and eternal difference.

It should come as no small consolation to understand that whenever we make deliberate moral choices for the good or turn away from what is wrong, we are already starting to make those “eternal differences.” Through such decisions of consequence, we align our own will with God’s, and contribute, in His wisdom, to rectifying the many patterns of sin around and within us. Such decisions enable us to collaborate with His all-encompassing redemptive plan.

In the field of bioethics, these “decisions of consequence” arise with great regularity. When one of our ethicists at The National Catholic Bioethics Center, for example, helps a husband and wife to understand the moral problems surrounding in vitro fertilization, not only can this help them avoid the tragedy of trapping their young offspring in “frozen orphanages,” but it can also help them reflect on deeper questions like, “What does our infertility really mean?,” and, “How does God want us to be fruitful?” This can lead them to consider new paths of grace, like reaching out to kids in the community who are parentless, through mentoring programs such as Big Brother/Big Sister, or through pursuing the generous path of foster parenting and adoption. Such generosity is another “decision of consequence” where we stand to make an eternal difference.

Our “decisions of consequence” need not be great or lofty gestures; they can be quite simple. I recall a true story first relayed by John W. Schlatter in 1993, that has circulated widely since.

Bill was walking home after his junior high school classes, his arms full of books and other items from his locker. At a certain point, everything spilled out of his arms, and another boy



FATHER TAD PACHOLCZYK

MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

named Mark witnessed it and came over to help him pick it up off the ground, making some friendly small talk. The two of them decided to spend part of the afternoon together, playing games and goofing off. In succeeding weeks and months, they became friends.

Years later, Bill was reminiscing with Mark, and he brought up the day they first met.

“Did you ever wonder why I was carrying so many things home that day?” he asked. “I cleaned out my locker because I didn’t want to leave a mess for anyone else. I had stored away some of my mother’s sleeping pills and I was going home to commit suicide. But after we spent some time together talking and laughing, I realized that if I had killed myself, I would have missed that time and so many others that might follow. So, Mark, when you picked up those books that day, you did a lot more: you saved my life.”

In a sense, each day for us involves a walk along the threshold of eternity, through small and not-so-small gestures, even though we may not always see the full implications of each of our decisions. Each day we have a chance to make beautiful, potentially lifesaving and indeed eternal “decisions of consequence.”

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D., serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.

on. But she’s got countless to go, and she now fields requests.

“To share the podcast has been so great because it’s simply: ‘Wow, this is how the Lord worked in their lives!’ And that builds up my faith so much. It gives me a weekly reminder of all the heavy lifting the Lord has done.”

In the process of studying these saints, she’s felt a shift. The saints are not there simply to inspire her, but to accompany her.

As All Saints Day nears, she urges Catholics to pick a saint to study. “See if they can be a new dead friend of yours!”

Ellendson tries to live simply like St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi and purges her closet every three months. Soon she’ll be selling her furniture, preparing to leave her apartment

CAPECCHI, from page 12

eloquent and unafraid to use young-adult speak, describing when a saint “wasn’t down with” something or didn’t “vibe” with someone.

It appears to be working. Since her inaugural episode last August, she’s garnered more than 10,000 downloads — some from far-flung cities across the globe.

Ellendson marked the podcast’s one-year anniversary by bringing on a special guest: her local bishop, Archbishop Bernard Hebda, who discussed his love for St. Joseph.

The list of saints she’s covered is lengthy: St. Maximilian Kolbe, St. Jane de Chantal, Blessed Chiara Badano, St. Lidwina of Schiedam, St. Gemma Galgani, Venerable Emilie Engel and so

and live in a friend’s home to attend a program for radiation therapy.

“I’m going to downsize my life,” she said. “I’m craving simplicity.”

The saints help her trust in God as she makes her next step. “God will use everything. He wants to make us a more vivid version of ourselves.”

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

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for October 10, 2021

Mark 10: 17-30

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B: The young man who went away sad. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

A MAN	KNELT	ETERNAL LIFE
GOOD	ALONE	STEAL
FALSE	DEFRAUD	HONOR
OBSERVED	LOVED HIM	TREASURE
HEAVEN	ENTER	CAMEL
NEEDLE	SAVED	ALL THINGS
POSSIBLE	GOSPEL	AGE TO COME

QUESTIONS

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



PAUL OF THE CROSS

FEAST: OCTOBER 20

Paolo Francesco Danei, the oldest son in a poor but noble Italian family, lived austerely even as a teen. After a year in the Venetian army, he returned to a monk-like life of prayer and penance, and refused to marry. In a vision in 1720, Our Lady, wearing a black habit with a white cross and bearing Jesus’ name, told Paul to start an order to preach Christ’s passion. With his bishop’s approval, he founded the Discalced Clerks of the Most Holy Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which he led for the rest of his life, and later began a nuns’ institute. Passionists were soon doing missions, retreats and spiritual direction throughout Italy. Paul was canonized in 1867.



