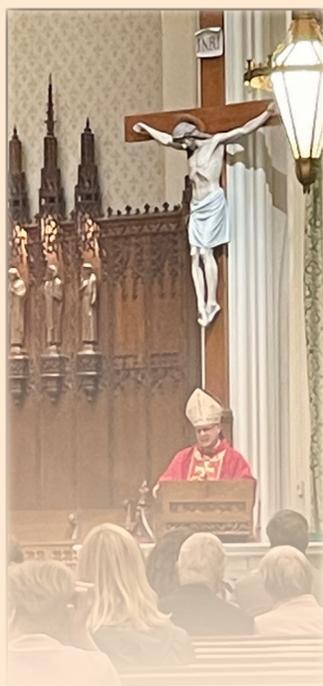


# TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 95 No. 37

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JOSHUA SCHIPPER

A stone altar centrally located at Catholic Cemetery, Fort Wayne, reminds visitors that death is not the end of life, but rather continues a life of faith begun in the waters of baptism. Prayers for all departed souls will be heard at the altar Nov. 2, where an All Souls' Day Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades at noon; and included in this edition of Today's Catholic is a special pullout section on death, burial and Catholic funeral planning. See page 7.

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Photos by Katie Murray

On the feast day of St. Luke, patron saint of physicians, a White Mass was celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne.

## Health care workers pray for colleagues, patients

BY KATIE MURRAY

Health care workers have been a main line of defense these many months during the unrelenting pandemic. They have given themselves with love and compassion and, like Jesus, have worked tirelessly to care for the sick and afflicted.

On Oct. 18, the White Mass for these ministers of life was celebrated at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. That date was also the feast day of St. Luke, patron saint of physicians. The special liturgy was given its name for the color worn by health care professionals and serves to give them strength and guidance when caring for others.

The tradition of the White Mass is traced back to the 1900s in the United States by the Catholic Medical Association. The CMA was formed to "... educate physicians in church doctrine related to the practice of medicine" with three main objectives: foster Catholic physicians' faith and relationship with God, strengthen knowledge and the practice of moral and ethical medical principles, and promote support and solidarity among physicians.

In Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades' homily, he spoke about the importance of prayer and how Jesus links health with "even larger purposes." As he looked out to the congregation, he said, "I invite you who have been blessed by God with medical skills to see your profession as a share in the mission Jesus gave to the 72 disciples. Jesus Himself is your model. Jesus, the divine physician, humbly put Himself at the full disposal of His patients."

"Please know of my and the Church's gratitude to you for



Jason Shanks speaks at a dinner following the Oct. 18 liturgy. He recounted his long recovery from COVID-19, crediting the Catholic faith and his medical professionals.

your service of the Gospel, especially your selfless and exhausting work during the pandemic. May the Lord continue to give you strength and consolation as you face the pressures of your work," he said.

The physicians and other health care personnel attended the Mass to celebrate their fellow medical professionals and to pray for strength for each other and for their patients.

Dr. Patrick Krach, a third-year family medicine resident with the Fort Wayne Medical Education Program, shared why he is so passionate about his career.

"It's great to be a Catholic doctor and take that approach every day in how I take care of my patients and pray for my patients. My Catholic faith first and foremost leads me to respect the human dignity of every per-

son that I see whether it's just a normal well child check or sick and dying patients in the hospital. My faith is how I approach my patients in an everyday setting."

The decision to become a medical professional touches the lives of those around the person who makes that decision. Dr. Eustace Fernandes, pulmonary and critical care specialist with Lutheran Medical Group, said he was inspired by his father, who was also a physician.

"I learned from [my dad] that it was an opportunity to serve Jesus living in my fellow man and also just a genuine love of the subject matter and the desire to serve others is what led me to pursue a career in medicine."

In his approach to caring for his patients by being a Catholic physician, his father told him: "My faith teaches me that every patient I encounter is an image of Christ so it provides encouragement for me to uphold the dignity of every human person because that person is Jesus."

For Anne Koehl, a registered nurse who works with expectant moms and helps them to make the choices for their babies is something she is passionate about. She is the director of the Women's Care Center, a pregnancy resource center in Fort Wayne, that provides free pregnancy testing and ultrasounds, counseling and more for pregnant mothers who are facing unplanned pregnancies.

Koehl also serves as a member of the Catholic Medical Guild chapter in Fort Wayne. To her, the White Mass is a special time for health care professionals to come together once a year as an opportunity to worship and pray together and continue the work that they do. "I just really love helping people. It makes me feel closer to God with the work I do," she said.

After Mass, a dinner was provided at St. Mary, Mother of God Parish down the street. There, a special guest spoke about his miraculous recovery from COVID-19 while in the care of a Catholic physician. Jason Shanks, OSV Institute president, was intubated and sedated for six weeks and was under the care of Dr.

Fernandes. "Tonight, I want to express my gratitude and thanks. I think Catholic medicine in particular saved my life," he said. "I was in the hospital for three months and had to relearn how to walk and talk, use my arms again, swallow — many things we take

for granted. I want to show you a little bit of hope for your other patients of what God can do through you and the work you do."

Shanks went on to encourage everyone to remember the medical heroes that are on the front lines during this pandemic. "I watch them go through very stressful days, and I think we owe them a debt of gratitude and prayers for their strength and courage."

*"It's great to be a Catholic doctor and take that approach every day in how I take care of my patients and pray for my patients."*

DR. PATRICK KRACH

# U.S. Catholic Church to observe National Vocation Awareness Week Nov. 7-13

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Bishop James F. Checchio of Metuchen, New Jersey, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, is encouraging dioceses to use National Vocation Awareness Week, Nov. 7-13, as a time to foster vocations in their local faith communities.

"Studies of those recently ordained and religiously professed consistently show that the encouragement of the parish priest is the most influential factor in vocational discernment," Bishop Checchio said in an Oct. 20 statement about the upcoming weeklong observance.

"But the accompaniment of the whole faith community is key for genuine vocational discernment — from one's parents and family members, to the Catholic educators, as well as the vital role that youth ministers and fellow parishioners play as the early encounters for young people to the faith," he added.

National Vocation Awareness Week is an annual celebration of the U.S. Catholic Church dedicated to promoting vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life through prayer and education, and calling the faithful to pray for and support those who are considering such a vocation.

Resources to utilize during National Vocation Awareness

Week, including recommended reading and discernment tips, prayers of the faithful in English and Spanish, and bulletin-ready quotes are available online at <https://bit.ly/3jCqTcS>.

The observance of National Vocation Awareness Week began in 1976 when the U.S. bishops designated the 28th Sunday of the year to call attention to the importance of upholding vocations and praying for those discerning a religious vocation and celebrating those who were in ordained ministry and consecrated life.

In 1997, the celebration was moved to the feast of the Baptism of the Lord and in 2014, the USCCB's Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations moved the observance to November to influence youth and young adults by engaging Catholic schools and colleges.

In his message for the 58th annual World Day of Prayer for Vocations April 25, Pope Francis

offered St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, as a model for vocational discernment.

He urged the Church "to look to St. Joseph as an 'outstanding example of acceptance of God's plans.'"

"For St. Joseph, service — as a concrete expression of the gift of self — did not remain simply a high ideal, but became a rule for daily life," the pope said in his message. "I like to think, then, of Saint Joseph, the protector of Jesus and of the Church, as the protector of vocations. In fact, from his willingness to serve comes his concern to protect."

Pope Francis added: "What a beautiful example of Christian life we give when we refuse to pursue our ambitions or indulge in our illusions, but instead care for what the Lord has entrusted to us through the Church! God then pours out his Spirit and creativity upon us; he works wonders in us, as he did in Joseph."

*"Studies of those recently ordained and religiously professed consistently show that the encouragement of the parish priest is the most influential factor in vocational discernment."*

BISHOP JAMES F. CHECCHIO



CNS photo/Joe Cashwell, Arlington Herald

Deacon Vincent Cong Nguyen, assisted by Father Joseph W. Farrell, parochial vicar of St. Timothy Church in Chantilly, Va., uses incense to bless five newly ordained priests at the Cathedral of St. Thomas More in Arlington, Va., June 6, 2020. National Vocations Awareness Week is Nov. 7-13.



## Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, October 31: 10:30 a.m. — Confirmation Mass, Holy Cross Church, South Bend  
 Monday, November 1: 10:30 a.m. — All Schools Mass, Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne  
 Tuesday, November 2: 12 p.m. — Mass, Catholic Cemetery, Fort Wayne  
 Wednesday, November 3: 10 a.m. — Meeting of the Bishop's Cabinet, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne  
 Wednesday, November 3: 5:30 p.m. — Meeting of Diocesan Review Board, Oakwood Inn, Syracuse  
 Thursday, November 4: 1 p.m. — Virtual Meeting of Our Sunday Visitor Institute Committee  
 Thursday, November 4: 7 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, St. Charles Borromeo Church, Fort Wayne

## Bishops urge Senate to include pro-life provisions in appropriations bills

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The chairmen of the U.S. bishops' pro-life and religious liberty committees urged U.S. Senate leaders Oct. 22 to include the Hyde and Weldon amendments and "other long-standing, bipartisan pro-life provisions" in appropriations bills being advanced in the chamber.

By eliminating these provisions, "the Senate is staking out an extreme position of forcing taxpayers to pay for the taking of innocent unborn human life and forcing health care providers to participate in this injustice" against their deeply-held beliefs, the prelates said in a joint statement.

In addition, employers and insurers will be forced to cover and pay for abortion, they added.

On Oct. 19, the U.S. Senate's Committee on Appropriations released the text of several appropriations bills which, "like their House counterparts," they said, currently exclude pro-life measures, such as the 46-year-old Hyde Amendment, which have long enjoyed bipartisan support.

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee for Religious Liberty, and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Pro-Life Activities, issued their statement in response to the Senate committee's action.

"We recognize and appreciate that these bills also include many life-affirming provisions that help vulnerable people, including pregnant moms, refugees, low-income families and the elderly," they said. "The laudable concern and support these provisions represent must also extend to our vulnerable brothers and sisters in the womb."

"We reiterate the fact that funding the destruction of innocent unborn human lives, and

forcing people to participate, are grave abuses of human rights," Cardinal Dolan and Archbishop Naumann added. "We call on the Senate to prevent this injustice by passing appropriations bills that fully support and protect human dignity, and the most vulnerable among us."

Their statement reiterated a number of earlier statements issued by U.S. bishops over the past several months urging both House and Senate to keep Hyde, Weldon and other pro-life provisions intact in spending bills.

In July, the U.S. House rejected several pro-life riders to spending bills offered by pro-life House members, including Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., and Rep. Andy Harris, R-Md., and supported by the U.S. bishops and various pro-life organizations.

Hyde first became law in 1976 to prohibit federal funds appropriated through the Labor Department, the Health and Human Services Department and related agencies from being used to cover abortion or fund health plans that cover abortion except in cases of rape, incest or when the life of the woman would be endangered.

Hyde has been reenacted in spending bills every year since it was first passed.

The Helms Amendment — what Smith called "the Hyde Amendment for the rest of the world" — has prohibited using U.S. taxpayer funds to directly pay for abortions in other countries since 1973.

The Weldon Amendment has been included in the annual appropriation for Health and Human Services since 2005. It allows health care providers as well as insurance plans to refuse to provide abortions, pay for them or refer women to abortion clinics.

An early version of the Senate's \$3.5 trillion spend-

# Large Catholic families live against the grain

BY JENNIFER BARTON

They might have once been commonplace, but modern society often treats large families as an anomaly. American culture is geared toward two-income parents, so neither stays at home with the children, and the average household boasts only two or three offspring. Large, devout Catholic families tend to be seen as a countercultural phenomenon and are sometimes the target of mockery in Hollywood and in society.

The tide may be starting to turn back toward bigger families among the younger generation. Some local mothers demonstrate that it is possible to raise large families in a culture that ridicules them.

## Sacrificial love

In raising her family of 12 children, Jessica Smith has heard every flippant, derogatory comment about them. People have asked about her finances, given her the “you-know-how-that-happens” remark, and even gone so far as to tell her they hoped she would have a miscarriage. Friends and family members have argued against her home-schooling her children from kindergarten through high school. She has walked into restaurants and heard other customers ask to be moved away from her large family.

None of those things have deterred Smith, a longtime parishioner of St. Paul of the Cross in Columbia City, from loving the “big, counter-cultural life



Provided by the Jessica Smith

**The Scott and Jessica Smith family of Columbia City let the size of their family be in God's hands. The couple has 12 children, including a set of triplets.**

that we live.” Her oldest son is 20; her youngest is 2.

Neither her nor her husband, Scott, come from large families, and they hadn't planned on 12 children. She recalls telling people that “if God desires me to have 12 children, then I will;” but she expected that number was too high to ever become a reality. “And now here we are.”

It started with one child, and then suddenly the Smith family tripled. They had no idea Jessica

was carrying three babies prior to the ultrasound for their now-19-year-old triplets. But they had prayed for God's will to be done, telling Him they thought they could handle one more baby. When the ultrasound technician announced that it was twins – and then a slight movement revealed three heads instead of two — it was a dramatic moment.

“It was literally the best thing that ever happened to us,” Jessica remarked. “From then on, we just kind of let it be in His hands. We submitted to His will.”

Raising a large family is not without financial and emotional cost. Jessica admitted that each time they were faced with the

possibility of another child being added to their brood, she and Scott went through a checklist of “why nots” to determine if they were truly trusting God to provide for them.

“I think openness to life is something that as Catholics, we're so quick to dismiss,” she stated. “People look at Scott and I and think that we chose this, that this is what we always dreamed of and that it's not hard at all. But this is a life of great sacrifice.”

She continued, “It has involved emotional struggle, financial struggle; the fruits are so much bigger than that, though, which is true of anything God gives us.”

