

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 95 No. 1

50¢

TODAYSCATHOLIC.org

Mary, Mother of God

*On feast day, pope pleads
for end to violence
against women*

Page 3

State legislative session begins

*ICC prepared to advocate for
Catholic social teaching*

Page 5

Year in review

*Church, Bishop Rhoades
at forefront*

Pages 8-9

Special education grows

*More accommodations
made in Catholic schools*

Page 10

Cupertino Classic

*Annual priest vs. seminarians
basketball matchup*

Page 16



Follow the 'stars,' of the saints, encourages bishop on Epiphany

Lisa Everett

The feast of the Epiphany was celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Sunday, Jan. 2, at St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend. At the beginning of the Mass, the bishop receives gifts representing gold, frankincense and myrrh from Thomas Balderas, Jesus Escoban and Nolan Patterson, St. Matthew Cathedral School students who represented the roles of the Magi in a school reenactment of the Nativity.

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

“My Christmas celebration would not be complete without worshipping our newborn King with you here at St. Matt’s,” declared Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades on the feast of the Epiphany, which he celebrated at the South Bend cathedral the morning of Jan. 2.

He shared with the congregation present in the new year that his practice is to celebrate Christmas Eve Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne, visit his family in Pennsylvania for a few days and then return to the diocese to celebrate the feast of the Epiphany at St. Matthew Cathedral. He did the same this year, despite a New Year’s Day snowstorm.

Third graders at St. Matthew

Cathedral School enacted a Christmas pageant at the cathedral in honor of the celebration of the Epiphany. Three of them — Thomas Balderas, Jesus Escoban and Nolan Patterson — donned red, purple and blue robes and the crowns of kings and processed in with the bishop bearing gifts representing gold, frankincense and myrrh, which they presented for him to incense and lay in the creche.

Two deacons assisted at the Mass, Deacon Frederick Everett and Deacon Drew Clary, CSC. The occasion was also made festive by the participation of the choir, organ and a brass ensemble.

The Magi worshipped the baby that Mary cradled in her arms, the bishop began. He noted that today Christians worship Him in the Eucharist.

“Indeed, at every Mass, we worship Him; we praise and thank Him. Our prayers rise up

to Him like incense, one of the gifts of the Magi. On the altar will become present the One whom the Magi saw lying in the manger: Christ, the living Bread who came down from heaven to give life to the world.”

“Why did the Magi set off from far away to go to Bethlehem?” the bishop asked. “The answer has to do with the mystery of the star, the star which they saw in the East and which they recognized as the sign of the birth of the Messiah, the King of the Jews.” The famous prophecy of Balaam, in Num. 24:17, speaks of a star or scepter rising out of Israel.

The bishop alluded to several astronomical phenomena that may explain the special star, as well as the speculation of some Fathers of the Church that it was an angel in disguise. At the Epiphany Mass, astronomers and other scientists were lifted up during the prayer of the faithful.

St. John wrote in his first letter: “God is light; in him there is no darkness,” said the bishop. “Then further on he adds: ‘God is love.’ This is what the Magi saw when they entered the house in Bethlehem: they saw God’s light and love in the Child Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God. They saw the light that enlightens all the peoples of the world, the light of the Epiphany. They were guided to the source of light by the light of the star (creation) and by the light of the Scriptures (Balaam’s and Micah’s prophecies) ... They did homage to the Messiah of Israel, who is the Light of the World.”

“It is good to reflect today on our mission as disciples of Jesus, as his Church, in the light of the mystery of the Epiphany,” he continued. “We are called to make Christ’s light shine in the world.” Citing the Sermon on the Mount,

EPIPHANY, page 3

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

(ISSN 0891-1533)
(USPS 403630)

Official newspaper of the
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend
P.O. Box 11169
Fort Wayne, IN 46856

PUBLISHER: Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

PUBLICATION MANAGER: Nicole Hahn

Editorial Department

EDITOR: Jodi Marlin
STAFF WRITER: Jennifer Barton
PAGE DESIGNER: Francie Hogan

Business Department

BOOKKEEPING/CIRCULATION:
circulation@diocesefwsb.org
BUSINESS SALES MANAGER: Erika Barron
ebarron@diocesefwsb.org

Website: www.todayscatholic.org
260-456-2824

Published weekly, except for the last Sunday in December and every other week from the fourth Sunday in May through the last Sunday in August by the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, 915 S. Clinton St., P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, IN 46802. Periodicals postage paid at Fort Wayne, IN, and additional mailing office.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Today's Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN 46856-1169 or email: circulation@diocesefwsb.org

MAIN OFFICE: 915 S. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46802. Telephone 260-456-2824. Fax: 260-744-1473.

BUREAU OFFICE: 1328 Dragoon Trail, Mishawaka, IN 46544. Telephone 260-456-2824. Fax 260-744-1473.

News deadline is 10 days prior to publication date. Advertising deadline is nine days before publication date.

Today's Catholic may be reached at:
Today's Catholic,
P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN
46856-1169; or email:
editor@diocesefwsb.org

**Find us on Facebook**

www.facebook.com/todayscatholicFWSB

Follow us on Twitter

@diocesefwsb

Follow us on Instagram

@diocesefwsb



CNS photo/Saadia Azim

Children and their mother who live on the street wait outside the Missionaries of Charity motherhouse and orphanage in Kolkata, India, Jan. 2. Although the Indian Home Ministry has not approved the order's Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, the nuns are hoping for some support from state governments.

With foreign donation license denied, Missionaries of Charity ration food

BY SAADIA AZIM

KOLKATA, India (CNS) — Since Christmas, the Missionaries of Charity have been strictly rationing the food and daily use items for their regular 600 beneficiaries at their motherhouse and Shishu Bhavan, a children's orphanage. On Jan. 2, the breakfast of tea, bread and eggs was cut short by an hour.

"As long as you did it to one of these, my least brethren, you did it to me," said Razia, a beneficiary of the Missionaries of Charity, as she waited for the nuns to give her the weekly provisions. She lives with her two sick children across the road from the motherhouse and says she visits the tomb of St. Teresa and prays for the "difficult times to pass."

Abdul Razzak, a 45-year-old beggar, stays put outside the motherhouse curled in his rags. He has been staying there since Christmas in hopes of getting his share of food and medicine. A few others like him sit along with him to receive their subsidy from the nuns. Since the pandemic began, they received

their daily meal from the motherhouse, but now, "Sisters told us that we might not be able to collect the food any longer," said the sick man.

The Indian Home Ministry has not approved the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act license of the Missionaries of Charity on the grounds of some "adverse reports." However, the nuns do not express their disappointment with the central government's action and continue the routine of prayers and service.

A spokeswoman for the order said the nuns are looking into the lack of FCRA approval and will appeal the ruling.

But the uncertainty hanging on the fate of foreign donations

has started showing in the organization's everyday operations.

Sister Dominic Mary, a member of the Missionaries of Charity from neighboring Orissa state, told Catholic News Service that, "The state government of Orissa has confirmed that their supplies will keep going in these difficult times. ... If other state governments also support us, maybe this phase will pass."

Every Friday, Chotu, 5, Abdulla, 7, Sashi, 6, Gulnaaz, 8, all living by the street with their mother, collect food from the Shishu Bhavan. Their father is blind and lives in a makeshift wooden trolley, begging on the streets. In the winter, their only hopes of survival have been the Missionaries of Charity. They

were expecting to receive the woolen blankets that did not arrive after Christmas.

"We might not get it this winter," said their mother, Rosy.

On Fridays and Sundays, the poor line up to get their share of essentials at the motherhouse. The nuns have told them now that it might get difficult for them in the coming days.

In India, about 6,000 nongovernmental organizations — some as prominent as Oxfam — lost their FCRA licenses Jan. 1. When an FCRA license is canceled, the organization can appeal to the Home Ministry; with an appeal, the license remains valid for 180 days. Permanent cancellation of the permit then follows.

John Dayal, human rights activist and author, said: "The FCRA curbs are just a way to restrict humanitarian organizations to work independently in India. It is a kind of continued violence that's played on the streets by goons and by the government through regulations and misinformation against Christians."

Muslims have suffered similar discrimination.

On New Year's, pope says a mature faith is realistic, but hope-filled

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — As Catholics begin a new year contemplating the motherhood of Mary, they should be inspired not to let problems weaken their faith or prevent them from helping others grow, Pope Francis said.

"In her heart, in her prayer," he said, Mary "binds together the beautiful things and the unpleasant things," and learns to discern God's plan in them.

Pope Francis celebrated Mass Jan. 1, the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and World Peace Day, in St. Peter's Basilica and then led the recitation of the Angelus prayer in St. Peter's Square with thousands of people, including dozens who held signs with the names of countries at war.

In his homily at the Mass, Pope Francis pleaded for an end to violence against women.

"Enough," he said. "To hurt a woman is to insult God, who from a woman took on our humanity."

And, in his Angelus address, Pope Francis insisted peace is a gift from God that requires human action.

"We can truly build peace only if we have peace in our hearts, only if we receive it from the prince of peace," he said. "But peace is also our commitment: it asks us to take the first step, it demands concrete actions.

It is built by being attentive to the least, by promoting justice, with the courage to forgive, thus extinguishing the fire of hatred."

Peace also requires "a positive outlook as well, one that always sees, in the Church as well as in society, not the evil that divides us, but the good that unites us," the pope said. "Getting depressed or complaining is useless. We need to roll up our sleeves to build peace."