CNS photo/Paul Haring

Pope Francis listens to a question while responding to journalists aboard his flight from Tallinn, Estonia, to Rome in this Sept. 25, 2018, file photo. The pope has chosen "Listen" as the theme for the 2022 celebration of World Communications Day.

Pope chooses 'Listen' as theme for World Communications Day

BY JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In the search for truth, Catholic communicators must learn how to listen above all else, the Vatican said.

"Listen" will be the theme for the 2022 celebration of World Communications Day, said the statement released Sept. 29. A papal message on the theme should be published on or around the Jan. 24 feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of journalists.

"The pandemic has struck and wounded everyone, and everyone needs to be heard and comforted. Listening is also fundamental for good information," said the statement announcing the theme.

The pope's choice of the theme for the 2022 celebration, which will be held May 29 in most dioceses, is drawn from Jesus' words in the Gospel of Luke, "Take care, then, how you listen."

The search for truth, the statement said, "begins with listening" as does "bearing witness through social communications media."

"Every dialogue, every relationship begins with listening," it said. "For this reason, in order

to grow — even professionally — as communicators, we must relearn to listen a great deal."

The Vatican said that Jesus' words are a reminder that in order to listen, Christians need "courage, an open and free heart, without prejudices."

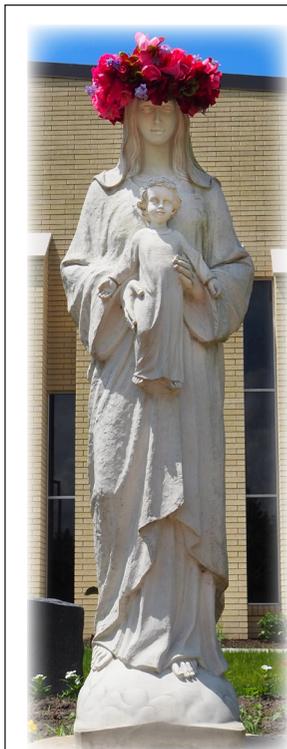
"In this time, when the whole church is invited to listen in order to learn to be a synodal church, we are all invited to rediscover listening as essential for good communication," the statement said.

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OUR LADY OF GOOD HOPE

Our Lady of Good Hope Parish in Fort Wayne is seeking a full time **director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry**. Under the direction of the pastor, this staff member directs the overall mission and vision for youth and young adult ministry. The ideal candidate can build strong relationships with youth and young adults and recruit and train qualified volunteers for both programs. View the complete job description and apply online at diocesefwsb.org/careers.



OUR LADY OF GOOD HOPE

Our Lady of Good Hope Parish in Fort Wayne seeks a full time **parish business administrator**.

The ideal candidate for this position has strong organizational skills, experience with Microsoft Excel and can demonstrate sound bookkeeping skills to include reconciliation of general ledger/bank accounts and accounts payable.

Apply online at www.diocesefwsb.org/careers.



DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is seeking a senior administrative assistant.

This full-time position serves the assistant to the bishop and the director of human resources. This position requires a high level of confidentiality and professionalism. The ideal candidate has strong technological skills, handles multiple priorities well and enjoys a fast work pace. To view the complete job description and/or apply online, visit diocesefwsb.org/careers.

Application deadline is October 18, 2021.

The Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross

deeply committed to the vision of the Second Vatican Council, is searching for an **Assistant Director of Liturgy** (and music)



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A candidate for this position must appreciate the value of full, conscious, and active participation of the assembly. Responsibilities include directing the choir and cantoring, along with some instrumental accompaniment on the piano or organ. Organization, detail-management, and a pastoral heart are needed for this position.

Position is full-time, exempt/salaried. Compensation depends on experience. Excellent benefits package including: medical, dental, and vision insurance, short-term and long-term disability insurance, group term life insurance and AD&D, paid vacation, sick, and holidays, 403(b) retirement savings plan, and tuition assistance program.

We look forward to receiving your application/resume today! For more information, please contact our Human Resources department at 574-284-5660, email ahogan@cscsisters.org, or visit www.cscsisters.org/employees.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

Parish mission with Daniel Oberreuter
COLUMBIA CITY — St. Paul of the Cross Parish, 315 S Line St., will have a mission with Eucharist-centered music featuring Daniel Oberreuter Sunday, Oct. 10 from 6:30-8 p.m. Contact Stephanie Hamilton at 260-610-3777 or youthministry@saint-paulcc.org for information.