Trusting God's providence

sometimes requires giving up material possessions, which is the comment Jessica most dislikes hearing. She grew up wearing handmade and garage-sale clothes and was never bothered by that, and she applied this frugal mindset to her own children. Sometimes she has to tell her children ‘No.’ “But that's ok, they learn to not take things for granted. They learn to pitch in and pay for some of their own stuff. They learn to be generous to others.”

The family is heavily involved in Taekwondo, which is an avenue of evangelization for them. “People recognize that there's a joy in our family and the source of that joy is our faith,” Jessica said. “And we pray before every tournament ... but we always pray that the most important thing we do at that event is be a source of Christ's love, that somebody will see that in us and be drawn to it.”

Jessica spent many years in ministry at St. Paul before taking a hiatus. She is now back serving as co-leader of the Gifted and Sent Ministries with Father Andrew Curry.

Her love of service has rubbed off on her daughter, who also feels called to take part in the ministry.

“Parenthood is sacrificial love, and we don't really understand sacrificial love in our culture,” Jessica stated.

## Trusting the Holy Family

During times of trial, Fort Wayne mother of seven Gina Huston has turned to the Holy Family to intercede for hers, with wondrous outcomes. Her children range from 20 years to 18 months.

After she and her husband, Chris, married, they had three children quickly, then took a six-year hiatus due to health issues. They used natural family planning to space their children, and Gina made some dietary changes to improve her health so they could have more children. She was already pregnant with her sixth child when they discovered something was wrong with their then-infant son, Calvin.

One night, Gina woke with a bad feeling and discovered Calvin suffering a stroke, which left his physical capabilities severely diminished. By age 5, he had been diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder called CACNA1A. He requires the use of a wheelchair and feeding tube.

As he grew, caring for him became difficult, particularly carrying him, and they lived in a two-story house. Calvin loves water, so Gina often took all the children to a community pool, but that put stress on her because she had to stay in the water with Calvin while trying to watch her other children. Once

### “THE COMMANDMENT

*‘You shall not kill!’*

*always requires respecting and promoting human life, from its beginning to its natural end.”*



John Paul II

**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CHURCH**

FORT WAYNE

### “THE CONFLICT

*is between a culture that affirms, cherishes, and celebrates the gift of life, and*

*a culture that seeks to declare entire groups of human beings - the unborn, the terminally ill, the handicapped, and others considered ‘unuseful’ to be outside the boundaries of legal protection”*

—Pope John Paul II

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Provided by the Gina Huston

**Gina and Chris Huston have found abundant joy and blessings amid the struggle of having seven children.**

when the pool had to be evacuated due to a thunderstorm, Calvin experienced a meltdown so severe that Gina had to call her husband home from work.

The night before Chris was about to sign a costly loan to put in a pool, Gina was a mess. She remembers praying to Mary. "I told the Blessed Mother 'I don't know why this happened to me, but all I want is this kid to be happy. I'm supposed to care for these kids ... this is too much.'" She cried herself to sleep that night.

The next morning, they pulled the plug on the loan but still needed a housing solution. That same day, her sister sent her a link to a YouTube video describing how Mary would not refuse the request of anyone who prayed four rosaries a day. Even though finding time to pray the rosary "is so insane at my house," Gina took out a piece of paper, wrote down every little requirement she could think of for a new house and began playing YouTube rosaries throughout her day.

Their elderly neighbors had a beautiful, one-story house complete with basement and pool, but insisted they would never move. Twenty-seven days after Gina started the four rosaries, the older couple came to the Hustons' door asking if they wanted to buy their house because they were moving out of state.

Everything about the house met the Hustons' needs, right down to wood flooring that was perfect for a wheelchair. Gina and Chris were even able to sell their home to another Catholic family with children who play with theirs.

Instead of being abandoned by God, Gina found that Mary "listened to me even though I was being a brat." The four rosaries "changed my life."

Anxiety over the possibility of another child plagued her, yet they wanted one more. Prayers to Blessed Solanus Casey were answered when Gina attended a Cursillo weekend and found herself surrounded by parents of large families, who reassured her that she could handle another child. She and Chris now have

an 18-month-old daughter.

St. Joseph has reached his mighty arm into her life as well. Last year, days after delivering their daughter, another stroke-like episode left Calvin with a complete loss of his abilities. Gina began invoking St. Joseph's aid. Calvin has since regained some control of his limbs and can eat certain foods. "That's why I'm in love with St. Joseph, his abilities just kept coming back and coming back and coming back."

The St. Charles Borromeo Parish community pulled Gina through that tough time by providing meals even amidst the pandemic. "I don't think I cooked the entire summer. ... I couldn't have done it without them," she said.

The struggles of rearing seven children are nearly twofold with a special needs child, but there is abundant joy and blessings as well. Gina's and Chris's children have learned to be loving and compassionate people. Their oldest son is studying to become a nurse and is Calvin's full-time caregiver, paid by the state. During quarantine, the older kids held their baby sister while doing online lessons.

For the other children, Calvin's life normalizes disabilities and demonstrates the value of every life. "I think it's teaching my kids to be the people God designed them to be."

Gina relies on Mary to walk with her in motherhood, interceding for her children daily.

"I just say those rosaries, which I'm not even halfway there when I'm saying them, but I'm trying my best, I feel like she's helping us along, because it is a lot."

Gina and Chris try to do things with each child individually and approach discipline on an individual basis. When it comes to passing on the faith, Gina said, "I've learned big time to let the dad lead," she commented. "He takes them to holy hour, which we try to do once a week ... because if the husband doesn't go to church, it's like 90% that the kids won't," she said.

**Advice for a counter-cultural life**

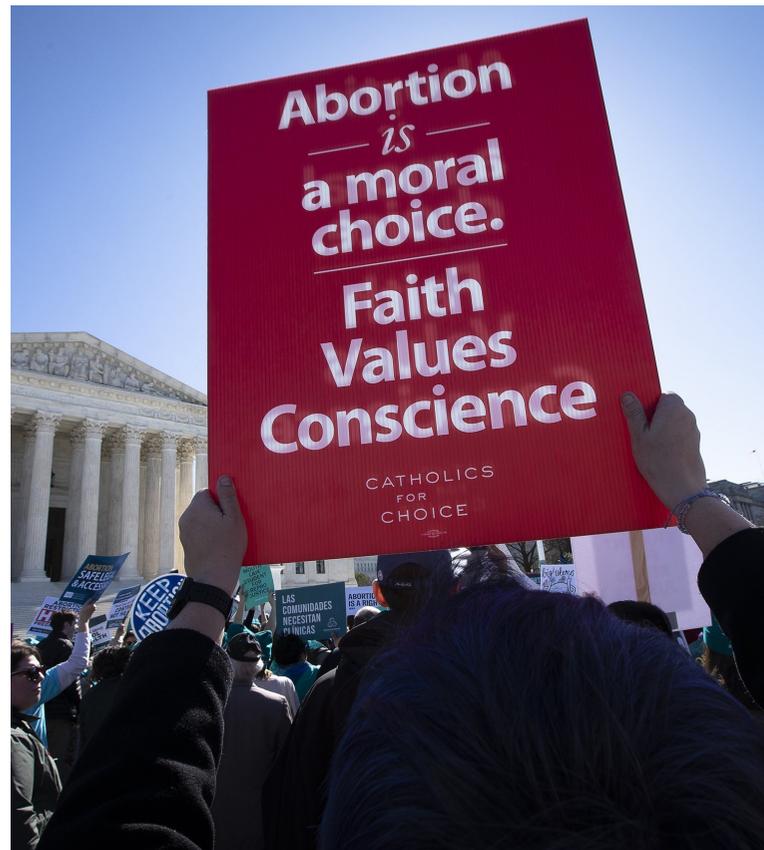
How do large families flourish in a sometimes child-unfriendly culture? Amanda Woodiel of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Goshen said her family makes deliberate efforts to live counter-culturally. Both she and her husband are converts and are raising their five children in the Catholic faith. She said, "We try to order our lives into something larger." They follow the Church calendar and fast and feast on Fridays and Sundays respectively.

The Woodiel family has one television in their house and their children have a set screen time and can earn TV-watching privileges. No smart phones – "we live in the time and place of reality," Woodiel stated.

She is trying to disconnect the family's wants from their spending, partly by avoiding instant gratification services like Amazon Prime. "My kids are very used to a make-do mentality." They sacrifice material goods and try to teach their children life skills, including woodworking and baking. First Communion celebrations do not consist of elaborate parties, but rather pilgrimages to places such as the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on Notre Dame's campus. And Christmas often looks a little different as well. "My kids get three gifts at Christmas," noted Woodiel.

The Smith family views Christmas in a similar manner. They celebrate Advent by making gifts for others. "We spend a lot of time thinking and praying and creating for the people that we love, and my kids are so much more focused on watching other people receive than they are with what they receive because they've created something for someone else."

Jessica summed up the reasons for having multiple children. She said, "It's not just about numbers, it's about what we teach our children to put into the world. How many people will see and know Christ because of my 12 children? Hopefully more than we can count."



CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn

**Demonstrators who support legal abortion are seen near the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington March 4, 2020. The chairmen of the U.S. bishops' religious liberty and pro-life committees in a joint statement Oct. 22 urged the U.S. Senate to include the Hyde and Weldon amendments and other "long-standing, bipartisan pro-life provisions" in several appropriations bills that senators have advanced.**

**PROVISIONS, from page 3**

ing plan did pass with a pro-life amendment offered on the Senate floor by Sen. James Lankford, R-Okla. It was approved in a largely party-line vote of 50-49, with Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., joining Republicans to support it. The Lankford Amendment included Hyde language to prohibit federal funding for abortions and Weldon Amendment language to provide conscience protections for health care providers and medical professionals who object to performing abortions.

But the \$3.5 trillion bill is stalled and ongoing negotia-

tions are aimed at trimming the bill; Manchin, whose "yes" vote Democrats would need to pass it, said he won't vote for anything higher than \$2 trillion and is pushing for less.

Though Hyde and the other provisions have for years enjoyed bipartisan support, a number of Democrats in the House and Senate now claim the provisions "discriminate against low-income women who depend on Medicaid and other federal funding for health care and places a disproportionate burden on women of color, especially Black and Hispanic women," according to an Oct. 6 article in The Hill, a daily news outlet.

**"Let us respect and love human life."**  
 ~ Pope Francis, Twitter, May 2013

Respect Life

Saint Pius X Catholic Church  
 Granger, Indiana

StPius.net/  
 RespectLife

## Kidnapping in Haiti prompts worries about other church workers' safety

WASHINGTON (CNS) — As Christian missionaries and family members, some as young as 8 months old, were still being held for ransom in Haiti by a gang notorious for group kidnappings, other charities and religious groups examined how they can remain safe while delivering humanitarian aid. Seventeen members of Christian Aid Ministries, based in Millersburg, Ohio, were kidnapped Oct. 16. The 400 Mawozo, which is considered in control of Croix-des-Bouquets and the surrounding area where the abductions occurred, claimed credit for the kidnapping and is demanding a \$17 million ransom — \$1 million per person. The Ohio group was grabbed after their visit to an orphanage in Croix-des-Bouquets, a northeast suburb of Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince. In April, five priests and two nuns were abducted in that same area and released after 20 days when ransoms were paid. Christian Aid Ministries is connected to Amish and Mennonite groups in the United States. "This is the worst Haiti has been for a long time," Miami Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski told *The Tablet*, the newspaper of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York. "It's hard to see when it turns around. You think once it hits bottom it would start going on the uptick, but every time we think we hit bottom we find out that bottom is even deeper."

## Spirituality, encounter at heart of World Mission Sunday, cardinal says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — At the heart of the celebration of World Mission Sunday are the experiences of countless missionaries who share with others their own personal love story with Jesus, said Filipino Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle. Promoting the celebration of World Mission Sunday Oct. 24, Cardinal Tagle, prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, told journalists that the Church's mission to evangelize does not belong to just a select few, but is a "call for all the baptized. Spirituality and an encounter with the Lord is always missionary," he said. A relationship with Jesus is "an experience that moves us out of ourselves to share Jesus with all nations." A missionary, he said, is anyone who "tells 'a story of love' lived with Jesus and brings compassion from Christ to the world. We cannot keep to ourselves the encounter with God who has touched our hearts and who has done marvelous works," he said.

## Pope congratulates ecumenical patriarch on anniversary of election



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople exchange gifts at the end of a private meeting at the Vatican in this Sept. 17, 2019, file photo. The pope sent good wishes to Patriarch Bartholomew on the 30th anniversary of his election; in an Oct. 22 message, he said he was grateful for their "profound personal bond from the time of the inauguration of my papal ministry, when you honored me with your presence in Rome. I join you in thanksgiving to the Lord for the many blessings bestowed upon your life and ministry over these years, and pray that God, from whom all gifts come, will grant you health, spiritual joy and abundant grace to sustain every aspect of your lofty service." Since his election in 1991, Patriarch Bartholomew has shared a close relationship with the Roman pontiffs, especially with Pope Francis.

## With numbers growing in U.S., more Hispanics involved in Church, community

HOUSTON (CNS) — Catholic Church officials say they are not surprised by the 2020 U.S. census showing Hispanics accounted for 51.1% of the country's growth, rising to 18.7%, or about 62.1 million, of the U.S. population. Eight in 10 Hispanics in the U.S. are American citizens, according to the data. And for the first time, the percentage of whites dipped below 60% in the U.S. to 57.8% in 2020, the census stated. For future planning in education and job training, the census reported the under-18 population is now majority people of color at 52.7%. In Southwestern states, the numbers are even closer, with Hispanics now the largest population group in California, while in Texas, Hispanics grew to 39.3%

of the state's population, nearly equal to non-Hispanic whites at 39.7%. All these census numbers align with a national program the Catholic Church has developed in V Encuentro, or Fifth National Encuentro, a series of regional and national meetings of Hispanic ministry leaders and youths, said Lazaro Contreras, director of the Galveston-Houston Archdiocese's Office of Hispanic Ministry. Now the office is in the midst of finalizing a bilingual manual to help Hispanic laypeople and Church leaders to "provide a pastoral response to the large presence of Hispanics in the church in the U.S.," Contreras told the *Texas Catholic Herald*, the archdiocesan newspaper.