Pope Francis said he could not look at Mary holding the baby Jesus in her arms without thinking of "young mothers and their children fleeing wars and famine or waiting in refugee camps. And there are many of them."

"Contemplating Mary who lays Jesus in the manger, making Him available to everyone, let's remember that the world can change, and everyone's life can improve only if we make ourselves available to others, without expecting them to begin," he said. "If we become artisans of fraternity, we will be able to mend the threads of a world torn apart by war and violence."

In his homily earlier at the Mass, Pope Francis asked people to consider what it must have been like for Mary, who had been told by the angel that her son would be great, to give birth in an animals' stall and to lay her baby in a manger instead of a



CNS photo/Romano Siciliani, pool

Pope Francis venerates a figurine of the baby Jesus at the start of Mass marking the feast of Mary, Mother of God, in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Jan. 1. In the foreground is a young person dressed as one of the Magi.

cradle.

"His poverty is good news for everyone, especially the marginalized, the rejected and those who do not count in the eyes of the world," the pope said. "For that is how God comes: not on a fast track and lacking even a cradle! That is what is beautiful about seeing him there, laid in a manger."

But for Mary, a mother, it must have been painful to see her son in such poverty, the pope said.

Pope Francis contrasted the amazement and enthusiasm of the shepherds with the quiet, pensive reaction of Mary.

"The shepherds tell everyone about what they had seen," he said. "The story told by the shepherds, and their own amazement, remind us of the beginnings of faith, when everything seems easy and straightforward."

"Mary's pensiveness, on the other hand, is the expression of a mature, adult faith," he said. Hers is "not a newborn faith, but a faith that now gives birth. For spiritual fruitfulness is born of trials and testing."

Mary "gives God to the world" in a dark stable in Bethlehem, he said. "Others, before the scandal of the manger, might feel deeply troubled. She does not: she keeps those things, pondering them in her heart."

And through faith, he said, "in her mother's heart, Mary

comes to realize that the glory of the Most High appears in humility; she welcomes the plan of salvation whereby God must lie in a manger. She sees the divine child frail and shivering, and she accepts the wondrous divine interplay between grandeur and littleness."

Mary, like most mothers, knew how "to hold together the various threads of life," the glorious and the worrisome, the pope said. "We need such people, capable of weaving the threads of communion in place of the barbed wire of conflict and division."

Departing from his prepared text, Pope Francis said the Church itself is "mother and woman," and while women could and should have greater positions in the Church, they are "secondary" to the role all Catholic women have of giving life, including figuratively, and in combining "dreams and aspirations with concrete reality, without drifting into abstraction and sterile pragmatism."

"At the beginning of the New Year," he said, "let us place ourselves under the protection of this woman, the mother of God, who is also our mother. May she help us to keep and ponder all things, unafraid of trials and with the joyful certainty that the Lord is faithful and can transform every cross into a resurrection."



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, January 9: 4:30 p.m. — Sung Vespers beginning Sesquicentennial of Immaculate Conception Parish, Auburn.
Wednesday, January 12: 10:30 a.m. — Meeting of Priest Personnel Board, Sacred Heart Rectory, Warsaw
Friday, January 14: 9:30 a.m. — Mass and Pastoral Visit, Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne



Lisa Everett

St. Matthew Cathedral School students dressed as the Magi bring forward gifts at the start of an Epiphany Mass celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades at St. Matthew Cathedral Jan. 2.

EPIPHANY, from page 1

he noted that Jesus taught the Beatitudes — and that by living in the way of the Beatitudes, "we can attract people through the witness of our love."

"Immediately after giving the Beatitudes, Jesus said to His disciples: 'In the same way, your light must shine before men so that they may see goodness in your deeds and give praise to your heavenly Father.'"

He explained, "We attract people to the light by our love. Our light, the light of the Church, is not ourselves. We shouldn't think that we are to shine with our own light. St. Ambrose expresses this reality well by presenting the moon as a metaphor for the Church."

The moon, according to St. Ambrose, "shines not with her own light, but with the light of Christ. She draws her brightness from the Sun of Justice, and so she can say (with St. Paul), 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.'"

The bishop concluded by encouraging the congregation to follow the right stars, the "little stars in whom shine forth the true light of Christ and his love.

These stars are the saints, the greatest of whom we celebrated yesterday: Mary, the Mother of God. With their help, we won't fall into the darkness."

"In this New Year, may the Blessed Virgin Mary help us to be missionary disciples, little stars that mirror the light of Christ," he asked. "May she intercede for us that we may have the humility, the wisdom and courage of the Magi."

Inserted into the liturgy this year, cantor Susan Berger proclaimed the dates of all the movable feasts in 2022, including Easter and Pentecost. Bishop Rhoades called special attention to June 19, the feast of Corpus Christi. In the United States, the feast will mark the beginning of the three-year eucharistic revival announced in the fall by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

On the feast day, Bishop Rhoades will lead a diocesan procession of the holy Eucharist that brings together the entire Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend in one location, Warsaw. Details of the procession will be shared this spring.



DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

Report abuse

Report abuse

It remains important for our Church to protect children and young persons from the evils of abuse. The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend remains committed to upholding and following its guidelines, policies and procedures that were implemented for the protection of children and young people. These can be reviewed on the diocese's website, www.diocesefwsb.org, under "Youth Protection."

If you have reason to believe that a minor may be a victim of child abuse or neglect, Indiana law requires that you report this to civil authorities. If you or someone you know was abused as a child or young person by an adult, you are encouraged to notify appropriate civil authorities of that abuse. In addition, if the alleged abuser is or was a priest or deacon of the Catholic Church, you are encouraged to contact Mary Glowaski, victim assistance coordinator, at (260) 399-1458 or mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org; or Very Rev. Mark Gurtner, vicar general of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, at P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801; at (260) 399-1419; or at mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org. The diocese is committed to helping prevent the abuse or neglect of children and young people and to assist those who have suffered harm as a result of such abuse.

Denuncie los abusos

Es importante para nuestra Iglesia proteger a los niños y jóvenes adultos de los actos malvados como el abuso. La Diócesis de Fort Wayne-South Bend se compromete a mantener y seguir las reglas, políticas y procedimientos que fueron implementados para la protección de niños y personas jóvenes. Estos pueden leerse en la página web de la diócesis, www.diocesefwsb.org bajo la sección de "Protección de Jóvenes" ("Youth Protection").

Si usted tiene motivo de creer que un menor es víctima de abuso o negligencia, la ley de Indiana requiere que usted reporte esto a las autoridades civiles. Si usted o alguien que usted conoce fue abusado, ya sea niño o persona joven, por un adulto, le recomendamos que notifique a las autoridades civiles apropiadas. También, si el alegado abusador es o fue un sacerdote o diácono de la Iglesia Católica, se le insta comunicarse con Mary Glowaski, coordinadora de asistencia de víctimas, al (260)

399-1458 o mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org; o con el Presbítero Mark Gurtner, vicario general de la Diócesis de Fort Wayne-South Bend, al P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801; al (260) 399-1419; o al mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org. La diócesis se compromete a ayudar a prevenir el abuso o negligencia de niños y personas jóvenes y ayudar a aquellos que han sufrido daño como el resultado de tal abuso.

Báo cáo lạm dụng Tình dục.

Nếu bạn có suy luận cho rằng một đứa trẻ nào đó có lẽ là một nạn nhân đã bị lạm dụng hoặc bị bỏ bê, Pháp luật Indiana yêu cầu bạn báo cáo cho chính quyền dân sự. Nếu bạn hay người nào đó bị lạm dụng với tư cách một đứa trẻ hoặc thanh thiếu niên do người lớn, bạn được động viên đặc biệt thông báo cho chính quyền dân sự về việc lạm dụng này. Ngoài ra, nếu kẻ bạo hành bị cáo buộc là một linh mục hay phó tế của Giáo hội Công giáo, xin vui lòng liên hệ:

Mary Glowaski, Trưởng ban hỗ trợ nạn nhân. (260) 399-1458 email: mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org

Hoặc Very Rev. Mark Gurtner, Cha Tổng Đại Diện. (260) 399-1419

Email: mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org

Giáo Phận Fort Wayne-South Bend

Attn: Hỗ trợ nạn nhân PO Box 390 Fort Wayne, IN 46801

Giáo phận Fort Wayne-South

Bend cam kết bảo vệ trẻ em và thanh thiếu niên từ các tệ nạn lạm dụng và hỗ trợ những người kêu nại đã bị thiệt hại do hậu quả bị lạm dụng. Lạm dụng một đứa trẻ là một tội lỗi. Chúng tôi cam kết lắng nghe, hỗ trợ, điều tra cùng thực hiện theo các chính sách và thủ tục như đã ban hành của Tòa Giám Mục.