St. John Holy Name Society fish fry
NEW HAVEN — A drive-thru fish fry will be Friday, Oct. 15, from 4-7 p.m. at the St. John the

Baptist Community Center, 943 Powers St. A meal includes fish, potato wedges, coleslaw, applesauce and cookie. Cashiers will be located outside. No need to get out of your vehicle. Advance in line and the order will be brought out.

Rosary rally for an end to abortion
FORT WAYNE — During the 40 Days For Life Campaign, gather to pray the rosary for the end of abortion in front of Planned Parenthood, 2930 Lake

Ave., Saturday, Oct. 16 at noon. This event is sponsored by St. Aloysius of Yoder parishioners and by America Loves Fatima.

Fatima rosary to be prayed at St. Patrick
SOUTH BEND — On the 104th anniversary of the Miracle of the Sun, a rosary will be prayed in front of St. Patrick Church, 331 S. Scott St. at noon. If raining, prayer will be inside.

Praying with Father Solanus: rosary and Mass for the Sick
HUNTINGTON — A rosary and Mass for the Sick with Father Joe Tuscan will be Saturday, Oct. 16, at 12:30 p.m. at St. Felix Catholic Center, 1280 Hitzfield St. Following Mass, refreshments will be served and tours of St. Felix will be offered. The day will conclude with a presentation by Father Tuscan at 2:30 p.m. This is a free event open to the public. Visit www.prayingwithfrsolanus.org for details.

Adoration Under the Stars
FORT WAYNE — Spend some quality time with Jesus Christ in the monstrance under the night sky of God's creation on the lawn in front of Our Lady of Good Hope Church, 7215 Saint Joe Rd. The evening will close with Benediction. In case of inclement weather, adoration will move inside the church. Prelude music will begin at 6:45 p.m. before the Adoration at 7 p.m.

Right to Life talk
NEW CARLISLE — A Right to Life talk will be Wednesday, Oct. 20, at 6:30 p.m. in the parish center at St. Stanislaus Kostka, 55756 Tulip Rd. The talk from Right to Life Michiana will be on the issue of abortion and ways to get involved in the local movement. Visit www.ststansnewcarlisle.org or contact Diane Oudhuis at 574-654-3781.

REST IN PEACE

Angola

Richard S. Justice, 73, St. Anthony

Evelyn M. McClure, 83, St. Anthony

Fort Wayne

Jane A. Christman, 86, St. Vincent de Paul

Myrtle Dinger, 92, St. Vincent de Paul

Ellen Rawding, 61, St. Vincent de Paul

Margaret Windle, 94, St. Vincent de Paul

Granger

John Barrett, 83, St. Pius X

Karen Heisler, 67, St. Pius X

South Bend

Karla Bella, 61, St. Adalbert

Robert Eichstedt, 79, Cathedral of Saint Matthew

Ricardo Fuentes, 44, St. Adalbert

Paul Helek, 70, St. Adalbert

Norman Kajser, 81, St. Adalbert

Angel Rodriguez Peña, 74, St. Adalbert

Carolyn Tihen, 77, Christ the King

Manual Vargas, 29, St. Adalbert

Wabash

Jayne Hatton, 91, St. Bernard

Warsaw

Rosemary L. Muniz, 77, Sacred Heart

Sunday Night Praise

FORT WAYNE — An outdoor evening of fellowship, praise and worship will be Sunday, Oct. 16 at Our Lady of Good Hope Church, 7215 St. Joe Rd. Food trucks will be available from 4-6 p.m. with live praise and worship to begin at 5 p.m. Bring a lawn chair or blanket to sit on.

St. Jude Parish mission

FORT WAYNE — A parish mission, "Gather Us In," will be Oct. 24-27. 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 K-5 students each night.

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St. Adalbert, South Bend (Spanish)

Thursday, Oct. 21, 6:30 p.m.
St. Joseph, Fort Wayne (Spanish)

Friday, Oct. 29, 7:30 p.m.
St. Thérèse, Little Flower, South Bend

Friday, Oct. 29, 5:45 p.m.
St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne

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In retirement, McGraw coaches communities to go on offense against hunger

BY CATHERINE M. ODELL

NOTRE DAME (CNS) — Much as she did in her 33 years as the University of Notre Dame's highly successful women's basketball coach, Muffet McGraw still pays close attention to numbers that tell a story.

But now her focus is on hunger stats.

In her coaching days, numbers for her meant keeping close track of points per game, field goal percentages, free throw percentages and how the skills of her own Irish players were adding up.