## Retired Pope Benedict hints at his death in condolence message

WILHERING, Austria (CNS) — Retired Pope Benedict XVI has

hinted at his death in a condolence message for a former colleague who was a professor in Regensburg, Germany. "Now he has arrived in the hereafter, where I am sure many friends are already waiting for him. I hope that I will soon be able to join them," the 94-year-old pope wrote in a letter published by the Upper Austrian Cistercian Abbey of Wilhering on the death of Father Gerhard Winkler. The German Catholic news agency KNA reported that in the letter dated Oct. 2, the retired pope also emphasized that Father Winkler, who died at the end of September at the age of 91, was "closest to him" among all his colleagues and friends. "His cheerfulness and deep faith always attracted me," he wrote. Father Winkler was a Cistercian monk and professor of Church history at the University of Salzburg from 1983 to 1999. Before that, he had been a professor at the University of Regensburg beginning in 1974, at the same time as Joseph

Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI, who was there from 1969 to 1977.

## November Gold Masses celebrate 'unity between science and religion'

BISMARCK, N.D. (CNS) — A Gold Mass celebrating the "unity between science and religion" will bring scientists and science students together in prayer and fellowship Nov. 3 at the University of Mary. Bismarck Bishop David D. Kagan will preside at the 10 a.m. liturgy at Our Lady of the Annunciation Chapel on campus. "We are excited to host this Gold Mass. It is a wonderful way of connecting those who practice or teach science, at the university or in the community, and witnessing to the harmony of faith and reason," Jack Boyle, assistant professor of biology, said in a news release from the school. The Mass has been celebrated at the school since 2018. It is one of several around the country arranged in collaboration with the Society of Catholic Scientists. Founded in 2016, the society is an international organization of scientists and undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral students who are pursuing research in natural science. Gold was chosen for such liturgies because it is the color worn on the hood of those receiving a doctoral degree in science. In addition, St. Albert the Great, the patron saint of scientists, was an alchemist who worked to turn base metals into gold.

## Gregory: Rev. King's legacy should inspire today's fight against injustice

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Washington Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory said marking the 10th anniversary of the dedication of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in Washington Oct. 21 was an opportunity "to pause and reflect together at this place of tribute to the legacy of a great American. In studying and reflecting on this special place on its 10th anniversary, we are inspired by the life work of Dr. King and confidently recognize ourselves and the work we must still do in gratitude for each of the lessons he shared with us," he said in remarks at an anniversary ceremony. Cardinal Gregory, who offered a reflection and prayer, said Rev. King's examples of hope and resiliency should inspire people today to "never grow discouraged in our pursuit of social justice and racial justice." The cardinal joined President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, representatives of different faith communities, civil rights activists and others at the memorial to remember the slain civil rights leader and honor his legacy.

# BURYING THE DEAD

**A guide to Catholic  
funeral planning**

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT FROM TODAY'S CATHOLIC

## BURYING THE DEAD

*Truly my soul  
finds rest in  
God;*

*my salvation  
comes from  
Him.*

— Psalm 62

# Liturgical norms for the celebration of funeral rites



*Promulgated by  
Bishop John D'Arcy  
in June 2001  
and reprinted  
November 2005.  
Unless otherwise  
noted, material in  
quotation marks is  
from the Order of  
Christian Funerals.*

FORT WAYNE — Death and passing over into eternal life are mysteries at the center of the Catholic Christian faith. Though popular culture at times recoils from death and denies its reality, the “Order of Christian Funerals” states: “In the face of death, the Church confidently proclaims that God has created each person for eternal life and that Jesus, the Son of God, by his death and resurrection, has broken the chains of sin and death that bound humanity.”

## A celebration of the Church

Christian funerals are not private observances but celebrations of the whole Church, in which “Christians celebrate the funeral rites to offer worship, praise, and thanksgiving to God for the gift of a life which has now been returned to God, the author of life and the hope of the just.” These rites are celebrated, therefore, with appropriate choices of music, readings, gestures and decorations consistent with a Catholic Christian understanding of death.

When the Order of Christian Funerals is celebrated, the faithful gather not only to remember the deceased but also to comfort one another. “The celebration of the Christian funeral brings hope and consolation to the living. While proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and witnessing to Christian hope in the resurrection, the funeral rites also recall to all who take part in them God’s mercy and judgment and meet the human need to turn always to God in times of crisis.”

## The role of community

The celebration of a Christian funeral is a time for members of the community to come together. St. Paul says, “If one member suffers in the body of Christ which is the Church, all the members suffer with that member.” (1 Cor 12:26) No one is to be isolated in grief and mourning but to see the outstretched hands of fellow Christians, ready to help. For “those who are baptized into Christ and nourished at the same table of the Lord are responsible for one another.” All the baptized, then, are called to comfort those who have lost a loved one.

## The role of the ministers

Pastors and their associates play a special role as “teachers of faith and ministers of comfort.” Outside of Mass, when no priest is available, a deacon may preside at the funeral rites; when no priest or deacon is available for the vigil and the Rite of Committal, a layperson presides.

In addition to those who preside at the funeral rites, laypersons may serve as readers, musicians, pallbearers and extraordinary ministers of holy Communion. Both ordained and lay people must exercise their ministries with reverence and great care, that they may truly bring consolation to the mourners.

“Family members should be encouraged to take an active part in these ministries, but they should not be asked to assume any role that their grief or sense of loss may make too burdensome.”

## The role of the parish

The parish is a community of Christian believers, and it is an organization with resources made available in the ministry of consolation. Parish members, therefore, should see each funeral as a parish celebration, not a gathering of strangers. The parish and its members should assist the mourners in their need and in preparing the funeral rites. Priests, musicians or other pastoral ministers meet with the family to prepare the funeral rites and to offer prayer and comfort.

The parish always celebrates the liturgy with reverence and joy, filled with the spirit of Christian hope. Such liturgical celebrations are a model for the celebration of the funeral rites.

## Celebration of the liturgy: general principles

“A careful selection and use of readings from Scripture from the funeral rites will provide the family and the community with an opportunity to hear God speak to them in their needs, sorrows, fears, and hopes,” says the OCF.

The readings are most often chosen from the lectionary. Non-biblical readings may not replace the biblical readings. Well-prepared readers and the deacon proclaim the readings. “The presiding minister proclaims the readings only when there are not assisting ministers present.”

The psalms give poetic voice to suffering and pain, hope and trust. They are the words that Jesus Himself used in prayer during His life on earth. The psalms provided for the funeral rites are eloquent communal prayers when sung between the readings, during the processions, during the vigil for the deceased, etc. The beauty of their musical settings enhances the prayerfulness of the psalms. “Since the psalms are songs, whenever possible, they should be sung.”

“A brief homily based on the readings is always given after the gospel reading at the funeral liturgy and may also be given after the readings at the vigil service, but there is never a eulogy,” according to the OCF.

Music and singing help bind mourners together as they walk. “For processions, ministers of music should give preference to settings of psalms and songs that are responsorial or in a litany style and that allow the people to respond to the verses with an invariable refrain.”

In texts chosen from the ritual to conform to the circumstances of death and the needs of the mourners, “the presiding minister addresses God on behalf of the deceased and the mourners in the name of the entire Church.” Responding to the word of God proclaimed and preached, the assembly prays prayers of intercession at the vigil and the funeral liturgy for the deceased and all the dead, for the mourners and the needs of the whole world. Models for intercession in the rites may be adapted according to pastoral needs.

In songs chosen with a Christian understanding of death in mind, human hearts are given a voice. In some pastoral settings, there has been increasing confusion about the appropriate types of music for funerals. The tendency to secularize the rites must be countered by prayerful reflection when choosing music for all parish liturgies and by sensitive guidance in the preparation of the funeral rites with the mourners. There are three elements to consider in choosing music for a Christian funeral: They are the liturgical judgment, the musical judgement and the pastoral judgment.

“Prayerful silence is an element important to the celebration of the funeral rites. Intervals of silence should be observed, for example, after each reading, after Communion and during the final commendation and farewell, to permit the assembly to reflect upon the word of God and the meaning of the celebration.”

## Symbols give concrete witness to faith

The Easter candle “...reminds the faithful of Christ’s undying presence among them, of his victory over sin and death, and of their share in that victory by virtue of their initiation,” according to the OCF.

Holy water “...reminds the assembly of the saving waters of baptism.”

Incense ... is “a sign of honor to the body of the deceased...a sign of the community’s prayers for the deceased rising to the throne of God and a sign of farewell.”

Other symbols include the pall, which may be placed on the coffin as a sign of the baptismal garment and the equality of all Christians. A cross may be placed on the coffin as a reminder of Jesus’ suffering and the victory of his resurrection. A Bible may be placed on the coffin as a reminder that the word of God is present to us throughout our lives. Fresh flowers may enhance the setting. But “only Christian symbols may rest on or be placed near the coffin during the funeral liturgy. Any other symbols, for example, national flags or flags or insignia of associations, have no place in the funeral liturgy.”

The liturgical color is another symbol. For all funeral rites, vestments may be white, violet or black.

## Final commendation

During the final commendation, there will be an invitation to prayerful silence, followed by a song of farewell. This is the climax of the rite. It is a song for all, either a responsorial song led by the cantor or choir, or a hymn that allows the assembly to take its leave of the deceased. This is not the time for a solo.

## Procession to the place of committal

As the procession leaves the church, the choir or cantor may chant the traditional “In Paradisum” in English or Latin or both. The choir or cantor may sing another appropriate sacred song, or instrumental music may accompany the procession. A congregational hymn may be sung if mourners have provided a worship aid. This is not the time for a congregational hymn from the hymnal since all are in the procession. Secular music is forbidden at this time.

## Rite of Committal

As the procession approaches the grave, the cantor or choir may sing the “In Paradisum” or other appropriate song.

The song will be followed by an invitation Scripture verse, prayer over the place of committal, committal of the deceased, intercession, the Lord’s Prayer, concluding prayer and a prayer over the people. Another song may conclude the rite.



Joshua Schipper

# The importance of the Catholic funeral Mass

BY KAREN CLIFFORD

Death is a subject most people don't usually wish to talk about. But communicating final wishes to loved ones is vital.

Msgr. Michael Heintz, vicar general Father Mark Gurtner, and Pat McGann, director of McGann Hay Funeral Home in South Bend and a St. Pius X, Granger, parishioner, offered their views on the importance of preparing for a Catholic funeral.

Father Gurtner and Msgr. Heintz pointed out that just as a will is important in expressing a person's desires after death, a written document specifying wishes for a funeral can be made by Catholics as well.

"I think people should definitely prepare a document with their funeral wishes," said Father Gurtner. "You don't know what the situation will be in the future and where your family members are going to be at in terms of the faith, so for family members to have something specifically spelled out for you is very important."

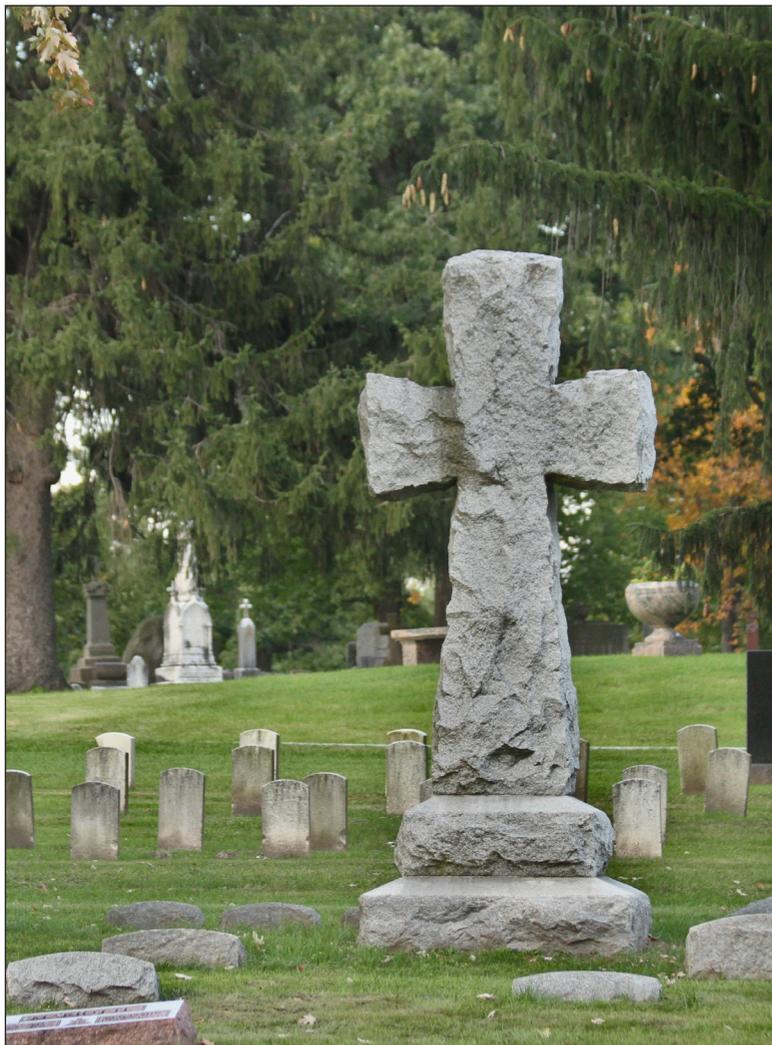
When children leave the Church, Father Gurtner pointed out, they often do not realize the importance of the funeral Mass. "What we see happening is people that are good faithful Catholics, who go to Mass every week, sometimes every day, are denied a funeral Mass because the children don't know their wishes."