မတရားကင်းကန့်ဝှံ့ဆွကညးပန့်ခင်းတုင်ပကော့ရန့်

ကလေးသူငယ်များနှင့် လူငယ်များကို မတရားကင်းကန့်ဝှံ့ဆွကညးပန့်ခင်းဖြစ်တဲ့ မကော့ခင်းဝါးရန့်များမကော့ကယု ပေးဖို့ပြုသည့် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့ အသင်းတော့အတိုက်အခံရဲပေးကော့သော အရာဖြစ်သည်။ အသင်းတော့ဂိုဏ်းအုပ်ချုပ်ရေးဌာနသည် ဖုန်း South Bend ဟာ ကလေးသူငယ်နှင့် လူငယ်များကိုကာကွယ်စောင့်ရှောက်ဖို့ အတိုက်အခံကော့အထိပါပေးနိုင်အောင် မှတ်တမ်းသည့် လမ်းညွှန်နည်းလမ်းများနှင့် မူဝါဒများကို

လိုက်နာ ကင်းသုံး ထိမ်းသိမ်းဆွကတည်နေပါသည်။ ထိုအရာများကို အသင်းတော့ဂိုဏ်းအုပ်ချုပ်မှုမှ ဖယ်တုတ် www.diocesefwsb.org ကို လှည့်လည်စစ်ဆေးနိုင်ပါသည်။ စာတင်ပေးရေး" ဆိုတဲ့ နေရာမှာ ပြန်လည်ဆန်းစစ် ဖြစ်ကည့်နိုင်ပါသည်။

သင့်အနေနှင့် အပြုမရကော့သော ကလေးသူငယ်များပစ်ကညးပန့်ခင်းရသည့် သို့မဟုတ် လိင်စပ်ပစ္စည်းထားခိုထားရသည့် လှုပ်ရှားမှုများကို သုံးသပ်ရလျှင် အိုင်ဒီယားနားပြုသန့်ယူရုံ ပုံပေးအောင် ထိုကိစ္စကို တာဝန်ရှိသူများထံသို့ အသိပေးအစောင့်အရှောက်ရပါမည်။ အကယ်၍ သင့် သို့မဟုတ် သင့်သိတဲ့ တစ်ယောက်ယောက်မှာ ကလေးဘဝတုန်းက သို့မဟုတ် လူငယ်အပြုမရကော့ လိင်စပ်ပစ္စည်း၏ နှိပ်စက်မှုပေးခင်းကို ခံရသည့် ရှင်သော် သို့မဟုတ် တာဝန်ရှိသူထံသို့ တိုက်ပစ်ကညးပန့်ခင်းလုပ်ကိုင်ပါ။

အစောင့်အရှောက်ရန် သင့်အားတိုက်တန်းလုပ်ပါသည်။ ။ ဖုန်းညှိပေးတော့လည်း ရှိပါလို့သိသည့်မှာ

အကယ်၍ ထိုသို့ နှိပ်စက်မှုပေးခင်းသို့ လက်ရှိ သို့မဟုတ် ယခင်က ကံတူသလို စွဲကော့ခင်း၏ ဘုန်းတော်ဖုန်းကို သို့မဟုတ် ကော့ခင်းထောက်ပံ့ပေးသူများထံသို့ ပြန်လည်ဆွကတည်သူများကို

ကူညီထောက်ပံ့ဆောင်ရွက်ပေးသူဖြစ်တဲ့ Mary Glowaski ကို (၂၆၀) ၃၉၉ -၁၄၅၈ သို့မဟုတ် mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org ၊ ဒါမဟုတ် အသင်းတော့ဂိုဏ်းအုပ်ချုပ်ရေးဌာန ယူပယူသည့် ဖုန်း South Bend ရှိ အသင်းတော့ဘုန်းတော်ဖုန်း

Mark Gurtner ကို လိပ်စာအမှတ် P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801 ၊ ဖုန်းနံပါတ် (၂၆၀) ၃၉၉ -၁၄၁၉ ၊ သို့မဟုတ် mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org သို့မဟုတ် အစောင့်အရှောက်

သင့်အားတိုက်တန်းပါသည်။ အသင်းတော့ဂိုဏ်းအုပ်ချုပ်ရေးဌာန ယူပယူသည့် ကလေးသူငယ်များနှင့် လူငယ်များကို

နှိပ်စက်မှုပေးခင်း သို့မဟုတ် လိင်စပ်ပစ္စည်းထားခိုခင်းများ တို့ကို ကာကွယ်တားဆီးပေးနိုင်အောင်

ထိုသို့ နှိပ်စက်မှုခင်း၏ အကဲခတ်အစီအစဉ်များနှင့် အစောင့်အရှောက်ရန်

လမ်းညွှန်နည်းလမ်းများကို အတိုက်အခံပေးပါသည်။

Catholics hold funeral after Myanmar massacre; attacks continue

YANGON, Myanmar (CNS) — For Christians in Chin and Kayah states, there were no Christmas and New Year celebrations due to fighting. They have borne the brunt of a decades-old civil war and faced oppression and persecution at the hands of the military, reported ucanews.com.

On Dec. 29, Catholics in Kayah's Hpruso Township held a funeral for 35 civilians — all Catholic — killed by troops and their bodies set on fire Christmas Eve in Mo So village. Ucanews.com reported local sources said the funeral was led by catechists, because the military would not allow a local priest to officiate.

The killings shocked the world and drew swift condemnation from Cardinal Charles Bo, who called it a "heartbreaking and horrific atrocity."

"The fact that the bodies of those killed, burned and mutilated were found on Christmas Day makes this appalling tragedy even more poignant and sickening. As much of the world celebrated the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the people of Mo So village suffered the terrible shock and grief of an outrageous act of inhumanity," he said.

Cardinal Bo, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Myanmar, urged the military "to stop bombing and shelling innocent people, to stop destroying

homes and churches, schools and clinics" and to begin "a dialogue with the democracy movement and ethnic armed groups."

The cardinal was criticized for meeting Myanmar's military chief, Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, and cutting a cake with him Dec. 23 to mark Christmas at the archbishop's house in Yangon.

Within hours of the Dec. 23 meeting, the military junta launched airstrikes, forcing thousands of people to flee their homes into neighboring Thailand.

Ignoring repeated appeals by the world and religious leaders, including Pope Francis, Myanmar's military regime has continued attacking villages and ethnic areas where armed resistance has been the strongest.

On Dec. 30, the Assembly of God church and another belonging to the Association of Baptist Churches in the deserted town of Thantlang were burned by soldiers, according to the Chin Human Rights Organization.

The conflict-ravaged town has seen five churches and more than 450 houses damaged by fire so far. Across Chin state, some 22 churches and 350 civilian homes were burned or destroyed by the military between August and November, said the human rights organization.

Kentucky parishioners ride out tornado praying the rosary

BY DENNIS SADOWSKI

(CNS) — Jenny and Bill Rush and other parishioners at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, were nearly finished praying the rosary after an early morning Mass on New Year's Day when an isolated tornado shook the church, much to their surprise.

As the storm roared, the group prayed all the louder, Jenny told Catholic News Service Jan. 3.

"We kept praying even though the lights were flickering," she said. "It was exhilarating and terrifying, but at the same token it was spiritually uplifting to realize that even as we were praying the 'Memorare' she (Mary) was holding us. I honestly believe she was holding us."

Bill watched what parishioners describe as the "great window," expecting it to break "because the storm was so loud." It survived intact.

The storm passed in minutes. Except for a downed tree, a few missing shingles and minor

water damage to another building, the church escaped serious harm, Father Richard Meredith, pastor, said in an email.

He described the storm as "roaring like a freight train and the church booming like a drum."

"Lights went out and it passed in under two minutes," the priest wrote, adding that the cleanup in the downtown area and the east side of the city of 31,000 where the storm struck was continuing. No injuries were reported.

Nearby homes and businesses, including Mount Olivet Baptist Church, along the storm's mile-long path, sustained extensive damage, local officials reported.

National Weather Service meteorologists toured the storm's path to survey damage with Randy Graham, Christian County emergency management director afterward. Meteorologist Christine Wielgos told WHOP Radio that based on the damage, the twister generated maximum winds of 115 miles an hour and stayed on the ground for about a mile.

ICC ready to add voice to issues, legislation at General Assembly

As lawmakers returned to the Statehouse in Indianapolis this week to begin a new legislative session, the Indiana Catholic Conference stood ready to speak on the key issues of the day, always standing in solidarity with the most vulnerable.

The 123rd Indiana General Assembly opened for business Tuesday, Jan. 4, for a short, non-budget-year session that is expected to wrap up by mid-March. State lawmakers will introduce and debate a flurry of bills on a wide range of topics. And as it has for the past 55 years, the ICC will weigh in on important legislation while engaging as many Catholics as possible in the process.

"The ICC is the public policy voice for the Catholic Church in the state of Indiana," said Angela Espada, the sixth and current executive director of the ICC. "Simply put, we advocate either for or against proposed legislation in line with the long and rich history of Catholic social teaching."

Espada explained that promoting the common good and protecting the most vulnerable members of society form the basis for the Church's engagement in the public arena.

"If you look at the issues that politics hits on, much of it has to do with immigration, education, whether or not to have a social safety net and how far that net expands, and respect for life," Espada said. "All of these are issues that the Church has experience in and has either advocated for or against in some form since its beginning — certainly long before there were lobbyists and massive political agendas."

Protecting human life from conception to natural death remains the most pressing of the Church's priorities — and, therefore, the ICC's. Abortion is at the forefront of the national debate again, as the Supreme Court has recently considered pro-life legislation in Texas and Mississippi that has been challenged by abortion advocates.

Indiana Speaker of the House Todd Huston (R-Fishers) stated during his recent Organization Day speech for the state legislature that Indiana is following

developments at the Supreme Court.

"In Indiana, we have a strong history of standing up for the rights of the unborn, and we'll continue to build on our pro-life efforts this session," Huston said.

Throughout its history, the ICC has supported pro-life initiatives brought before the General Assembly, Espada said. That includes standing up for the unborn while opposing the death penalty and assisted suicide. Pro-life efforts can take a variety of forms, she emphasized, pointing to recent efforts by the legislature to increase accommodations for pregnant women in the workplace — from longer and more frequent breaks to temporary transfers to less strenuous or hazardous environments.