Careful attention to those numbers as well as her charismatic leadership of young women athletes led McGraw's teams to nine Final Fours, seven championship game appearances and two national championships — in 2001 and 2018.

It also earned her many coaching awards and a place in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2017. She compiled a 905-272 record through 32 seasons.

After she retired as coach in April 2020, life changed considerably for McGraw.

She began teaching a class on sports leadership in Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business. And, in those early months of the pandemic, she decided that she had to contribute her energy and leadership skills to addressing hunger.

Not surprisingly, she'd been paying close attention to hunger statistics — both nationally and in her own community.

When the pandemic started," she explained, "I kept seeing reports on the news about the food banks and how many people were looking for food. I do some research online, but I like to know what's going on in my local community.

"So, every time I would go to the Food Bank of Northern Indiana, I would ask them, 'Well, how many people came by in the drive-thru? How many pantries are open? How many people do you expect to serve at Thanksgiving? How many school lunches are we packing this year?'"

"I wanted to keep updated. The numbers were astounding," she told Catholic News Service. "You might look around your neighborhood and think, 'Well, everybody here is fine.' But, they might not be.

"The thing about the pandemic and with people losing their jobs is that you really don't know who is doing fine."

McGraw was already a familiar face at her community food bank, an organization that serves six northern Indiana counties where nearly 13% of the population is said to be "food insecure."



CNS photo/courtesy Muffet McGraw

Muffet McGraw, right, seen in an undated photo with young volunteers helping with a food drive, has focused on addressing hunger in America and helping with food drives in South Bend since she retired in April 2020 after a highly successful 33-year career as the University of Notre Dame's women's basketball coach.

From January to June 2021, the Food Bank of Northern Indiana distributed 5,436,410 pounds of food.

"As coach, I would often take the team down to the food bank," she pointed out. "We'd pack school lunches for kids, and load and unload food when it was delivered. I thought it was good to get team members involved in a little community service and they always enjoyed it."

However, McGraw knew that she also had to do something on her own. Soon after announcing her retirement, she began collecting food in her own neighborhood and then in other neighborhoods in South Bend where she and her husband, Matt, have lived for many years.

"I just went and stuffed mailboxes with fliers about a food drive but I didn't know how they were going to turn out. The first time," she laughed, "I think I got only 150 pounds of food!" However, in the year and a half since that first food drive, she's done more than 30 more neighborhood food drives and contributed the food to the local food bank.

"Everybody can start in their own neighborhood," she's quick to tell people. "Lots of neighborhoods have their own homeowner's Facebook pages or websites. You don't necessarily have to print up fliers."

And what's the recommended game plan? "Start where you are!"



CNS photo/Bill Odell

In retirement, McGraw still pays close attention to numbers — especially the stats on hunger in America. She is involved in food drives in South Bend and at Notre Dame to replenish food pantries, especially during the pandemic.

When Notre Dame saw their legendary Coach McGraw taking the local offensive against hunger, the university's alumni association offered to help. Meals with Muffet — <https://mealswithmuffet.nd.edu> — was founded in 2020 to promote food drives among the university's large network of active alumni clubs and among other interested groups.

Because September is "Hunger Action Month," a national campaign, Notre Dame alumni clubs were encouraged in 2020 and 2021 to host September food drives and report their food totals to Meals with Muffet. When they did, they were automatically registered for prizes.

Meals with Muffet also was designed to collaborate with other Notre Dame-linked groups — Holtz's Heroes and Bread of Life Food Drive.

In 2020, Meals with Muffet reported that almost 150,000 pounds of food and \$85,000 were collected by Notre Dame alumni clubs and other groups to fight hunger around the country.

McGraw believes that the larger American Catholic community also could really help to address hunger in the U.S., with parishes, schools, established groups like the Knights of Columbus stepping in to help on the local levels.

"I think we need a call to action, and as a Catholic, I think the way you live your life and serve people who need help defines you," she said. "And this would be such a great way to teach our kids about giving back, about community service and about the fact that everybody doesn't have it as good as they do. I just wish that more people would see this as really important."

Coaching others to be and do their best is second nature for McGraw. Nonetheless, she concedes that some people may be hungry or needy because, as she put it, "they're holding themselves back."

She quickly added, "I would love to coach them and encourage them to stop making excuses for themselves and to be accountable. I do worry about the future a bit because there is a lot of 'woe is me' and 'there's nothing that I can do about my situation.'"

On the other hand, as she sees it, "there are also a lot of people who are working two jobs who still can't afford to feed their families. I think that some of us don't see or understand that. Whatever it is, we have to feed people if they're hungry."

"And wouldn't it be great," McGraw said, issuing a challenge, "if we could just take care of everybody in our own communities?"