Msgr. Heintz encouraged parishioners to plan their funeral rites and is happy to assist them. "This includes not only music and readings for the Mass, but also the vigil service at the funeral home and the committal service at the place of burial," he said.

Father Gurtner recommended having several copies of funeral arrangements in several places, such as filed with the will, in the church office and with family members.

When the death of a Catholic is near the priest should be notified. "If you know the death is coming soon, you should call the priest so they can hear their last confession, anoint the person and give Communion," said Father Gurtner.

"There is often a misunderstanding by some that a person will die and then the priest is called to give the last rites or



Joshua Schipper

anointing of the sick. The anointing of the sick can only be given to the living," he continued.

Both priests agree it is preferred that a funeral home should be contacted first following the death of a family member. "A funeral home director serves as a kind of intermediary and can assist the family with many of the decisions that need to be made about the particulars of which they are more competent to deal with," said Msgr. Heintz.

McGann spoke about the role of the funeral home in the Catholic Mass.

"Over the years, the funeral director's role has evolved and will continue to evolve as the Catholic Church adapts to societal changes. We guide and advise the family members regarding local customs in the arrangement conference at the funeral home or the family's home."

The music at a funeral Mass should be liturgically appropriate. Father Gurtner recognized that while some popular Christian music is liturgically

appropriate for a funeral Mass, some should be used only at the funeral home.

As for cremation, according to McGann, the bishop has asked funeral directors in this area to share with Catholic families that are thinking about cremation the order of the Church's preference in this area. They are:

- That the whole body be brought to church for the celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial; and that a vigil, rosary, wake or prayer service be held the day before at the funeral home with cremation later, followed by burial in a consecrated cemetery.
- If the whole body is not brought to church, the ashes and urn should be brought to church for the celebration of the Mass and burial following.
- A memorial Mass can be held for the deceased without the

body or the ashes and urn if the other two options are not possible or wanted.

Father Gurtner concluded, "The priest blesses the cremains and the Church says that they must be sealed, usually in an urn. They must be treated just like a casket. You can't keep it on your mantel. You can't spread it around. And they should either be buried or sealed in a mausoleum. That is the reverent way to treat the cremains."

## BURYING THE DEAD



Francie Hogan

*My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.*

— Psalm 63

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# Guidelines for the funeral liturgy with cremated remains present

FORT WAYNE — The Church clearly prefers and urges that the body of the deceased be present for the funeral rites. The presence of the body forcefully reminds the faithful that they are temples of the Holy Spirit and destined for future glory at the resurrection of the dead. In addition, the body, which lies in death, recalls the personal story of faith, the past relationships and the continued spiritual presence of the deceased person. Thus, the presence of the body is important for the grieving process of family and friends.

Making the decision to cremate primarily on the basis of convenience is inappropriate in light of the Church's teaching. In extraordinary circumstances, the diocesan bishop may grant permission for the pastor or his delegate to celebrate the funeral liturgy in the presence of the cremated remains following the guidelines as outlined here.

It is recommended cremation take place after the funeral liturgy, which allows the full celebration of the funeral rites as found in the Order of Christian Funerals.

All funeral Masses are to be celebrated in the church, not the funeral home.

Appropriate music always must be a significant part of the funeral liturgy. Psalms, hymns and antiphons that express our sustained and insistent prayer commending the deceased person to God's merciful care should

be chosen so his or her place in the communion of the just may be assured.

## Respect for cremated remains of a body

According to the OCF, "The remains of cremated bodies receive the same respect given to the corporeal remains of a human body. This includes a worthy, sealed vessel to contain the ashes, the manner in which they are carried, the care and attention to appropriate placement and transport, and their final disposition."

Cremated remains are entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium; they may also be buried in a common grave in a cemetery. The practices of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air or on the ground, or keeping cremated remains in the home of a relative or friend of the deceased, are not the reverent disposition the Church requires.

## Part I: Cremation following the funeral liturgy

At the conclusion of the funeral liturgy, the rite of final commendation and farewell take place using the alternate form of the dismissal. The body is then taken to the place of cremation, where the rite of committal may

be celebrated. Then the cremation of the body takes place.

When the cremated remains are given to the family, they reverently are taken to a place of burial or entombment and the rite of committal may be repeated using the alternate form provided.

## Part II: Cremation and committal before the funeral liturgy

The "Prayers after Death" and the "Vigil for the Deceased" from the OCF may be adapted as necessary and appropriate and celebrated before the funeral liturgy.

When the interment of the cremated remains takes place before the celebration of the funeral Mass, the rite of committal and final commendation is celebrated at the time of interment (before the Mass). The alternate form is used for the words of committal.

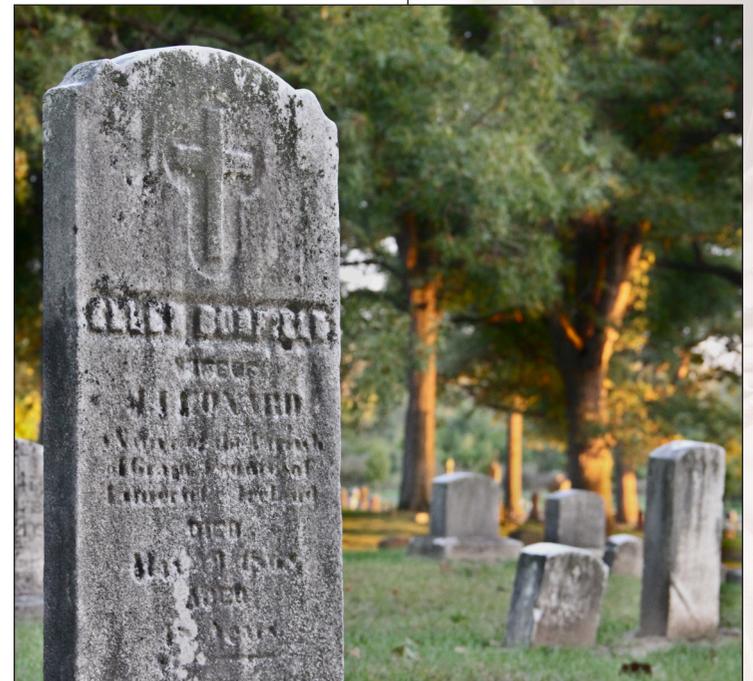
Following the committal, the family and friends of the deceased join the Christian community for the funeral Mass. Prayers should be chosen that do not make reference to burying the body of the deceased since this already has been done. A number of options may be found in the Roman Missal under the heading "Masses for The Dead." The OCF also offers suggested opening prayers and Scripture reading. The rite of final com-

mendation is omitted since this already has taken place.

Following the prayer after communion, the blessing is given and the people are dismissed in the usual way. It is appropriate to conclude the funeral liturgy with a hymn, antiphon or psalm which expresses our belief that for those who have died, "life is changed, not ended. When the body of our earthly dwelling lies in death, we gain an everlasting dwelling place in heaven."

When the funeral liturgy is celebrated outside of Mass, the rite of final commendation is omitted since this already has taken place at interment.

## BURYING THE DEAD



Joshua Schipper

Following the Lord's Prayer, a blessing is given and people are dismissed in the usual way.

## Part III: Funeral Mass in the presence of cremated remains

Sometimes it is not possible for the body to be present for the funeral Mass. When extraordinary circumstances make the cremation of the body prior to the funeral liturgy the only feasible choice, pastoral sensitivity must be exercised by all who minister to the family of the deceased.

In extraordinary circumstances, the diocesan bishop may grant permission to a pastor or his delegate to celebrate the funeral liturgy in the presence of the cremated remains in the church. Two options exist in this situation: contact the Office of Worship for more information or visit [diocesefwsb.org/diocesan-guidelines-and-norms/](http://diocesefwsb.org/diocesan-guidelines-and-norms/).

*Promulgated by Bishop John M. D'Arcy for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Re-issued 2005*

***Though I walk in the valley of darkness, I fear no evil, for you are with me.***

— Psalm 23

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# BURYING THE DEAD

*The Lord is my light and my salvation;*

*whom should I fear?*

*The Lord is my life's refuge;*

*of whom should I be afraid?*

— Psalm 27

## Funeral planning and wills

FORT WAYNE — Indiana lawmakers established a way years ago to address common questions about funeral planning, wills, and how to legally document a person's preferences for their own funeral services. The passage of Indiana's Funeral Planning Declaration statutes remove some of the uncertainty, and perhaps some disagreements, regarding the funeral arrangement process.

The law, which went into effect July 1, 2009, provides a vehicle for any competent person 18 years of age or older to designate a family member, friend or other trusted individual as the person who is authorized to carry out funeral wishes specified in the declarant's Funeral Planning Declaration. The full text of the law, which includes a Funeral Planning Declaration form, can be viewed at [www.in.gov/legislative/ic/code/title29/ar2/ch19.html](http://www.in.gov/legislative/ic/code/title29/ar2/ch19.html).

A Funeral Planning Declaration could be invaluable as a means of assuring a declarant that his/her desired funeral ceremony and burial preferences will be carried out after the declarant's death. A Catholic's end of life worship preferences are no less important or meaningful than those undertaken during life.

The law provides that a Funeral Planning Declaration must be separate from a will, power of attorney or similar document. It is a standalone document and takes precedence over certain other documents concerning decision making on the disposition of the declarant's body after death; the disposition of the declarant's remains; the provision of funeral services for the declarant; religious ceremonies to be performed after the declarant's death; the casket, urn or other merchandise necessary for the disposition of the declarant's body after death; direction



Jennifer Barton

of funeral arrangements; and grave memorials. The declarant designates the individual who is authorized to carry out the declarant's preferences on such items, or who is entrusted to make those decisions on behalf of the declarant after the declarant's death if no preference is provided. Either way, the law presents a means to take guesswork out of who is authorized to direct the funeral planning process and gives a declarant some

level of assurance that their religious preferences will be honored after death. If the declarant has a change of heart after making a valid Funeral Planning Declaration, the document can be destroyed, rendering it invalid, and another can be executed.

A declarant's ability to have preferences that are designated in a Funeral Planning Declaration carried out as requested could be limited by such things as the declarant's

financial resources at the time of death or contractual agreements, such as a prepaid plan with a funeral home. Consult a priest to determine the suitability of liturgy preferences. Anyone who is interested in a Funeral Planning Declaration should coordinate it with their other estate plans and talk with a priest to avoid roadblocks to having their preferences carried out after their death.

As we continue to be challenged by COVID-19 and its variants, we honor the souls of our loved ones and of those who have perished during this pandemic.

Please join us for our annual *All Souls Day Mass*

Bishop Kevin Rhoades and Fr. Zach Barry, presiding

Tuesday, November 2, 12 noon

Catholic Cemetery

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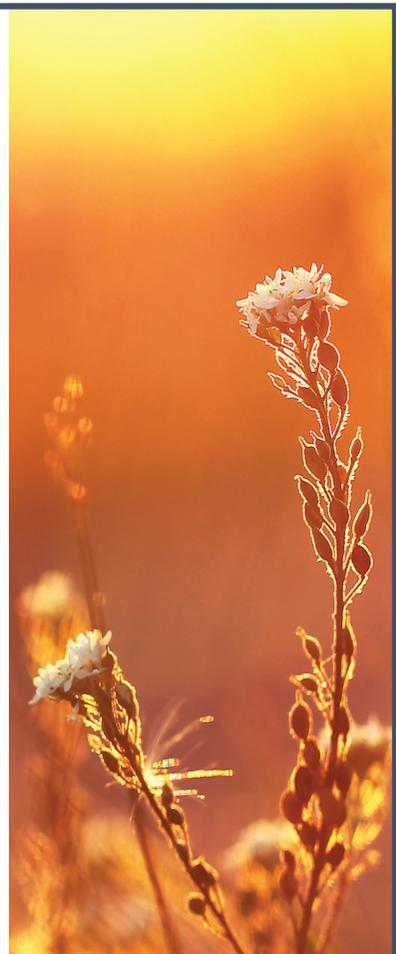
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## BURYING THE DEAD

### Catholic cemeteries in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend

The following cemeteries have been designated as sacred places by a Catholic bishop's blessing. If a Catholic is instead buried in a non-Catholic cemetery, the priest who leads the burial rite will include a prayer of blessing for the grave.

**Divine Mercy Funeral Home and Catholic Cemeteries**  
3500 Lake Ave., Fort Wayne, IN  
46805-5572  
www.divinemercyfuneralhome.org

**Arcola**  
St. Patrick Cemetery  
St. Patrick Parish  
260-625-4151

**Auburn**  
Immaculate Conception Cemetery  
Immaculate Conception Parish  
260-925-3930

**Avilla**  
St. Mary of the Assumption Cemetery  
St. Mary of the Assumption Parish  
260-897-3261

**Besancon**  
St. Louis Cemetery  
St. Louis Parish  
260-749-4525

**Columbia City**  
St. Paul of the Cross Cemetery  
St. Paul of the Cross Parish  
260-244-5723

**St. Catherine of Alexandria Cemetery**  
St. Catherine of Alexandria Parish  
260-672-2838

**Decatur**  
St. Joseph Cemetery  
St. Mary of the Assumption Parish  
260-724-9159

**Ege**  
Immaculate Conception Cemetery  
Immaculate Conception Parish  
260-693-9578

**Elkhart**  
St. Vincent de Paul Cemetery  
St. Vincent de Paul Parish  
574-293-8231

**Fort Wayne**  
St. Leo Cemetery  
260-426-2044

**St. Michael Cemetery**  
Pierre Settlement  
260-426-2044

**St. Vincent de Paul Cemetery**  
St. Vincent de Paul Parish  
260-489-3537

**Garrett**  
Calvary Cemetery  
St. Joseph Parish  
260-357-3122



## Diocesan funeral home a rare blessing

BY JENNIFER BARTON

For more than a hundred years, the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has maintained a Catholic, diocesan-operated cemetery; but until a few years ago, there has not been a funeral home with a coordinating mission. Divine Mercy Funeral Home officially opened its doors in 2017 and recently aided their 1,000<sup>th</sup> family with funeral preparations.