"The legislation that passed last year did not go far enough, and we'd like to see something better this year for expectant moms," Espada said.

With COVID-19 cases once again on the rise, efforts to stem the pandemic are likely to dominate conversations at the Statehouse during the 2022 session, according to Alexander Mingus, associate director of the ICC.

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE



BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

"We anticipate lots of discussion around COVID response, especially concerning vaccines and exemptions," Mingus said. Espada added that the ICC will be particularly interested in the debate as it concerns religious freedom and liberty.

With inflation rising sharply nationwide, Espada and Mingus expressed hope that a long-overdue update of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program would finally pass the state legislature. TANF is a federal government program that provides grants to the states for distribution to families in dire economic circumstances. Because of outdated state guidelines, the \$288 maximum monthly cash payment for a family of three in deep poverty has not been adjusted for inflation since 1988.

Much to the dismay of the

ICC and other advocates for the poor, proposed legislation to update TANF has been passed over in recent legislative sessions.

"Even though TANF money flows to the states from the federal government and is readily available, Indiana has not offered an increase in monthly payments for the neediest of the needy in more than three decades," Espada said. "With COVID continuing to devastate our economy and inflation on the rise, we need these changes more urgently than ever."

She and Mingus call on the Catholic faithful for their prayers during the 2022 legislative session — as well as their active engagement. They encourage everyone to visit the ICC website, www.indianacc.org, which offers access to I-CAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network. Those who sign up for I-CAN receive action alerts on important legislation and ways to contact their

elected representatives.

"This is the best way for everyone to stay engaged with us throughout the legislative session and all year long," said Mingus, who was instrumental in recently revamping the ICC website and introducing the weekly podcast that he and Espada host during the General Assembly. "If anyone has family members, friends and fellow parishioners who aren't aware of the ICC, we ask that they encourage them to sign up for I-CAN and stay up to date through our podcast and other resources."

"We need everyone's help to spread the word that we exist, and ultimately to support our work on behalf of the Church."

Indiana's Premier Butcher Shop and Deli



4924 S. Calhoun St., Ft. Wayne
260-338-0022

2820 Maplecrest Rd., Ft. Wayne
260-485-0003

Mon-Fri 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Sat 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Sun 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



2323 Almon St., Huntertown
260-637-0111

Mon-Sat 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Sun 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

CATERING, MEAT BUNDLES,
PREPARED FOOD, AND MORE!

CATERING, CUSTOM PROCESSING, FOOD TRUCK,
WILD GAME, HOG ROASTS

Parishioners of St. Vincent de Paul

YOU ALREADY READ

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

NOW IT'S TIME TO EXPAND
YOUR SPIRITUAL READING LIBRARY
WITH

Good Shepherd

BOOKS • GIFTS

Print subscribers receive 30% OFF
one regular-priced item

Good Shepherd Books & Gifts hours are:
10 a.m.-6 p.m. M-F and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat.
We are still filling orders via our website or by phone
at 260-399-1442 and offer curbside delivery.
Must present this original PRINT coupon at time of purchase

Digital subscribers receive 20% off
one regular-priced item

Must show your digital copy of coupon at time of purchase.
LIMIT: one coupon per visit. Some restrictions apply.
Expires January 31, 2022



www.todayscatholic.org/subscribe

www.goodshepherdbookstore.org
915 S. Clinton St., Fort Wayne | Free Parking in the Garage





CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
OF NORTHEAST INDIANA

Create Your Legacy With Us

For more information about how to
include the Catholic church in your will or
estate plan, contact Mike Shade at (260)
949-2441 or mshade@ccfnei.org

Even when rejected, God seeks out His children, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christians can rest assured that even when they feel unworthy, God is a good shepherd who goes in search of them, Pope Francis said. Speaking to pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square Jan. 2 for his Sunday Angelus address, the pope said God persists with His children "because He does not resign Himself to the fact that we can go astray by going far from Him, far from eternity, far from the light. This is God's work: to come among us," the pope said. "If we consider ourselves unworthy, that does not stop Him: He comes. If we reject Him, He does not tire of seeking us out. If we are not ready and willing to receive Him, He prefers to come anyway. And if we close the door in His face, He waits." Reflecting on the prologue of the Gospel of St. John, in which the apostle proclaims that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," the pope said the phrase contains a paradox in that "the Word is eternal" while "the flesh" is "fragile, limited and mortal." The "polarities," he said, explain "God's way of acting. Faced with our frailties, the Lord does not withdraw."

Vatican pays tribute to 22 church workers murdered in 2021

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In situations of extreme poverty, war or civil tensions, 22 Catholic church workers were murdered in 2021, according to Fides, the news agency of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Presenting its annual list of missionaries killed during the year Dec. 30, the news agency explained, "We use the term 'missionary' for all the baptized, aware that 'in virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples.'" None of the 13 priests, one religious brother, two religious sisters and six laypeople "carried out striking feats or actions," Fides said, but they gave witness to their faith "in impoverished, degraded social contexts, where violence is the rule of life, the authority of the state was lacking or weakened by corruption and compromises and in the total lack of respect for life and for every human right." "From Africa to America, from Asia to Europe, they shared daily life with their brothers and sisters, with its risks and fears, its violence and its deprivations, bringing in the small daily gestures Christian witness as a seed of hope," Fides said. In publishing the list, Fides said it was not looking only at Church workers killed in traditional mission territories and it was not proclaiming any of them as "martyrs" in the technical sense of having been killed out of hatred for their faith.

Colorado family finds hope in Mary statue largely untouched by wildfire



CNS photo/courtesy Leslie Rowe

A statue of Mary is seen standing amid the rubble of a Louisville, Colo., home Dec. 31. Amid the smoldering ashes of his family's recently remodeled Louisville, Colorado, home that was destroyed by a Dec. 30 wildfire, Tom Greany found hope in the symbol of his deep Catholic faith. He and his wife Kat had placed the statue outside their home, and it was left unscathed except for the soot that covered its right side. "Bricks appeared to have fallen all around her — some probably even hit her. But she didn't even fall over," Greany wrote in a reflection shared with Catholic News Service by a friend, who asked to remain unidentified. The Greanys were among hundreds of families who lost their homes in the wildfire driven by winds estimated to top 100 mph. In the Louisville neighborhood, 50 of 55 homes were destroyed.

While not included in the count, the Fides report also paid tribute to the 35 "innocent civilians, all of whom were Catholic," who died Dec. 24, reportedly at the hands of the Myanmar military in Mo So village in Kayah state as they were fleeing fighting in the area. The victims, including elderly women and children, were shot and then their bodies were burned.

Christians in Bethlehem on Christmas: Tell the world we have joy

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (CNS) — The normal crowds of pilgrims and tourists may not have been able to come to Bethlehem for Christmas due to COVID-19 travel restrictions for a second year in a row, but local Palestinian Christians wanted to assure everyone that the Christmas spirit is still alive and well in the city

of Jesus' birth. "Tell the world that the one word for Christmas would be 'joy,' and we have that here. Tell them that Christmas is about family," Francis Gedeon, 75, said after Christmas Mass as his family posed for family photos in the courtyard of St. Catherine Church, adjacent to the Church of the Nativity. "We pray the pandemic will end soon." "We are still happy to be able to celebrate Christmas despite everything, especially in Bethlehem," agreed his son, Fadi. "Christmas is when family gets together, that is the

most important thing," chimed in Rawan, Gedeon's daughter. "It has been a challenging year due to COVID, but we still have the spirit of Christmas and send prayers to the whole world. I love the Christmas feeling of peace, despite all the difficulties and restrictions." She said that as the world continued to struggle with the pandemic, she felt especially blessed to be able to celebrate Christmas in Bethlehem.

Though problems abound, God-given hope never fails, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christian hope grants those who suffer the assurance that God does not abandon His people in their time of need, Pope Francis said. "Problems do not vanish, difficulties and worries are not lacking, but we are not alone; the Father 'sent forth His son' to redeem us from the slavery of sin and to restore our dignity as children," the pope said Dec. 31. To mark the end of 2021, Pope Francis took part in an evening prayer service in St. Peter's Basilica. Surprisingly, however, the pope did not preside over the prayer service as scheduled; instead, the Vatican press office said, he wanted Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, dean of the College of Cardinals, to preside. Last year, Cardinal Re presided over the traditional end-of-the-year prayer service after the Vatican announced Pope Francis would not attend due to a flare up of "painful sciatica." Arriving several minutes before the liturgy began, the pope greeted Rome's new mayor, Roberto Gualtieri, and shook his hand before taking a seat in a white chair set in front of several cardinals. The service included the singing of the "Te Deum" ("We praise you, oh God") in thanksgiving for the blessings of the past year, as well as eucharistic adoration and benediction.

Immigrants' stories explored in book about sisters' literacy center

AURORA, Ill. (CNS) — While looking for a project so she could cross "write a book" off her bucket list, Anna Marie Kukec Tomczyk thought about her time as an associate with the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Illinois and decided to focus on the sisters' work in the Dominican Literacy Center with immigrants. The more women Tomczyk talked with, the more she learned about how their lives changed through their involvement with the center located in Aurora. The book, "We Are Eagles," was released last spring. Tomczyk sees the stories as belonging to the women. "A lot of these women bootstrapped their lives and set goals for themselves and did it — with the center helping, too, along the way," she said. "It's a women's book (about) women's issues. That's how I hoped it would be perceived."