What is truly unique about Divine Mercy is its status as one of only five diocesan-operated funeral homes in the country, and the only one east of the Mississippi River.

"We're truly blessed to have Divine Mercy; it's a benefit to the Catholic community and the non-Catholic community," said Casey Miller, director. Building a Catholic funeral home had been on the minds of the board of directors for the Catholic Cemetery for several years before Miller joined the board.

Since the Catholic Church supports education for young people, hospitals for the ill and a nursing home for the elderly, Miller said it simply made sense to have a funeral home on the grounds of the diocesan cemetery.

He sees the mission of Divine Mercy as filling the corporal work of mercy to bury the dead. It does this not only for Catholics, but for anyone seeking to make funeral plans.

Many minds came together in making the funeral home a reality, though Miller pointed toward Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades as the driving force behind it. "I commend Bishop Rhoades because without his approval and his tenacity, if you will, in making Divine Mercy come to fruition, this never would have happened."

Through a contact in Indianapolis, Miller and board members were able to speak with other funeral center directors



Photos provided by Jason Mann

to discover both the good and challenging aspects of their diocesan funeral homes and to learn from them. That helped William Carr of Grinsfelder Associates Architects design the roughly 14,000 square foot building, keeping the Catholic mission forefront in the design.

Bishop Rhoades chose the names for the funeral home's two visitation rooms – St. Faustina Kowalska and St. John Paul II – and Father Daniel Scheidt, with help from Father Thomas Shoemaker and Father Mark Gurtner, chose Scripture passages for the walls. The mosaic image of the Divine Mercy was created by Christopher Botti, an Italian artist, and shipped in 1-foot by 1-foot squares to be reconstructed on the wall in the entranceway. It's the first thing most visitors see when they enter the building.

Catholic Cemetery was consecrated in 1873, though some of the graves date back even earlier because people who had been buried on the grounds of nearby Cathedral Square were moved when expansions of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception required more space. Miller stated, "To make accommodations for the cathedral, this tract of land was purchased, and those bodies that were buried at

the cathedral were moved here, along with the tombstones. This, then formally established the Catholic cemetery."

The oldest part of the cemetery is the inner circle near the altar. The Resurrection Mausoleum, the cemetery's first chapel mausoleum, was completed in 1919 and is maintained in the same perfect condition as it was a hundred years ago.

Everything involved with funerals and burials is done at Divine Mercy. Record-keeping, administration and even cremation is all completed in one building. In line with Church teaching, there are two things that Divine Mercy does not do, however: scattering and/or separating the ashes of a deceased person, and creating keepsake jewelry out of the ashes.

According to the instruction "Ad resurgendum cum Christo," put forth by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, cremation is acceptable for Catholics, but Christian burial is still required in those cases.

"In memory of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord, the mystery that illumines the Christian meaning of death, burial is above all the most fitting way to express faith and hope in the resurrection of the body."

It continues: "In order that every appearance of pantheism, naturalism or nihilism be avoided, it is not permitted to scatter the ashes of the faithful departed in the air, on land, at sea or in some other way, nor may they be preserved in mementos, pieces of jewelry or other objects."

Instead, Miller explained, "What we believe is appropriate is shortly thereafter the cremation process, the cremated body — the whole body — be interred in a Catholic cemetery."

He went on to clarify that the funeral home is more than willing to work with any other Catholic cemetery, often ones operated by individual parishes, to ensure that a person's ashes are properly interred after cremation.

Divine Mercy and the Catholic Cemetery continue to move forward on new projects, creating a singular blend of new and old behind the cemetery's gates. "We have something very exciting that is in the works right now and we hope to have it completed by the summer of next year," Miller shared. "It is called the All Saints Columbarium."

The new columbarium will have an upper level with glass-fronted columbaria niches and the lower level will be a catacomb structure similar to St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Stained glass windows will feature saints chosen by Bishop Rhoades and the floor will be made of marble.

Miller proudly described it as "very unique; there's nothing like it in the Fort Wayne or northern Indiana area."

Since it is owned by the diocese, Divine Mercy is a nonprofit organization. Miller takes great pride in the artwork displaying the home's Catholicity and his staff's welcoming and pleasant attitude to all who enter. As one of the few diocesan funeral homes in the country, Divine Mercy will continue its mission to provide personal and reverent burials for years to come.

# Frequently asked questions about Catholic Christian funerals in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend



## May Catholics be cremated?

Yes, as long as Catholic beliefs in the resurrection of the body are respected. Cremation should take place after the funeral liturgy.

## May we celebrate a funeral Mass in the presence of cremated remains?

The Church prefers that the funeral liturgy be celebrated in the presence of the body, which we reverence as God's good creation. However, for a serious reason, it is possible to celebrate the funeral liturgy in the presence of cremated remains. In this case, the urn containing the cremated remains may be placed on a table or stand where the body would normally be during the liturgy, but the urn is not incensed. This is only done to reverence the body, which is not present. The cremated remains must be buried or entombed.

## May we celebrate a Christian funeral for an unbaptized infant?

Yes, if the parents intended to baptize the child. The appropriate rites and texts are used from the Order of Christian Funerals.

## May we celebrate a Christian funeral for a stillborn infant?

Yes, the consolation of the funeral rites is offered for the parents of stillborn or miscarried infants. The appropriate rites and texts are used from the Order of Christian Funerals.

## May we celebrate a Christian funeral for a nonpracticing or lapsed Catholic?

Yes, if it can be determined that this would not be contrary to the wishes of the deceased.

## May we celebrate a Christian funeral for a baptized person who is not a Roman Catholic?

Yes, if the minister of the deceased is not available, a spouse or family member has requested the funeral, and it would not have been contrary to the will of the deceased. If a funeral Mass is celebrated, the name of the deceased is not mentioned in the Eucharistic Prayer, when only those in full communion with the Catholic Church are mentioned. In case of doubt, contact the chancellor of the diocese.

## May we celebrate a Christian funeral for a catechumen?

Yes, catechumens are entitled to the rites of Christian burial since they are members of the household of the Church.

## May we celebrate a Christian funeral for an unbaptized person who is not a catechumen?

No. The Christian burial rites are for the baptized, catechumens and unbaptized infants only. It may be pastorally sound to participate in a funeral service of the Word and prayer for an unbaptized person, but the Christian rites may not be celebrated.

## May we celebrate a Christian funeral for a person who has committed suicide?

Yes. We may not judge the state of mind or the condition of the soul of the deceased, whom we commend to God's mercy.

## Where may a Christian funeral be celebrated?

The vigil is normally celebrated in a funeral home, though under special circumstances it may be celebrated in the home of the deceased or in the parish church.

The funeral liturgy is celebrated in the parish church of the deceased.

When this is not possible, another church or chapel may be used if approved by the pastors involved and the diocese. In case of doubt, check with the chancellor's office. The funeral liturgy is not to take place in the home of the deceased, in a funeral home, or a cemetery chapel.

Though many people are lax about registering in a parish and participating in parish life, the parish is the basic unit of faith life. The parish church is the public place in which the Catholic community — the Body of Christ — professes its corporate faith. Grief is difficult, and some may prefer to grieve in private, but funeral liturgies are public, celebrated in the midst of a community gathered to bolster the faith and hope of the mourners.

The committal normally takes place at the grave site.

## May the coffin be draped with the American flag?

If a national flag or other flag is on the coffin, it should be removed before entry into the church. As a community of faith, what we celebrate is beyond any national or organizational boundaries. Only the pall, a sign that the baptized person has put on Christ, may be used in the church.

## When will the eulogy be given?

A eulogy is a text praising the deceased. There is no eulogy during the Catholic funeral rites. During the vigil and the funeral liturgy, a homily based on the Scriptures is preached and words of comfort are shared. Brief words of remembrance may be shared by family members or friends of the deceased, according to diocesan guidelines. The most appropriate time for such words is after the celebration of the vigil or at the funeral dinner.

## When is the rosary prayed for the deceased?

The rosary is a prayer which offers consolation to the family

of the deceased. This prayer may be prayed at any time during the visitation at the funeral home or at the church. The rosary should not take the place of the vigil. However, it may be prayed as part of the vigil or after the vigil.

## Who will lead the music for the funeral liturgy?

A parish cantor and parish instrumentalist(s) support the singing of the congregation. Guest musicians may be welcome to take part, but this must be verified with the parish musicians. When guest musicians participate, they do not take the place of parish musicians, but join them in the musical ministry. Many parishes have funeral choirs that support the singing of the congregation.

## When may favorite songs be sung?

Hymns and liturgical songs consonant with diocesan guidelines may be used during the funeral liturgy. Sacred songs that are not connected with the liturgy, e.g., "Ave Maria," "Panis Angelicus," and favorite songs of Mary or the saints, may be sung or played as part of the prelude before the funeral Mass or after the vigil at the funeral home. Secular songs may not be performed in the church but may be performed at the funeral home after the vigil, or at another time, or at the funeral dinner.

## Where can I find resources for celebrating Christian funerals?

The most important resource is the ritual book, Order of Christian Funerals, prepared by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy and approved by the USCCB in 1989. The Order of Christian Funerals is also available in a study edition. Both can be purchased through the Good Shepherd Books and Gifts. The bookstore will also be able to assist in locating other funeral resources.

*Source: Office of Worship*

For more information visit [www.diocesefwsb.org/worship](http://www.diocesefwsb.org/worship).

**Geneva**  
St. Mary of the Presentation Cemetery  
St. Mary of the Presentation Parish  
260-997-6558

**Goshen**  
Old St. John's Cemetery  
St. John The Evangelist Parish  
574-533-3385

**Hessen Cassel**  
St. Joseph Cemetery  
St. Joseph Parish  
260-639-3748

**Huntington**  
Mount Calvary Cemetery  
St. Mary Parish  
260-356-4398

**SS. Peter and Paul Parish**  
260-356-4798

**Lagro**  
St. Patrick Cemetery  
St. Bernard Parish, Wabash  
260-563-4750

**Lakeville**  
Mount Calvary Cemetery  
Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish  
574-291-2826

**Mishawaka**  
St. Joseph Cemetery  
St. Joseph Parish  
574-255-6134

**Monroeville**  
St. Rose of Lima Cemetery  
St. Rose of Lima Parish  
260-623-6437

**New Haven**  
St. John the Baptist Cemetery  
St. John the Baptist Parish  
260-493-4553

**Notre Dame**  
Cedar Grove Cemetery  
University of Notre Dame  
574-631-7646

**Pierceton**  
St. Francis Xavier Cemetery  
St. Francis Xavier Parish  
574-594-5750

**Plymouth**  
St. Michael Cemetery  
St. Michael Parish  
574-936-4935

**Roanoke**  
St. Joseph Cemetery  
St. Joseph Parish  
260-672-2838

**Rome City**  
St. Gaspar del Bufalo Cemetery  
St. Gaspar del Bufalo Parish  
260-854-3100

**South Bend**  
Sacred Heart Cemetery  
Our Lady of Hungary Parish  
574-287-1700

**Waterloo**  
St. Michael the Archangel Cemetery  
St. Michael the Archangel Parish  
260-837-7115

**Yoder**  
St. Aloysius Cemetery  
St. Aloysius Parish  
260-622-4491

# Prayers for the dead help the living, too, pope says

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Praying for the dead and asking God to welcome them into his presence forever helps Christians remember what life and death are really about, Pope Francis said.

Such prayers “instill in us a true vision of life; they reveal to us the meaning of the trials we must endure to enter the kingdom of God; they open our hearts to true freedom and inspire us unceasingly to seek eternal riches,” the pope said last year on Nov. 5, during a memorial Mass.

The annual Mass at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter's Basilica offered prayers for the six cardinals and 163 bishops who had died over the past year, including 16 bishops from the United States and three from Canada.

Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, dean of the College of Cardinals, and Cardinal Francis Arinze, a retired Vatican official, were the principal concelebrants.

One of the prayer intentions during the liturgy asked God to “welcome into your loving embrace the cardinals and bishops who died this year and give them the reward reserved for your faithful servants.”

In his homily, Pope Francis focused on Jesus' promise: “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”

Jesus' promise is a challenge to believers, the pope said. “We,



Jennifer Barton

too, are called to believe in the resurrection, not as a kind of distant mirage but as an event already present and even now mysteriously at work in our lives.”

However, he said, like Jesus, who cried at the tomb of his friend Lazarus, “our faith in the resurrection neither ignores nor masks the very human bewilderment we feel in the face of death.”

“As we pray for the cardinals and bishops deceased in the course of this last year,” the

pope said, Christians should ask the Lord “to dispel that unholy grief which we occasionally feel, thinking that death is the end of everything — a feeling far from faith, yet part of that human fear of death felt by everyone.”

Faced with “the riddle of death,” with its end of earth life and beginning of eternal life, Christians are called to conversion, he said.

“We are called daily to leave behind our instinctive image of death as the total destruction of a person,” Pope Francis said.

“We are called to leave behind the visible world we take for granted, our usual, commonplace ways of thinking, and to entrust ourselves entirely to the Lord who tells us: ‘I am the resurrection and the life.’”

When Christians believe that, he said, their prayers for the deceased are “truly Christian” prayers.

Such prayers “enable us to have a truly realistic vision of the lives they lived, to understand the meaning and the value of the good they accomplished, their strength, their commitment and their generous and unselfish love,” he said. And they also help people “understand the meaning of a life that aspires not to an earthly homeland, but to a better, heavenly homeland.”