Pastor honored with St. Brother Andre Medal

NOTRE DAME — One might say Father Jim Fenstermaker, CSC, pastor of Holy Cross Parish in South Bend, traveled back in time to receive an award not only honoring his life as a priest, but also paying tribute to a beloved saint.

Father Fenstermaker recently headed back to Long Island, where he grew up, and specifically to Holy Cross High School in the New York City borough of Queens. He was a member of the Class of 1974.

In mid-November, the school, which is operated by the Congregation of Holy Cross, as are other schools including the University of Notre Dame, invited Father Fenstermaker back for the bestowal of the St. Brother Andre Medal. The medal is awarded annually to "individuals who have exemplified the virtues of humility and service and have made, over many years, an enduring contribution to the mission of Holy Cross High School in making God known, loved, and served."

The medal is named for Brother Andre Besette, CSC, (1845-1937) who was canonized a saint in 2010. Brother Andre is known for his modest living as a doorkeeper and a deep faith in St. Joseph, whose intercession allowed him to perform many reported miracles for the poor and ill.

Father Fenstermaker accepted the medal as part of the high school's awards gala for alumni Nov. 13. He said his education at the school was the launching point for his discernment of a priestly vocation.

His life has led him to varied service through the Congregation of Holy Cross, as a pastor in a Brooklyn parish plus other assignments "back east" and elsewhere. He served as vocations director for the Congregation. He returned to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend in 2018.

Holy Cross High School's fundraising event was planned to take place in its gym until Hurricane Ida passed through. When the event was moved to the Inn at New Hyde Park, Father Fenstermaker's geographical and chronological trek was made complete. New Hyde Park was the town where he grew up: He graduated from a grammar school there that bore the name of his parish — Notre Dame.

Come meet a sister

ST. MARY-OF-THE-WOODS — The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, invite all single, Catholic women ages 18-42 to join Sister Jessica Vitente, SP, Jan. 7, and Sister Arrienne Whittaker, SP, Jan. 14 for virtual mini-retreats dubbed "Hail Mary Full of Grace, Come Meet a Sister Face-to-Face." Both events will take place from 6:30-7:45 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Sister Jessica and Sister

AROUND THE DIOCESE

St. Vincent de Paul Society breakfast



Provided by Donna Brooke

The District Council of the Fort Wayne Society of St. Vincent de Paul came together for an annual Mass and breakfast Dec. 11 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish. Volunteers for the society, who are called Vincentians, received Top Hat awards for their service. The awards were given out by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, who also celebrated the Mass. The organization's founder, Frédéric Ozanam, wore a top hat on his visits to those in need, and the Top Hat award commemorates his work.

Arrienne will share stories about their lives and their journey to become Sisters of Providence. There will also be a question-and-answer session.

Sisters of Providence Vocations director Sister Joni Luna, SP, said that during the congregation's most recent Come and See Retreat, they conducted a survey with participants. The survey concluded that those women wanted to meet more younger Sisters of Providence.

"Our goal in these two mini-retreats is to introduce younger women in the congregation," Sister Joni said. "We want to share that there are women still entering the congregation and we want them to share their vocation story."

Sister Joni added that since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the congregation has conducted many virtual events, which have been well received.

"COVID encouraged us to see the way we're operating vocations with new eyes," Sister Joni said. "We got together and developed new ways to connect with women discerning religious life and because of that, we have met and connected with many talented women seeking more in life."

The congregation will continue the series Feb. 11 with a virtual event with Sister Denise Wilkinson, SP, and another discernment event in March with Father Terry Johnson. Then, the congregation's spring Come and See Retreat will take place in person in April.

Register online for these or any of our upcoming events at Events.SistersofProvidence.org or by contacting Sister Joni at 361-500-9505 or at jluna@spsmw.org.

Lady Pioneers win basketball championship



Provided by Lois Widner

The Varsity Lady Pioneers of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School clinched the 2021 Hoopfest Championship at the University of St. Francis over Christmas break. Sponsored by the Queen of Angels athletic board, the Lady Pioneers won the title in games against St. John the Baptist School, New Haven; St. Peter Lutheran School, Fort Wayne; St. Jude School, Fort Wayne; and a double-elimination game against St. Peter Lutheran. The coaches, from left, were Chris Spoltman, Eric Hills and Jason Funk.

A year of essential questions

BY JODI MARLIN

10

Passing into eternal life

The parish of St. John the Evangelist in Goshen mourned the passing of beloved servant Deacon David Elchert in 2021. Two

retired priests also gained eternal rest; Father John Pfister, a former vocations director for the diocese, and Father Phillip Widmann, whose interest in preserving history led to the founding of Diocesan Museum. Following Father Widmann's passing a new director, Kathy Imler, has presented several new exhibits at the museum, including a current display of parish altars decorated with joy and beauty for Christmas. In addition, the Notre Dame community bowed its head in prayer over the November loss of Father David Link, a priest of the Diocese of Gary and a former dean of the Notre Dame Law School.

9

Youths praise His name during outdoor worship

A diverse crowd of teens converged on Headwaters Park in Fort Wayne for two days of praise, prayer and

adoration this past summer. Spanish-speaking young people and their families worshipped Friday, Aug. 27, at ¡Viva! Night of Praise, and hundreds of English-speaking youths convened in the same location the next day for a stateside World Youth Day gathering.

8

Worldwide conversation opened

Pope Francis opened the Synod on Synodality in late September, and the theme of synodality will be the theme of the next Synod of Bishops

in 2023: In preparation, people all over the world are being asked to be open to the Holy Spirit and thus discern toward deeper communion, fuller participation and greater openness to fulfilling their mission in the world.

On Oct. 17, the diocesan phase of the process began. According to Bishop Rhoades, the fundamental question being discussed is: "A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, 'journeys together.' How is this 'journeying together' happening today in your local Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our 'journeying together'?"



7

Mass of Healing in Remembrance of the Miami Tribe

Acknowledging generations of pain caused by the forced removal of Miami Indians from the

Northeast Indiana region to Kansas and then Oklahoma in 1846, Bishop Rhoades celebrated a Mass of Remembrance and Healing at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Oct. 2. "At this Mass, we say NO to what happened to the Miami peoples here in Fort Wayne 175 years ago," he told the tribe members present. "We say YES to the encounter between peoples and cultures that takes place with mutual respect, justice and love."

6

Afghan refugees

As refugees from the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan were airlifted to countries around the world, Catholic Charities of Fort Wayne-South

Bend was one of several Catholic Charities chapters around the country who jumped to their

feet and began making arrangements for some Afghans to be resettled in the immediate area. By December, 75 individuals were making their homes between Fort Wayne and the surrounding communities and donations were pouring in.

5

Ordered to Christ and His Church

In April, Bishop Rhoades added the position of vicar for clergy to the diocesan curia and appointed Father Matthew Coonan, pas-

tor of St. Therese Parish, to the responsibility. Ordinations took place in May, June and November with Deacons Brian Isenbarger and Mark Hellinger ordained to the diaconate May 23 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne. Seven new priests, Father Paolo Degasperi, Father Daniel Koehl, Father Michael Ammer, Father Keeton Lockwood, Father Benjamin Landrigan, Father Augustine Onuoha and Father Logan Parrish were anointed June 5, as Bishop Rhoades put it, "to lead God's people in love." On Nov. 27, Deacons Isenbarger and Hellinger were joined in their vocations of service by LeeAllen Fortin, who with God's providence will pledge his life to the Lord at the priestly ordination of all three in June.

A different kind of sacrificial commitment to Christ and His Church was celebrated Oct. 3 when Anne Therese Stephens became the second consecrated virgin in the diocese. At a Mass celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, she entered into a bridal union with Christ. Stephens continues her work in the Tribunal office of the diocese and additional ministries as requested by the bishop.



Abortion laws. Vaccines. The centrality of the Eucharist. These and other storms of debate polarized Americans in 2021, but Catholics of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend found themselves with wise counsel as they sorted through the issues. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Doctrine, was instrumental in framing public conversation on several issues of public concern; closer to home and in the presence of his faithful, he led the diocese in prayer while sharing the truth of the Catholic faith. Many initiatives brought hope and clarity to the conversations, and as moments of joy punctuated life within the diocese and at its parishes, hope for a new year returned.

4

Indiana voucher program expansion

A significant expansion of the Indiana Choice Scholarship program allowed many more Hoosier families to afford Catholic education.

After the passing of critical legislation in April, eligibility for the vouchers rose to 300% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program, and the tier system was eliminated — meaning the families of all qualifying students receive 90% of the state tuition support for that child.



Pro-Life Activities, had collaborated to issue a document “Moral Considerations Regarding the New COVID-19 Vaccines;” Bishop Rhoades further clarified in a statement that, in light of oral concerns that Johnson and Johnson’s vaccine was “developed, tested and is produced with abortion-derived cell lines,” that “while we should continue to insist that pharmaceutical companies stop using abortion-derived cell lines, given the world-wide suffering that this pandemic is causing, we affirm again that being vaccinated can be an act of charity that serves the common good.”

1

The eucharistic question

The spring and fall gatherings of the USCCB made headlines over development of a document concerning eucharistic consistency. Many

minds construed the discussion as a political one sparked by the second Catholic president in the history of the United States. It was actually about recognizing the Real Presence in the sacrament, however, and the implications of this truth.