## BURYING THE DEAD

**Relieve the troubles of my heart;**

**and bring me out of my distress.**

**Put an end to my affliction and my suffering;**

**and take away all my sins.**

**To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.**

— Psalm 25

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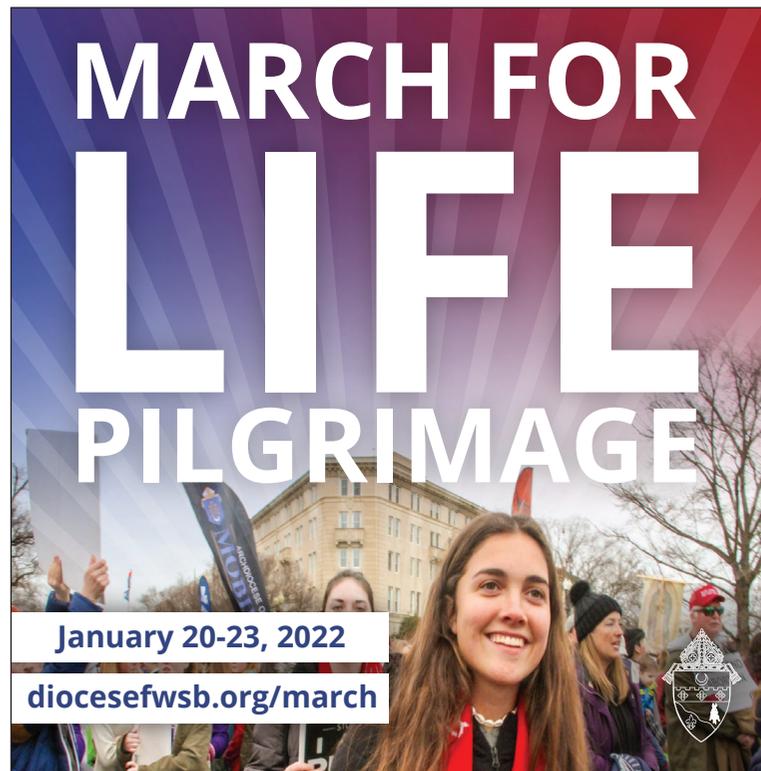


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# Gropps thankful for the power of prayer

BY DENISE FEDOROW

Even for a family rooted in their Catholic faith, a health scare can elevate the ability to trust in the Lord — and show just how powerful prayer can be.

Tom and Barb Gropp's 13-year-old son Chris was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer this past summer. Now, thankfully — and in their words, miraculously — he is cancer-free.

In June, the Elkhart boy told his parents he was experiencing swelling under his jaw. The family doctor put him on antibiotics. After seven days, he broke out from head to toe in a rash, necessitating another trip to the doctor. He was diagnosed with a classic allergic reaction and put on steroids.

The family left for Florida on a two-week vacation. Chris wasn't 100%, Mom said, but he was still able to play football on the beach and jump in the waves. The family arrived home July 9 and the next day, Barb went to work and Tom coached the All-Stars team Chris plays on.

Before the game, Chris was in tears. He couldn't breathe, saying it "felt like he was breathing through a straw." He sat down, and the breathing eased.

When the game was over, Chris was taken to an urgent care center, where an X-ray showed fluid on his lungs. Because the doctor thought it might possibly be a larger problem than antibiotics could handle, it was suggested he be taken to the emergency room at the hospital for more testing. "I'm so glad I decided to do that," Tom said.

The doctor told Tom and Barb they had found a mass in the chest area. At that point, they didn't know anything other than that it was "something out of the ordinary." Arrangements were to send Chris to Riley Children's Hospital in Indianapolis that night.

At Riley, the doctors quickly discarded lymphoma and leukemia. But initially, they still didn't know what the mass was.

## Prayers and support

Chris is one of nine Gropp children. Older sister Josie was taking care of the others at home, and at that moment there wasn't much food in the house. Barb called a group of friends and asked them to bring dinners. In a matter of 24 hours, the kids had dinners for two weeks. She also asked friends to put Chris on their prayer lists.

"The outpouring of love and support we received from the whole community — St. Thomas, Marian High School, St. Thomas Church and the Facebook community was amazing," she said. "We were receiving prayers from all over the world."

People began writing to her that they were thinking of



Provided by Beth Camp

**St. Thomas the Apostle School eighth grader Chris Gropp, front, gathers with his classmates after he shaved their heads Aug. 29 to show support for him in his battle with cancer. A teacher and his pastor, Father Jason Freiburger, also asked Chris to shave their heads.**



Denise Fedorow

**A helium balloon rosary is released at the school Oct. 11 after the classmates of Chris Gropp, in hat, prayed a healing rosary for him before a bone marrow transplant to ensure his Peripheral T Cell Lymphoma doesn't return.**

Chris and praying hard. "I had people contacting me from other prayer groups in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Florida and I had messages telling me they were growing in their faith because of reading his story and that they had a new outlook on prayer, faith and trust by hearing his story," Barb said. They also offered to make Chris scapulars and rosaries.

## Diagnosis and treatment

It was the middle of the second week at Riley before the family got a diagnosis of Peripheral T cell Lymphoma. They were told there were two kinds: Both were rare, but Peripheral T cell had a better success rate — 80%. It was also more aggressive, and they knew less about it.

According to the Lymphoma Research Foundation, PTCL is a subtype of nonHodgkin's Lymphoma. The cancer arises in lymphoid tissues outside of the bone marrow, such as lymph nodes, spleen, gastrointestinal tract or skin.

Barb said when they put

together a treatment plan, the doctor went hard on chemotherapy: three days in a row, all day. Chris has had to go back every three weeks to get another round. He has had three rounds to date.

It was determined the reason Chris felt like he was breathing through a straw was because there was a 10x10x4-centimeter mass laying on his left lung, which was 50% collapsed. He had to have a chest tube inserted for 2-½ weeks. During the first hour, the tube was inserted, it released two liters of fluid.

## Difficult road

One of the darkest times, Barb said, were when the word "cancer" was used for the first time. People had been saying "mass" and "tumor," but not "cancer," until the oncologist came in and explained the process he would go through. The doctor explained the timeline of treatments might go into next year.

Chris was doing well as far as his spirits were concerned, Barb said, and he was responding to treatment but was getting dis-

couraged about his release date from the hospital continually getting pushed back.

It was hard spiritually on him as well because he'd been denied the Eucharist a couple of times due to fasting and testing requirements.

At her request, a deacon from St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis came to bring Chris the Eucharist. Barb shared her concern that Chris hadn't shown any emotion yet, and that he was trying to be strong. She asked the deacon to counsel him. He talked to Chris about suffering, and they were praying the doctor's hands would be used as the Lord's healing hands. She stepped out for a moment, and when she returned, "Chris finally let the floodgates down."

The deacon told Barb, "He's scared, but he realizes the Lord's work in this and that he's not doing this alone."

## In remission

The couple said they were never shown Chris' first PET scan, but were told, "With all the cancer in his body he should have been in agony." They couldn't explain why he wasn't in pain," Barb said.

Tom and Chris went to Indianapolis for his second round of chemotherapy. They were in the hotel when they got a call from the doctor. She was going to take a picture of Chris's second PET scan and give a copy to the team of doctors to put on their refrigerators, she told Tom. He didn't understand why.

"She said the cancer was 98% gone. Her words were 'miraculous results': She said she'd never seen such results, especially after one round." They were sent home for a week.

They continued with the other two rounds. The cancer is completely gone, but to make sure it doesn't return, Chris underwent a bone marrow transplant in October.

"Since his illness began, he

has amazed them by how his body has responded quickly. It's been miraculous at every turn as far as I'm concerned," Tom said.

## Spiritual growth and classmate support

Barb said through her son's suffering, she has felt more connected to Mary in the Pieta.

"She watched her son suffer for the sake of others. I've watched my son suffer, not knowing the outcome. But I knew it wasn't in vain because others were gaining from it."

The ordeal gave her a new outlook on suffering. The message "surrender yourself" kept coming up — from others, in homilies, in readings and through prayer chains. She received messages from people sharing their experiences with different devotionals and incorporated all of it — brown scapulars, green scapulars, miraculous medals, oil of St. Joseph, oil of St. Raphael, holy oil from the holy land, rosaries. They prayed with medals she had pinned on Chris' sheets at the hospital, and they prayed over the room.

Chris said the faith foundation he was raised with helped him through the ordeal. "From what I know as long as I was faithful and prayed then God would help me get through it. Whether it took a while or not — whether it was a few years or a few months, He'd still get me through it. It really gave me hope, knowing that."

Tom drew from previous experiences that he'd been through "where God worked in my life in very obvious and direct ways. When you already have that faith point to draw from, you know it's there and it's real."

That first week, there were dark times. Tom shared an experience that stood out in his memory, of a time he felt like he was in a dark pit and wondering what was going on. He was in the elevator at the hospital and one other man was in there, too. They didn't speak a word, and the elevator stopped and the door opened.

"He looked at me and said, 'God's in control' and walked out. It was what I needed to hear at that point."

"I feel like I went through so much transition spiritually. I learned about suffering, surrender, trust. I feel like I had faith, but maybe I'd grown complacent," Barb said. "There's definitely room for growth in having more love for the Eucharist — it's still a journey."

For Tom, it rejuvenated and refocused them on "what's truly important. Believe in the power of prayer and trust, he emphasized." As hard as it may be sometimes, trust and let go. Looking at how amazed the doctors were and they were saying "We can't explain it'. Well, I can."

## The will of the people

Left-leaning editorial writers and news anchors have recently been warning us that public approval of the Supreme Court is dropping. They refer to polls conducted by Gallup and the Annenberg Public Policy Center.

In July 2020, after a term when the court struck down a Texas abortion law and protected gay and transgender employees, Gallup reported that it had an approval rating of 58%. When the court declined to enjoin a new Texas abortion law last month, Gallup said its rating had fallen to 40%.

It's pretty clear what's going on. On Dec. 1, the court will hear arguments in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. The question presented is whether all pre-viability prohibitions on elective abortions are unconstitutional.

The court has, in other words, agreed to reconsider whether *Roe v. Wade* was correctly decided. The abortion lobby is warning the court that the very prospect of overturning *Roe* is already threatening its legitimacy.

In April, President Joe Biden created a commission to study proposals for reforming the court, such as adding more justices. It's not an original idea. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt proposed packing the court after he won an electoral landslide (523-8) in the 1936 election.

President Roosevelt's proposal failed, but he did have reason to think that the court was getting out of its lane. For 40 years, the federal and state gov-

ernments had tried to regulate wages, hours and other terms of employment, and the Supreme Court had frustrated their efforts. The court was clearly out of step with the desires of the elected branches of government.

In *Lochner v. New York*, the court argued that the Constitution didn't allow laws like these. They violated the freedom of contract that was, the court said, inherent in the due process clause.

But the due process clause says nothing about freedom of contract. It says that no person can be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law. So, for example, the government can't execute (life) or incarcerate (liberty) or fine (property) a criminal defendant without a fair trial. The people who wrote it weren't thinking about minimum wage laws.

Though FDR's court-packing plan failed, the court eventually stopped supervising the economy. In 1937, it acknowledged that "the Constitution does not speak of freedom of contract." From then on it gave freer rein to the democratically elected branches, unless there was some express prohibition in the Constitution.

That is, until 1973. In *Roe v. Wade*, the court acknowledged that "the Constitution does not explicitly mention any right of privacy." It nevertheless held that such a right might be interpolated into the due process clause's "concept of personal liberty." And this right to privacy, the court said, forbade most kinds of government interference



JOHN GARVEY

### INTELLECT AND VIRTUE

with abortions.

According to a report this year by the Guttmacher Institute, states have enacted 1,313 different abortion restrictions since *Roe* was decided. And for almost 40 years, the court has relied on its unwritten version of the Constitution to strike down laws dealing with when, where, why and by whom abortions may be performed; with informed consent and spousal consent; with reporting and partial birth abortion.

The parallels between *Lochner* and *Roe* are striking. In both cases, the court invoked a right found nowhere in the Constitution to impose its own vision of social justice on the democratically elected branches of government.

Here's the ironic thing: The court has proposed to reconsider its behavior in *Roe*, as it did with *Lochner*. And rather than cheering this as a victory for democratic self-government, the media are whining that it would undermine the court's legitimacy because it would be contrary to the popular will.

John Garvey is president of The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

## The grace to endure

"Mommy, I don't feel good." Heart sinks. Grab the thermometer. Say a quick prayer it isn't COVID-19. Call the pediatrician and see if we can get an early morning appointment. Thank the Lord it's just strep throat. Just.

And then, a whole lot of sitting on the couch, watching movies, pushing Pedialyte pop-sicles and hoping the 1-year-old doesn't catch what her big sister has, all while juggling work emails and figuring out child care.

It was exhausting, and I was waiting for the moment my patience would run so thin I'd snap.

But, by the grace of God, we survived those few days of sickness and sadness with minimal yelling and just a few frazzled calls to my mom asking for advice.

On the evening of the third day of the great strep throat battle of 2021, my husband looked across the dinner table and joked, "Sickness and health, right?"

We said those words five and a half years ago before our family and friends. The assumption is that you're vowing to remain faithful, compassionate and committed to one another — husband and wife — on the healthy days and the sick days, in the prosperous times and the lean times, in the joyful moments and the moments of struggle and pain.

Then, God-willing and in His time, come kids who also get



KATIE PREJEAN MCGRADY

### WINDOW SEAT WISDOM

sick, feel sorrows, rejoice, struggle or battle their big feelings. And those vows to one another start to expand, mysteriously now encompassing tiny humans who are entirely dependent upon the two of you, who stood in that church, all gussied up and entirely unaware of what was to come.

When we sat down in our first marriage prep session with our friend, Father Jeff, he told us his favorite thing about marrying couples was watching them grow up and watching grace pour out upon them, helping them manage the moments that would otherwise be impossible.