3

The year of St. Joseph

A year dedicated to Joseph, of the house and lineage of Abraham and David and the spouse of Mary, was announced by Pope Francis to

begin Dec. 8, 2020. Consecrations to St. Joseph flourished across the diocese and a pilgrimage from St. Joseph Parish, Mishawaka, to St. Joseph Parish, South Bend, attracted more than 400 of the faithful. Bishop Rhoades closed the year of the man he called a “model of holiness” Dec. 8 in Mishawaka.



CNS photo/Harris County Public Health, Handout via Reuters

2

Vaccines

Bishop Rhoades reiterated on a national stage that use of vaccinations to combat Covid-19 was not only morally acceptable according to Church teaching, but an act of charity toward

others. In late 2020, he and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann, chairman of the Committee on

The completed document was accepted by the bishops and issued as a statement in November. It focuses on a three-year plan for eucharistic revival that will emphasize the centrality of Christ’s body and blood in U.S. dioceses and parishes. The plan will begin this summer and culminate in 2024 with a National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis.



Catholic special education 'reimagined'

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Educating a child is never the work of a single person; parents, teachers, administrators and so many others play a part in the lifelong learning process. Educating special needs children is no different. Catholic schools are not typically known for outstanding special education programs, but joint efforts between the aforementioned people are looking to make great strides in special education within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Juanita Oberley has been involved in special education for more than 10 years, first as a teacher at St. Vincent de Paul School in Fort Wayne, then as special education coordinator at Bishop Dwenger. Now she molds future teachers in the field as an associate professor of education at the University of Saint Francis. Recently, she has become involved with the ministry Belonging, a group that is concerned with helping the Church reach out to those with disabilities and bring them into greater participation in all areas of Catholic life. A branch of the group has lately increased its focus on inclusion within the Catholic schools.

"I say this to people: there's this misconception that special education doesn't happen in Catholic schools – no, it's reimagined," Oberley emphasized. "Mass, sacraments, prayer services, the rosary – all those things are, in my mind, unique services. They're services to get kids to heaven ... to teach them about their faith. That's special education."

Through the aid of Allison Sturm with the Ministry with Persons with Disabilities, members of the Belonging school group met with Dr. Joe Brettnacher, superintendent of Catholic schools, to find ways to provide more services for students with disabilities. In her role for the diocese, Sturm helps connect parents, teachers and principals with others who can help them find the answers they are seeking. She said that parents of special needs students "can ask me any question and I'm going to look into it."

Out of that meeting came a push to move diocesan policy forward by updating documents and guidance and making it easier for parents to find services for their children. The first step in the process was a survey sent out to all Catholic schools to determine what services each one provides. Individual Catholic schools do not – and realistically should not, as Oberley argued – cover every need, which even individual public schools cannot. The overarching goal is to accommodate students with disabilities within the realm of



Photos by Jennifer Barton

At St. Vincent de Paul in Fort Wayne, special education teacher Amanda Arnold works with a student in her resource classroom. A collaboration between parents, educators and administrators headed by the Belonging ministry for people with disabilities is moving Catholic schools within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend toward increasing educational programs for students with physical, emotional and intellectual disabilities.

Catholic education as much as possible.

Associate superintendent David Maugel has been placed in charge of the special education initiative, and two principals, both with backgrounds in special education, have been identified as administrative representatives on either side of the diocese. The diocese is also helping fund a study by the group ADAC to ensure that the schools are getting their Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds. Dr. Brettnacher has also created a Padlet electronic "binder" with special education resources.

Dr. Brettnacher knows that in the three years he has been superintendent, the diocese has not made the progress in this area that he would have liked, but by having Maugel in place to work toward this goal, he is confident that big changes are coming. The main thing, he said, is that, "we want parents to be informed about what our schools have to offer ... to be informed about our policies."

With 43 Catholic schools under the Catholic schools office, Maugel admits that reforming special education will be a "huge undertaking," but he is hoping to see improvements at the local level, "enhancing skills and knowledge and maybe slowly branching into other schools that maybe recognize the need for it and then being able to find ways to support them."

One diocesan policy that many parents may not know about is that if their parish school does not offer services that a child needs and another school might be a better fit, families can still get parishioner rates at that school.

Special education in the Catholic schools is a com-



Students with disabilities use physical tools to represent numbers in mathematics class. Resource paraprofessional Anne Delagrange helps students learn math facts as well as other skills at St. Vincent.

plicated field to navigate. Education plans often differ from those used in the public schools. There is no centralization in the Catholic schools as there often is in public schools, but most complicated of all is learning the laws for funding services. Belonging and the Catholic schools office are working together to tap individual resources who understand the complex aspects of special education and bring them together to spread awareness across schools and parishes in the diocese. They are also in the planning stages of working with autism centers on both sides of the diocese to better equip these students with everyday life skills for their future needs.

"It's not easy work, but it's very rewarding," Oberley stated. She has a passion for helping students with disabilities. This had not been her initial career path, having wanted to

teach English at the high school level, but in her studies at the University of Saint Francis, where she earned her bachelor's degree, the requirement at the time was a dual study in both general and special education. Her first job practically landed in her lap when St. Vincent called her about filling a position for a teacher on maternity leave. The job happened to be in special education.

Named for an aunt that passed away as a toddler, and who happened to have Down syndrome, Oberley felt an immediate connection with her special needs students. "Our choices have consequences, but I feel like you're led to a choice if you just open your eyes and listen. I ended up here and never left," she remarked.

Not only does she now teach others who will go on to work with children who have disabilities, but she is an ardent

advocate for the inclusion of students of all abilities in Catholic classrooms to the greatest extent possible. She gave a presentation at Catholic Mission day on both sides of the diocese on the topic and sometimes receives calls or emails from other educators asking for advice about individual students and how to best meet their needs.

Oberley was amazed at the timing of the initiatives within the diocese and how it coincided with the Vatican's launch of the #IamChurch campaign, which features people with disabilities who actively participate in their faith. Both the launch of #IAMChurch and the Catholic schools meeting took place in early December.

Part of the new plan is a disabilities awareness curriculum that Oberley and a colleague are working on for schools to use, which will give individuals with disabilities an opportunity to visit schools and talk to students about their differences. This also opens conversations about how to respectfully treat people with disabilities. "These are people first and they happen to have a disability or they learn differently... they still have value, they still have dignity, they're still created in the image and likeness of God, so as long as we focus on those things, it's fantastic," Oberley said.

Educating people with disabilities is more than a job for Oberley; it's a vocation, as it should be for all who participate in special education. "It's a calling and you're signing on to help get all these children to heaven, too. It's a huge responsibility and a huge undertaking," she said. "When I die and I'm trying to get into heaven, they're going to say, 'Did you do everything you could to help your kid get to heaven?' and I hope I can answer 'yes.'"

The Belonging Catholic schools group does not only consist of educators, but also parents such as Sarah Olson. Olson helped bring a sensory-friendly Mass to her home parish of St. Vincent de Paul in Fort Wayne and is "really excited to be part" of the movement toward inclusion in schools for students such as her son John, who has autism. Two of her other children were born deaf and have cochlear implants, so she wants to support their Catholic education and help pave the way for other deaf students. "They're not the first and they won't be the last, so let's try to get this right for them, for all the kids."

Maugel stated that: "I think Catholic schools are going to continue to be a very bright option for families." And with parents and educators working together, special education in the Catholic schools will continue to grow and progress in the next few years.

'It's about God;' evangelization abounds for layman

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Steve Till has often wondered why God allowed him to remain away from the Catholic Church for so long – 40 years, in fact. He stated that: “I come to realize that if it wasn't for that part of my life, this part of my life wouldn't be what it is today.”

An encounter with the Eucharist brought Till to a deep, enduring love for the Blessed Sacrament and back into the arms of the Church. His love of the Eucharist continues to grow, and he greatly desires to wake other Catholics up to this incredible blessing. He also aspires to bring as many people into the Church as possible, to experience this saving grace. In everyday places such as grocery stores, restaurants and hospitals, he finds opportunities to spread the Gospel message to those he meets.

“I know what it's like to be chasing your tail out here, trying to find something, not knowing what that something is. So many people have just been placed in my life... I can see it, it's obvious to me, they're looking for something,” Till emphasized.

He knows what that something is – love. But not just any kind of love, the greatest love that can be found. Such people,



Jennifer Barton

Since returning to the Church years ago, there is little that gives Steve Till greater joy than being close to God and bringing others into communion with the Catholic Church. He does this by aiding at his home parish of Most Precious Blood and the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and actively seeking ways to evangelize others.

he says, are “looking for the wrong kind of love in all the wrong places, when we should be looking for the kind of love that Jesus Christ brings into our lives.”

He spoke about a sermon

he heard recently that affected the way he viewed his own life. It was about St. Jerome, who taught that one should always live in a manner that demonstrates the glory of God rather than simply speaking of it. “We

– me included — we don't know how we affect people; how many people we affect,” he commented. “It's insignificant to us, but that little-bitty thing actually had influence on somebody over here that you had no idea that that was going to be — for good or for bad. ... So I guess that's the impetus, at least in my case, to try and live a little better life.”

Last year, Till shared the story of his return to the faith nearly 15 years ago with Today's Catholic. Since then, he has been amazed by how many people God has placed in his path to evangelize. For him, evangelization often starts out as simple conversations, such as the ones he had with the receptionist at a retirement home where he brought Communion to a resident on Saturday evenings. After seeing him come to the facility for three weeks in a row, the young woman finally became curious enough to ask him why he was there. Speaking about Jesus in the Eucharist came naturally to him, though to her “it's like speaking a foreign language.”

Each time he returned, he answered more of her questions, sharing little snippets of the Catholic faith. Eventually, the patient he was visiting moved to another facility, but amazingly, another Catholic came to the same home and requested

Communion, so Till gained another opportunity to speak to the receptionist again. Whether or not the young woman becomes Catholic is out of Till's hands, but he feels confident that he at least planted the seeds that may lead to her conversion.

The Holy Spirit has certainly been working through Till. Another time, he planned to take Communion to someone in the hospital with a bowel blockage, but she could not eat anything. After praying on her behalf, he received word late on a Saturday night that he could give her Communion the next day for the last time.

“It's not about people, it's about God,” Till said, “and our relationship, my relationship with God.”

Till is a parishioner at Most Precious Blood Parish in Fort Wayne, but calls the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception his “second home.” Few Sunday evenings pass without his presence at Mass, and he often fills the role of altar server there, sometimes serving for the bishop.

Also a substitute adorer at St. Vincent de Paul's new adoration chapel, Till has been known to take additional prayer hours in which he sits in silence, asking God to use him as He will. He

TILL, page 14



AT USF, ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

EVEN A TUITION-FREE CATHOLIC EDUCATION

“I WOULDN'T BE AT USF WITHOUT THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND BEING HERE IS LITERALLY A DREAM COME TRUE. I KNEW FOR A LONG TIME THAT USF WAS THE PLACE FOR ME. I'M THANKFUL EVERY DAY.”

MARIA SOLIS VALTIERRA '24,
PAY IT FORWARD SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Dream big and ask about our **Free Tuition Program** and **Pay it Forward** Scholarship.

You belong here! >> go.sf.edu/apply



UNIVERSITY of
SAINT FRANCIS™

2701 Spring Street | Fort Wayne, IN 46808 | 260-399-7700 | sf.edu

The University of Saint Francis complies with all federal regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, gender, age, or disability in matters pertaining to admission, employment and access to programs.

In the storm's wake, our neighbors need us

Christmas this year arrived amid shock and tears. The images of devastation wrought by at least 22 tornadoes slashing their way through Kentucky, Missouri, Arkansas and Illinois are etched in our national consciousness.

Nature unleashed a fearsome slaughter in our heartland. Stories of children sucked into the roaring night, of families huddling in bathrooms as the walls around them collapsed, are nightmares that will haunt those who experienced them and we who heard them.

It seems cruelly ironic that the disasters happened just as the Church was preparing to celebrate Gaudete Sunday, the time of joy as the commemoration of the birth of the Messiah draws near.

Crueler still, it happened only a few weeks before Christmas. Some of those injured and dead were working night shifts to make extra money for Christmas presents, their survivors told us, weeping.

"No more shall people call ... your land 'Desolate,'" Isaiah will tell us at the Christmas Vigil, yet desolate it is in Mayfield, Kentucky; Monette, Arkansas; Edwardsville, Illinois, and numerous other communities slashed by the storm.

The Christmas season with all its joy has always had a dark edge too. On the day after Christmas, St. Stephen's Day celebrated the first martyr for the faith. Two days later there was the feast of the Holy Innocents, babes put to the sword by

Herod's soldiers.

In the midnight Christmas Mass, we read that "the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." The Messiah has come, yet in faith we realize that on this earth we still grapple with the darkness.

We built creches in our churches to mark the birth of Jesus, but they were built in the shadow of the crucifix. We know the triumph at the story's end, but we also know the travails to come.

In a homily a few days after his diocese was hit by the storm, Bishop William F. Medley of Owensboro, Kentucky, noted this bond between the creche and the cross, saying, "The wood of the manger gives way to the wood of the cross. And the cross is in our churches year-round." But then he added, "We can make our sufferings one in communion with Christ on the cross."

The Church is nothing if not realistic. We will suffer, just as Our Lord suffered. Tragedies will befall us and our neighbors. We do not receive guarantees of safe passage in this life. Yet these tragedies also become opportunities of faith.

In Kentucky, Arkansas and Illinois, Americans rushed in to help. Parishes became centers of relief for broken neighborhoods. Volunteers provided food and shelter and even hunted for the scattered debris that once were people's photos and books and mementos. The suffering of our neighbors becomes suffering we can help ease.

We all know the parable of



AMID THE FRAY

GREG ERLANDSON

the good Samaritan who helped the stranger left for dead. "To rebuild our wounded world," Pope Francis writes in "Fratelli Tutti, on Fraternity and Social Friendship," "our only course is to imitate the good Samaritan."

We help the stranger we have not yet become friends with.

For many of us, all we can do is send prayers and money their way. Catholic Charities USA is collecting donations for people who have lost everything and whose needs are so great. If you'd like to send money, go to catholiccharitiesusa.org. The site has a button to hit to donate for tornado relief.

The good Samaritan donated money as well to help the wounded man. He also promised not to forget, telling the innkeeper he would be back. It is our responsibility as well not to forget. The towns will not be rebuilt overnight, the healing will take time.

Let's remember our neighbors this Christmas season. Let's not forget them come Easter.

Greg Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at gerlandson@catholicnews.com.

The thrifting Catholic: giving new life to old things

Emily Hannon was surprised by the children's clothes she saw at big-box stores and popular websites when she became a mom. And not in a good way: Obnoxious graphics, offensive messages, neon colors. It fell short of her long-held beliefs as a Catholic and her powerful new emotions as a mother. It didn't suit her newborn son with his peach-fuzz and bright eyes.

The 29-year-old Pittsburgh photographer had always sought beauty in hidden places. She'd taken to heart St. John Paul II's words in his 1999 letter to artists and quoted a passage in her Instagram profile: "beauty that stirs you to wonder...to the sense of eternal."

Now she was choosing how to dress her son, Jack, and feeling compelled to look beyond the mall.

"The loud graphics and words all over clothing take away from the beauty and dignity of the person wearing them," Emily said. "God made us each with such intricacy and complexity, and our clothing shouldn't detract from that but should simply point to it."

Outfits saved from her childhood and her husband's seemed like the answer, which led Emily to visit consignment stores. Oh, was she in for a treat! Peter Pan collars! Smocked dresses! Knit sweaters! Corduroy overalls!



TWENTY SOMETHING

CHRISTINA CAPECCHI

Vintage children's clothing felt timeless, like her baby himself: not dated or defined by one era, but rather, shimmering with a transcendent beauty, rising above.

"It reflects the joy that a new baby brings into the world just by their very existence," Emily said. "They are perfectly pure and deserving of all our love."

As Emily and Sean were blessed with another son, Peter, and then a daughter, Lucy, the young mom's appreciation for classic children's clothing has grown. The thrill of a great find spurs her along, prodding her to frequent a few favorite thrift shops.

Some discoveries seem meant to be, like a high-end European brand tucked between modern dresses. "Beauty is always there – you just have to open your eyes to find it!" she said. Thrifting feels countercultural, in keeping with Pope Francis' caution about a "throwaway culture." It feels Catholic. "Our

CAPECCI, page 13

In Jesus, the glory of God's love has been revealed



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

The feast of the Baptism of the Lord is very important to the Church's mission of bringing us to Christ. It reveals both the identity of the Lord and begins the Gospel's revelation of the Lord's work of salvation.

Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. The three synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, report this event. St. Luke's account is read on this feast this year.

John's Gospel alludes to John the Baptist's baptisms in the Jordan, and in this Gospel, John

the Baptist uses for Jesus the title, "Lamb of God."

The first reading is one of the four suffering servant songs of Isaiah. Who was this suffering servant? The future Messiah? One of the prophets? The author? Was it a collective reference to the people of Israel? No one knows for certain, but Christian liturgies over the centuries have seen Jesus in the suffering servant songs. So, these quite poetic passages are prominent in the liturgies of Lent and indeed of Good Friday.

Certainly, reference to Christ is the message for this feast. In this Scripture, God reveals that a faithful and pure servant will come. He will endure outrage. Many will turn against Him, yet He will be steadfast.

Supplying the second reading is the Acts of the Apostles. After Easter almost every liturgy contains a reading from the Acts of the Apostles, but this source rarely furnishes readings at Mass in any other time. So, the appearance of Acts on this weekend is unusual.

The reading is important. Peter's own identity is revealed. Peter spoke for all the Apostles. He was chief among the Apostles. He reached out to gentiles by teaching Cornelius, a Roman officer, a foreigner and pagan. Peter proclaimed Jesus, declaring that the saving ministry of Jesus began with the Lord's baptism. Peter's message clearly was the continuation of the Lord's message.

St. Luke's Gospel provides the last reading. Luke's revelation of the baptism highlights the Lord's divine identity and mission of salvation. In Luke, God announces that Jesus is the Son of God, sent by God to redeem humankind. Jesus fulfilled the plan of God.

Certain images are important. In a distant echo of Creation, the reading shows that life comes from the water. Jesus emerged from the water to begin the mission of redemption. The faithful must repent. It prefigures Christian baptism.

Another crucial image is that of the sky. God spoke from the

sky, a sign of divinity in the Old Testament.

Reflection

In Advent, the Church called us to renewed holiness and grace. The Church joyfully led us to Christmas, the anniversary of the Lord's birth. If we responded in Advent, Christmas was much more than a commemoration. It was a personal event in which faithful hearts and souls truly received Christ and were vivified, healed and freed from the burden of sin and the inevitability of death.