It's in the sacraments that God's presence and grace is made visible and poured out in the world. Tangible, ordinary things and moments become sacred. Unleavened bread transformed becomes living bread from heaven, sacred words spoken by a man in a stole bring forgiveness, cold water poured onto a forehead ushers in new life.

And, in a real way, the grace of marriage and the sacramental moments are seen when sick

MCGRADY, page 17

## 'The Lord our God is Lord alone!'



### THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

### Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time Mark 12:28b-34

The Book of Deuteronomy is the source of the first reading. One among the first five books of the Bible, Deuteronomy contains for Jews the basic rule of life, a guide for living from the best source of advice: Almighty God.

Moses is central in these five books. He led the Hebrews from Egypt, where they had been enslaved, and took them across the stark Sinai Peninsula to the promised land.

He led them not because they had chosen him, or because he somehow had assumed the role of leadership, but rather because

God commissioned him.

Not only did Moses lead the people to their own land, the land God had promised them and reserved for them, but he taught them how to live in peace and dignity. Again, the teachings of Moses were not merely the thoughts of Moses himself, but the very words of God conveyed to humanity by Moses.

In this reading, Moses, speaking for God, reveals the central reality of existence. God, the creator, is everything. Moses, still speaking for God, further reveals that God is one. God is a person.

For its second reading, the Church this weekend offers a selection from the Letter to the Hebrews.

The loveliest and most powerful symbols and understandings of God and virtue in the ancient Hebrew tradition gleam in the verses of the Letter to the Hebrews. The exact circumstances of its composition are unknown, but obviously it was intended for an audience very aware of the values and beliefs of Judaism at the time of Jesus.

For the ancient Jews, from the time that Aaron, the brother of

Moses, served as high priest, the central figure in Jewish society was the high priest. The high priest's role extended far beyond officiating at religious ceremonies. He represented God. In turn, he spoke for the people in acknowledging God as supreme.

This letter sees Jesus as the great, eternal high priest. While the memory of Caiaphas and other high priests was less than lustrous among Jews of the time of Jesus because they allowed themselves to be tools of the Roman oppressors, the great high priest envisioned by Hebrews is holy and perfect.

Jesus is the high priest of Calvary. As a human, the Lord represented all humanity. As God, the sacrifice of Jesus was perfect.

St. Mark's Gospel furnishes the last reading. A scribe, expert in Jewish religion, asked Jesus to capsule the Commandments — an understandable request. Jewish law, seen as emanating from God, had 613 precepts.

In responding, Jesus drew upon two divine statutes well-known to the audience, one from Deuteronomy, the other from

Leviticus. Love God. Love all others. This mere technique situated the Lord in the process of revelation and defined that Jesus was God's spokesman.

### Reflection

The Church is moving forward to the feast of Christ the King, celebrated only a few weeks hence. In this feast, the Church will conclude its year and close its yearlong lesson, given us in part during each of the 52 Sundays when we hear God's Word and pray.

As it approaches this end of the year, the Church, a good teacher, summarizes its teachings.

This is the summary: God is everything. Departing from God, or disobeying God, brings chaos and doom.

God shows us the way, as God guided the Hebrews to freedom.

Jesus is our teacher and leader, as once God sent Moses to teach the Hebrews. The teachings of Jesus are simple but profound: Love God above everything and love others as self.

In the Gospel reading, the active word is "love." It is instructive and challenging. If true disciples live by God's law, then they will love God and all others, pure and simple.

### READINGS

**Sunday:** Dt 6:2-6 Ps 18:2-4, 47, 51 Heb 7:23-28 Mk 12:28b-34

**Monday:** Rv 7:2-4, 9-14 Ps 24:1bc-4b, 5-6 1 Jn 3:1-3 Mt 5:1-12a

**Tuesday:** Wis 3:1-9 Ps 23:1-6 Rom 5:5-11 Jn 6:37-40

**Wednesday:** Rom 13:8-10 Ps 112:1b-2, 4-5, 9 Lk 14:25-33

**Thursday:** Rom 14:7-12 Ps 27:1bcde, 4, 13-14 Lk 15:1-10

**Friday:** Rom 15:14-21 Ps 98:1-4 Lk 16:1-8

**Saturday:** Rom 16:3-9, 16, 22-27 Ps 145:2-5, 10-11 Lk 16:9-15

# Rejection letters and the spiritual life

Just as “Tiger King” became a defining show of our early quarantine days and “Bridgerton” carried us through the first COVID-19 winter, “Squid Game” has dominated this fall. It’s not hard to see how the Korean drama resonates more deeply because of the pandemic’s long shadow.

The nine-episode Netflix series depicts a survival game with 456 participants desperate for money. It’s dark and riveting.

Every day new headlines tout the show’s global success, shattering record after record. “Squid Game” became the first Korean show to reach the No. 1 spot on the U.S. Netflix chart. Now it’s poised to overtake “Bridgerton” and become Netflix’s biggest show ever.

Not bad for the show that almost didn’t launch, declined by studio after studio for the last decade.

Hwang Dong-hyuk, the writer, started drafting scripts while living with his mother and grandmother. He had to halt the project when he found himself — like the game’s contestants — strapped for cash. At one point he sold his laptop for \$675.

Pitching the show was no easier. Prospective investors and actors found the plotline implausible. Then the coronavirus brought us closer to our mortality and underscored the public-health repercussions of the wealth gap.

“The world has changed,” Dong-hyuk told *The Wall Street Journal*. “All of these points made the story very realistic for

people compared to a decade ago.”

Dong-hyuk is now in good company, among literary superstars like Louisa May Alcott, Agatha Christie and J.K. Rowling, all of whom faced repeated rejection early in their careers.

I’ve been thinking about Dong-hyuk’s story as “Squid Game” continues to make news. It’s hard to admit, but I don’t possess the same kind of persistence.

An exciting new creative pursuit presented itself last spring that, by its nature, has a slow timeline. Not 10 years, but much longer than my typical writing. And I’ve let it slide to a back burner that conveniently allows denial and good intentions to keep simmering.

The Church teaches that there are four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. Fortitude is defined as forbearance mixed with courage — to bravely press on. It’s a virtue we sorely lack in this Insta-age: Instagram for an instant telegram, Instacart for an instant grocery cart. We expect same-day deliveries, immediate results; click and procure. Anything slower feels irrelevant.

Isn’t that a shame? Spiritual growth doesn’t happen on the first try. Good things are worth working at and waiting for. They mean more.

Jennifer Dukes Lee, a Christian writer from Iowa, is reminding me of this. Her message feels like a permission slip to drop out of the hustle



## TWENTY SOMETHING

CHRISTINA CAPECCHI

culture: “You were not made for speed.”

Her new book “Grow Slow” and its accompanying Bible study explore this in depth, drawing on the wisdom she’s gleaned from farming.

“This is the important work of cultivation — learning to trust the One who is in charge of the growth,” Jennifer writes. “If you’re like most people, you want things faster, sooner, easier. But life isn’t a reality TV competition where someone is suddenly discovered in front of a live audience. As I reflect on God’s cultivating work in me, I believe that the quality of the fruit I produce is directly proportional to the time God takes to shape me.”

I want God to take his time shaping me. I’m working on the patience and perspective that make way for persistence. I’m trying to see red lights as yellow lights, to hear “no” as “not yet.” Maybe something better is around the corner, when it is ready, when I am ready, when the time is right.

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

### MCGRADY, from page 16

kids are lying on a couch, when a husband pours his wife a cup of coffee, when a decision is made about jobs or homes.

God is seen, felt, known and pours out his love in moments we might miss, if not for the hope filling our hearts that we are never alone, never forgotten and always held close by the Creator.

Because moments of sickness, poverty or bad times, moments we are essentially hardwired to

avoid and hate, become holy moments of patience, generosity and hope. Moments otherwise awful can be transformed, sanctified even, by the grace God bestows upon those of us in need of his presence and strength.

No mother or father enjoys scrubbing vomit out of a couch cushion or delights in dabbing a feverish forehead with a cold washcloth. But those moments can be joyfully tolerated, even in some way can be embraced with a desire to grow in holiness, because of the grace God gives.

For the grace of God do we embrace it, perhaps coming to invite it.

Couples vow to embrace it all — good and bad, easy and hard, prosperous and lean, healthy and sick — not because they know they can handle it all, but precisely because they know God will help them to handle it, survive it and, with Him, even thrive in it.

**Katie Prejean McGrady** is an international Catholic speaker and author.

## SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for October 31, 2021

Mark 12: 28b-34

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B: The rules that cover it all. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

ASKED HIM	FIRST	JESUS
HEAR O ISRAEL	LORD	OUR GOD
LOVE	HEART	YOUR SOUL
STRENGTH	SECOND	NEIGHBOR
HE IS ONE	NO OTHER	BURNT
SACRIFICES	ANSWERED	NOT FAR
KINGDOM	NO ONE	DARED

### TOP RULES

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



## ST. HUBERT

FEAST: NOVEMBER 3 Died 727

Hubert was a married courtier who became a priest after his wife died. According to legend, he was called to serve God while hunting; he reportedly saw a crucifix between a stag’s horns and heard a voice say, “Unless you turn to the Lord, Hubert, you shall fall into hell.” He was ordained by St. Lambert, bishop of Maastricht in the Netherlands, and succeeded the murdered Lambert. After moving the see to Liege in Belgium, he served for 20 years, ending idol worship, converting many and tirelessly preaching Christ. He died peacefully while traveling to dedicate a church; this patron saint of hunters and dogs is also invoked against rabies.



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# Condoleezza Rice headlines Al Smith dinner; gala returns in-person

BY BETH GRIFFIN

NEW YORK (CNS) — These are hard times marked by longings for civil discourse among opponents, the smooth transfer of power, and the ability to acknowledge the shortcomings of our ancestors without rewriting or erasing history in self-loathing and accusation, according to Condoleezza Rice.

The former U.S. secretary of state was the keynote speaker at the 76th annual dinner of the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Oct. 21 at the Javits Center Expansion.

"We seem to long for a different future than the one in our darkest moments we see ahead of us," she said.

The longing is sometimes expressed as a kind of nostalgia based on an incomplete picture of history. "In our past, 'we the people' excluded many. Today's diverse voices, some unheard for years, are improving our national character even though the journey is rocky," Rice said.

We embrace who we are today yet reclaim our faith in the institutions that have brought us this far by combining the greatness of governmental efforts with the power of voluntary, often faith-based associations, she said.

"If we add a belief in the essential goodness of the American people, we will have a combination that is unbeatable," she said.

The Al Smith dinner honors the memory of the former governor of New York, who was the first Catholic nominated by a major political party to run for president of the United States.

Proceeds from the \$5,000-a-plate event help needy children in Greater New York. The foundation distributed \$8 million in grants in 2020, with particular focus on assistance to those affected by the pandemic.

The event drew more than



CNS photo/courtesy The Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation

**New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan stands next to former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice at the 76th annual dinner of the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Oct. 21 at the Javits Center Expansion in New York. Rice was the keynote speaker.**

600 guests to the traditionally festive gathering of political, religious and philanthropic New Yorkers. Among those sharing the three-tiered dais were New York Gov. Kathy Hochul, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, comedian Jim Gaffigan and actress Brooke Shields.

Last year's anticipated diamond anniversary, or 75th anniversary, of the dinner was canceled in favor of a virtual event featuring the quadrennial matchup of presidential candidates.

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, the evening's host, said it was a joy to be together after he presided over the 2020 event remotely from his residence.

He quipped that last year, after blithely quoting Jesus' promise to be wherever two or more were gathered in his name, he had to verify the number of people in the quiet room.

Journalist and FOX Business Network anchor Maria Bartiromo was the dinner's mistress of ceremonies. She joked that current supply chain disruptions

required the foundation to cut dinner portions in half while hedging against inflation by doubling the price of a ticket.

Former President George W. Bush addressed the gathering via prerecorded video. He said Al Smith dinner guests are, in his father's words, points of light, and represent neighbors helping neighbors in support of the most vulnerable.

"I might add that we will be having some new neighbors," he said, referring to Afghans. "I'm confident our country will welcome them and help them succeed," he said.

Bush appeared in a black T-shirt printed to look like the formal wear required of other dais guests. He acknowledged Rice as "one of our most gifted Secretaries of State, a great 'strategerist.'" He added, "Don't believe her when she tells you I used to refer to the president of Russia as 'Rootin' Tootin' Vladimir Putin.'"

Rice acknowledged the loss of her good friend former Secretary of State General Colin Powell. She said he was a giant among

us and a gem of a human being. "Colin Powell was a patriot. We will miss him," she said.

Rice entered into the spirit of the event, which calls for speakers to poke gentle fun at themselves and other participants. She mused about why she was invited to address the dinner. Perhaps it was an audition for a dream job as commissioner of the National Football League?

"But I already live and work in Silicon Valley, another place with huge egos and plenty of 20-somethings with more money than common sense, so the NFL would be a lateral move," she said.

She projected a photograph of herself as a high school student at St. Mary's Academy in Denver and said her time under the tutelage of the Sisters of Loretto might have qualified her for the invitation. It shaped her, she said, but obviously not as a rules follower.

"In the photo, I've perfected the tried-and-true rite of passage in Catholic girls' schools: rolling up your skirt just high enough to be stylish but not too short to have the nuns expel you before graduation," she said.

Rice, the daughter and granddaughter of Presbyterian ministers, described an audience with St. John Paul II where she

blurted out, "God bless you, Holy Father!" and was immediately embarrassed.

"I thought, 'Oh no, he blesses you, you don't bless him. What a stupid Protestant thing to do: I bless you. You bless me. All of God's children bless each other!'"

She said the pope, whom she credits with lifting millions of East Europeans out of communism, responded with humble thanks.

Rice said she was sworn into the post of secretary of state by late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg while standing under a portrait of Benjamin Franklin.

Reflecting on herself as an African American woman taking the oath in front of a Jewish woman justice, she said, "That the impossible now seems almost inevitable in retrospect is reason to reject cynicism about who we are and who we are becoming and embrace hope firmly as we move forward together in this still-young century."

In his invocation, Cardinal Dolan asked God's blessings on recently deceased supporters of the event, including Powell, longtime dinner emcee and foundation board member Alfred E. Smith IV and beloved New York restaurateur Jimmy Neary.



## DIocese OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

### The diocese is seeking an EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is seeking a full-time **Executive Assistant to the Bishop** to work from the Archbishop Noll Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana. This position provides direct administrative support to the Bishop. This position requires a high level of professionalism, confidentiality, and capacity to be very adaptable as priorities of the position can change rapidly which may require work outside traditional office hours. Apply online at [diocesefwsb.org/careers](http://diocesefwsb.org/careers).

## ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON

10700 Aboite Center Road, Fort Wayne

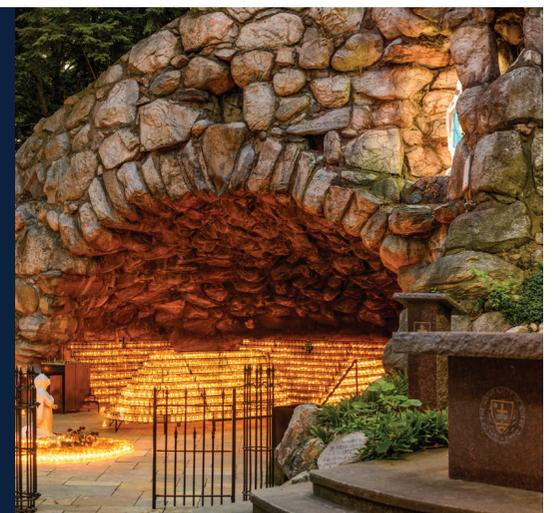
**St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church and School** are looking for a full-time second-shift (2-10 p.m.) **janitorial/supervisor**. This is a Monday through Friday position. It requires cleaning school classrooms, adult ed rooms and school offices. It also requires monitoring and closing the building on these five days. Start date would be on or around Dec. 1, 2021.

Contact **Rob Slocum** at [rslocum@seasfw.org](mailto:rslocum@seasfw.org) for additional information.

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

### UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME SEEKS GROTTO CARETAKER

The Grotto Caretaker is responsible for the day to day organization and cleaning of the Grotto, creating an organized, clean, and safe environment for guests. While working in or around the Grotto, the caretaker is to maintain a respectful and quiet demeanor. For position details, qualifications, and to apply, visit: [jobs.nd.edu/postings/21171](http://jobs.nd.edu/postings/21171).



# WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

**Rosary for poor souls**

**MISHAWAKA** — A rosary for the poor souls will take place Sunday, Oct. 31, at 2 p.m. in St. Joseph Cemetery in Mishawaka. Rosary will be recited rain or shine.

**Sensory-friendly Masses planned**

**FORT WAYNE** — A sensory-friendly Mass will be Thursday, Nov. 4, at 6 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, 10700 Aboite Center Rd. Livestream: [facebook.com/belongingFWSB](https://facebook.com/belongingFWSB). A sensory-friendly Mass will also be celebrated on Friday, Nov. 12, second Friday of the month, at 5:45 p.m. at St. John the Baptist Church, 4500 Fairfield Ave. For more information contact Allison Sturm at 260-399-1452.

**Most Precious Blood Rosary Society craft show**

**FORT WAYNE** — A craft show will be Saturday, Nov. 6, at Most Precious Blood school gym, 1529 Barthold St., from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will offer many unique handmade items as well as offerings from Pampered Chef, Tupperware, Young Living Oils and Mary Kay Cosmetics. Lunch items will be available along with an offering of baked goods.

Wheelchair accessible and masks are requested to be worn. For more information contact Ann Kenny at 260-579-2895 or [ann.kenny3@gmail.com](mailto:ann.kenny3@gmail.com).

**BDHS Designer Purse Bingo**

**FORT WAYNE** — Bishop Dwenger High School's Purse Bingo will be Saturday, Nov. 6, in the main gym. Play bingo for a designer purse such as Kate Spade, Coach, Michael Kors, and more. Cost is \$350 for a reserved table of up to 10 guests. Limited open seating is available for \$35 each. All reservations must be made and paid in full online. Limit of two tables purchased per person. Price includes one bingo card for 25 rounds. Additional cards may be purchased at event for \$5 each.

Doors open at 5 p.m. and games begin at 6:30 p.m. Must be 21 or older to attend. Food and refreshments will be available for purchase (no carry-ins, please). For more information contact Molly Schreck at [menschreck@bishopdwenger.com](mailto:menschreck@bishopdwenger.com). License # 000573.

**St. Aloysius craft show**

**YODER** — St. Aloysius Church, 14623 Bluffton Rd., will host a craft show on Saturday, Nov. 6, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Handmade arts and crafts along with direct sellers like Norwex and Paparazzi Jewelry will be available. Food and baked goods will be sold along with raffle prizes. Contact Amanda Freiburger at 260-622-4491 or [saintscraftshow@gmail.com](mailto:saintscraftshow@gmail.com).

## REST IN PEACE

**Fort Wayne**  
Larry A. Bartee, 75, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

William Bougher, 87, St. Jude

Rita I. Lehner, 88, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Margaret Nolan, 92, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Rada Rodriguez, 90, St. Jude

David Rosswurm, 71, St. Vincent de Paul

Lucy Tully, 66, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

**Goshen**  
Richard D. Copenhaver, 90, St. John the Evangelist

**Granger**  
Joann Koepp, 93, St. Pius X

Lauren Rectanus, 36, St. Pius X

**Huntington**  
Donna L. Geese, 67, SS. Peter and Paul

**Mishawaka**  
Eileen Balestri, 89, St. Bavo

Donna Fonseca, 89, St. Bavo

**South Bend**  
Melanie Como, 81, Cathedral of Saint Matthew

Ramon Garcia, 71, St. Adalbert

Richard Krieg, 83, Cathedral of Saint Matthew

## Count your blessings

With Thanksgiving approaching, Today's Catholic would like to share our appreciation for all of God's many blessings. Tell us what you are thankful for in 75 words or less and your comments may be included in the Nov. 21 edition of the newspaper and online.

Send an email to [editor@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:editor@diocesefwsb.org) by **Wed, Nov. 11**. Photos welcome.

FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTIONS are ALIVE in ROME CITY!



*Our Lady* the IMMACULATE VIRGIN PATRONESS OF AMERICA awaits you at the Mother of Mercy Chapel 2730 E Northport Rd, Rome City, IN November 6th at 11am EDT for Holy Mass and Devotions Confessions beginning at 9:30 am More info @ [www.patronessofamerica.org](http://www.patronessofamerica.org)



*Little Flower*  
**HOLY HOUR**

7 p.m. | First Tuesday of the Month

St. Mother Theodore Guérin Chapel  
1139 S. Calhoun St., Fort Wayne

September 7, 2021  
Fr. Michael Ammer

October 5, 2021  
Fr. Patrick Hake

November 2, 2021  
Fr. Jay Horning

December 7, 2021  
Deacon Jim Fitzpatrick

January 4, 2022  
Fr. Daniel Koehl

February 1, 2022  
Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

March 1, 2022  
Fr. Stephen Felicichia

April 5, 2022  
Fr. Keeton Lockwood

May 3, 2022  
Fr. Tom Shoemaker

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# Sisterly love: teen girls use talents for greater good

BY JENNIFER BARTON

While other teenage girls focus on enjoying their high school experience, Charis, Kenady and Cayley Hall are spending their formative years pursuing grand plans. The three sisters, ages 17, 15 and 12 respectively, possess a variety of talents that they have already put to use for the good of the world around them. Giving of themselves is ingrained in the three siblings.

The girls volunteer at Miss Virginia's Food Pantry and the soup kitchen at their home parish of St. Mary, Mother of God in Fort Wayne. They have also been involved in their grandfather's production company, Windsong Pictures, from an early age, marching in parades as well as being featured in videos. But their drive to impact their community stems from their unique gifts and how they use their skills to give back.

## Individual talents

Each of the girls is wildly talented in her own way. Charis, the oldest, loves physics and calculus, and is very advanced for her years. From the age of four, she knew that she wanted to be an astrophysicist. Toward that end, she completed a NASA internship this summer — the first person from Fort Wayne selected for such an honor. She participated in a virtual NASA challenge, working with science enthusiasts from all over the world, and made it to the finals. She is currently waiting to hear the results. Even before she graduated high school, she had won 11 NASA awards.

"When I heard about the field of astrophysics, I was fascinated by that; it was something I wanted to do in the future. But it also made me research and learn about other fields in science and beyond, so I think having a good thirst for knowledge has allowed us to research more and learn more."

This thirst for learning has showed her what she calls the "crucial" nature of helping others. She has created STEM videos and is in the development phase of her own blog or channel to post educational videos. At a designated time of day, she tutors Kenady in math.

At 15, Kenady loves to bake and runs a business out of her home called Angel Cakery, which makes special-order cakes along with other delectable sweets that are sold locally. "I love it when I get an order for a birthday or something and a kid wants something crazy you've never heard of," she remarked. For her, the creation of creations is all about putting a smile on someone's face.

She remembers helping her mom in the kitchen all her life, but she came into her own



**The sisters also perform together in their band, Angel project; Charis plays keyboard, Cayley is on bass, and Kenady is on drums. They have written many of their own songs and sing at weddings and local charity events.**

around age 8. "And then when our dad got sick, it was something that I dove into to just kind of bring some more joy back into our house ... to lift our spirits during such a hard time."

Big things were in store for Kenady this year. Disney contacted her in February, after viewing a video she had made a couple years ago for a national baking contest. She was chosen to participate in the Disney Magic Bake-Off television show. In the spring, she and Cayley competed in the show together in Burbank, California.

Even under the spotlights, Kenady used her platform for good. The baking contestants were also asked to create the character of a modern-day princess, so the sisters combined their convictions with their heritage, creating a character named Clarity who hails from Jamaica — their grandmother's homeland. "Clarity," they said, is a princess who "protects the earth and heals it," tying in the Hall sis-

ters' care for creation.

Kenady's three-tiered layer cake incorporated elements such as lime and pineapple to represent the island nation. She won the contest, adding the "Cakeness of Greatness" trophy to the girls' impressive collection of awards.

As the youngest, Cayley's interests run to animals. For her confirmation, Cayley chose the name Francis, the saint known for his love of animals and for being the patron of ecologists. She stated, "I've always been fascinated by understanding animals. I've always been very passionate towards animals and the environment and helping people understand how important it is for future generations."

She is a part of "Roots and Shoots," a program of the Jane Goodall Institute that empowers youths to find ways to impact their communities. She was privileged to meet her heroine two years ago at a fundraising event in Chicago and presented

special meaning for its members. "Our dad was diagnosed with cancer a couple years ago," Charis said. The aggressive treatment that he had to undergo, along with the loss of a much-loved dog, left an impression on the family and caused the young girls to think a great deal about angels "and how they're always with us." But more than that, the sisters realize that, as Charis put it, "we have to be angels for others, so it kind of all tied in at the end."

Homeschooling has allowed them the freedom to pursue their personal passions. It has also brought them closer as sisters since they spend much of their days together rather than in separate classrooms. While they still have some sibling squabbles, they consider themselves best friends and believe that the work they do together has brought them close and kept them that way.

## Faith in action

The Catholic faith that the girls have been raised with influences their desire to help others and to change the world. "As we do all of these projects and stuff, it always comes back to following the message of 'do unto others what you would have them do unto you,' and our passion to help others has come a lot from our faith," said Kenady.

"It drives it," Charis admitted. "We've always been faith-driven."

Kenady agreed. "We have kind of a little saying that we like to use in everything we do, and it's basically just saying 'everyday, in every way, anyone can make a positive impact on the world around.' Kind of just encouraging others that, even though it may seem like you're too small to make a big difference, but if everyone is trying, then you really can make a big difference."

Their grandfather, Michael Floyd, ascribes their overwhelming generosity to the influence of previous generations of grandparents, including his wife, Georgia, whose generous heart has embraced dozens of children of various ethnicities. "And that's the way we've always been as a family — reaching out and seeing what we can do for other people."

Each of the girls has big career plans: Charis hopes to attend the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena and become an astronaut; Kenady plans to go into the medical field, probably neuroscience; Cayley hopes to become a wildlife veterinarian and ecologist/conservation biologist.

Even Disney may have plans for the singing sisters. But they are not waiting for any future event to begin changing the world: They are proving that one person can be a force for change in their world, no matter the person's age.

Photos provided by Michael Floyd  
**Sisters Cayley, Kenady and Charis Hall are pursuing their dreams and living their Catholic faith in some selfless ways, including volunteering at Miss Virginia's Food Pantry and the St. Mary's Soup Kitchen in Fort Wayne.**

Goodall with a handmade angel doll holding a chimpanzee.

"We recently got a mini-grant from them, so we're going to begin finishing up a project on pollinators that we did last summer; spreading awareness of the need to protect pollinators and help them," Cayley said.

## Coming together

The sisters' complementary interests merge into a cohesive whole when they unite on projects, which is often. "We have our individual focuses, but the one thing I think that ties it all together is being aware and trying to make a difference, because that's something that we want to do for now but also incorporates into our future careers as well," Charis explained.

One of these projects is a band they put together a few years ago. They each began taking music lessons at Sweetwater Sound in Fort Wayne and began playing together at home.

Eventually, they began performing for family members, and before long found themselves playing events, including local parades and charity functions. All the girls sing and each plays an instrument: Charis on piano, Cayley plays the bass and Kenady is the drummer. Together they have written 20 original songs and have mastered another 100 cover songs for their performance repertoire. They call themselves The Angel Project.

The name of the band holds