In the great revelation of the Epiphany, celebrated last week, the Church continued to tell us about Jesus, son of Mary and therefore human, but also the Son of God, as the Magi realized.

Now, on this feast, the Church instructs us further about Jesus. He is the instrument of God's love for us. Doomed by our sins, we find another chance in Jesus. He is our Savior, reconciling us with God. He identifies with us. Union with Jesus is critical if we

wish to be saved.

He is God. God forgives us and restores us to eternal life if we accept the Lord.

Practically speaking, Jesus comes to us through Peter and the Apostles, the Lord's special students, sent to bring salvation to all the world. They still are present in and through the Church.

READINGS

Sunday: Is 42:1-4, 6-7 Ps 29:1-4, 9-10 Acts 10:34-38 Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

Monday: 1 Sm 1:1-8 Ps 116:12-19 Mk 1:14-20

Tuesday: 1 Sm 1:9-20 (Ps) 1 Sm 2:1, 4-8 Mk 1:21-28

Wednesday: 1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20 Ps 40:2, 5, 7-10 Mk 1:29-39

Thursday: 1 Sm 4:1-11 Ps 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25 Mk 1:40-45

Friday: 1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a Ps 89:16-19 Mk 2:1-12

Saturday: 1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1a Ps 21:2-7 Mk 2:13-17

On Christ and Christmas

It is an annual tradition: If it's Christmas, there must be a Grinch trying to steal it.

Vying for the Grinch award this year is Michael Weinstein, Air Force veteran and head of a group called the Military Religious Freedom Foundation.

He has attacked the nonprofit organization Wreaths Across America for placing Christmas wreaths on the graves of fallen soldiers at national cemeteries. He compares this to "carpet-bombing" the graves with a "Christian gang sign."

Weinstein says placing the wreaths on graves marked with a Star of David is "unconstitutional, an atrocity and a disgrace."

But Wreaths Across America says its policy is to pause and pay respects at these graves, but refrain from placing a wreath out of respect for Jewish beliefs. Spokespeople for the cemeteries say they do likewise, and comply with any family's objection to the wreath.

But the underlying reason for this dispute is worth some reflection. Mr. Weinstein says the wreath is "circular and made of evergreen to symbolize everlasting life through Jesus Christ." And the practice of leaving Jewish gravestones without a wreath seems to acknowledge this as a possible interpretation.

But then, what to make of the wreaths decorating lampposts and storefronts all over the U.S.? Are the White House Christmas tree and the dozens of trees and wreaths adorning that house an unconstitutional establishment of religion? Should my parish church take down its sign asking people to "Keep Christ in Christmas" and declare victory?

That seems unlikely. As noted Dec. 19 by Catholic newspaper

Our Sunday Visitor, one recent survey reports that 93% of Americans celebrate Christmas -- and another reports that 65% of Americans consider themselves Christians (one could add that far fewer attend church services).

Yet it's hard to avoid those first six letters of the word "Christmas," though some try to do so with "Xmas". Secular historians may replace "B.C." (before Christ) and "A.D." (anno Domini, year of the Lord) with "B.C.E." (before the Common Era) and "C.E." (Common Era), but the dividing line between the two is still Christ's birth -- placing this event, then ignored by the powers that be, at the center of human history.

Frankly, we cannot imagine what our society would be like without the influence of Christianity. To cite one example,

pagan Rome gave the "paterfamilias," the father of the family, almost absolute authority over wife and children -- to the extent that he could order a child to be killed before or after birth. Christians insisted that children (born and unborn), women, slaves and other mar-

ginalized persons are equally created in the image and likeness of God.

American efforts against slavery and racism were driven by Christian preaching. And a landmark manifesto on the "inherent dignity" and "equal and inalienable rights" of all members of the human family was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights approved by the new United Nations in 1948.

Canadian attorney John Humphrey, deeply involved in its drafting, said the U.N. had produced "something like the Christian morality without the tommyrot."



A MORE HUMAN SOCIETY

RICHARD DOERFLINGER

Efforts to keep Christian respect for every human being without the "tommyrot" -- the Incarnation, the miracles and Christ's triumph over death -- have been pursued for centuries. They have worn very thin, as philosophers redefine "dignity" to mean self-serving freedom, and politics seems like a game of warring factions.

Our secular neighbors may be more Christ-haunted than Christian, but they long for the peace and the universal goodwill included in the meaning of Christmas. Christians may find opportunities to say: "Aren't these wonderful things to hope for? Guess where they're from."

Frankly, we cannot imagine what our society would be like without the influence of Christianity.

CAPECCHI, from page 12

culture is constantly pressuring us to buy more, spend more, accumulate more. We've lost a sense of reusing things from the past or passing down things that may not be brand new but still hold tremendous value."

Searching for secondhand finds cultivates a loving disposition. It fosters a forgiving and unrushed eye, the ability to slow down and sift through, recognizing the potential in something old and overlooked. It feels spiritual. Emily can give an old dress another chance, another child.

Emily couldn't keep her thrifted finds to herself -- nor

did she need them all. Four months ago, she opened an online shop to sell her secondhand purchases: vintage children's clothing, heirloom toys and antique homewares. She named it The Simple Daisy, a nod to the St. Therese quote about the "simple charm" of a daisy, and secured the domain thesimpledaisyshop.com.

To her surprise, the shop has been a huge hit. She has already sold hundreds of pieces. Thanks to savvy marketing on social media, sharing glimpses of what's to come, many pieces sell three to five minutes after a "drop," or online release.

Emily is excited to grow the

shop in 2022. Stepping into a new year surrounded by old clothing feels like a hug from the past. It harkens back to simpler times and warms the future with well-worn history.

"I love that each piece tells a story, often one we don't know," Emily said. "I sometimes imagine other children who are now fully grown playing with the toys my children play with. It makes me feel connected to others, even those I'll never meet, like we're all part of something bigger."

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

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for January 9, 2022

Acts 10: 34-38/ Luke 3: 15-16, 21-22

Following is a word search based on the First and Gospel readings for the feast of Baptism of the Lord, Cycle C. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

PETER	FEARS HIM	PEACE
CHRIST	GALILEE	JOHN
PREACHED	ANOINTED	DOING GOOD
HEALING	DEVIL	PEOPLE
ANSWERED	SANDALS	FIRE
HEAVEN	DESCENDED	DOVE
VOICE	BELOVED	PLEASED

FROM HEAVEN

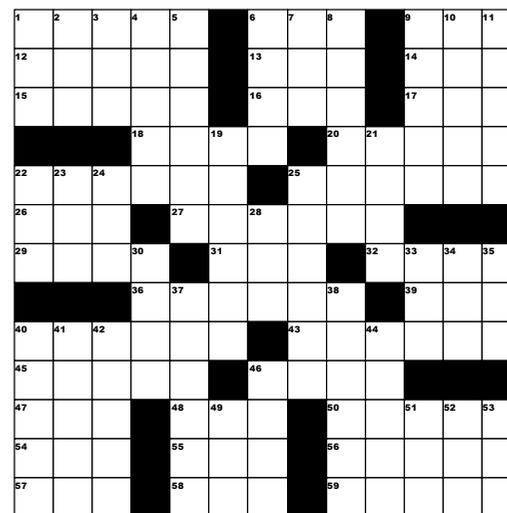
```

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

The Cross Word

January 2 and 9, 2022

- 56 Formally state law
- 57 Seeing spots
- 58 "Eyes has not seen..."
- 59 Afloat (2 wds.)



© 2022 tri-c-a-publications.com

Readings: Is 60:1-6/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12 & Is 42:1-4, 6-7/Acts 10:34-38/Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

ACROSS

- 1 Tan color
- 6 Pouch
- 9 Admiral (abbr.)
- 12 Capital of France
- 13 Bullfight cheer
- 14 Lanterloo card game
- 15 Laughing wild canine
- 16 Angry
- 17 The other half of Jima
- 18 ___ alms
- 20 Vexed
- 22 Japanese tree
- 25 Takes prayer posture
- 26 Recede
- 27 Magi came to pay
- 29 Call
- 31 Throw
- 32 Colorer
- 36 Unseal (2 wds.)
- 39 Did with loaves & fish
- 40 Left hand doesn't know what right does
- 43 Push button pad
- 45 Nicene Creed
- 46 Father (verb)
- 47 Holds cremated remains
- 48 Pressure unit
- 50 Flippant
- 54 Wager
- 55 Type of partnership

DOWN

- 1 Speed rate
- 2 Straw
- 3 "Blessed ___ you"
- 4 The Three ___
- 5 A major prophet
- 6 Not all
- 7 Wing
- 8 Relinquishing
- 9 Resembling
- 10 Wooden peg
- 11 Emotional states
- 19 Flower: "Mary's Humility"
- 21 A bruised ___
- 22 Manger was Jesus'
- 23 Kimono sash
- 24 BB association
- 25 Popular Japanese drama
- 28 First day of week
- 30 He shines upon Jerusalem
- 33 Small dog's bark
- 34 Terminal abbr.
- 35 Church cardinals' hu
- 37 Belong to "the nations"
- 38 Where Magi came from
- 40 Breathing device
- 41 Sinned
- 42 Widow's mite
- 44 Leaven
- 46 Jesus' was pierced
- 49 Pigpen
- 51 Ship initials
- 52 Prompt
- 53 Congressional vote

Answer key can be found on page 15

TILL, from page 11

knows those instances will arise and spending time in God's presence helps him spiritually prepare for them. He tries to maintain a greater awareness of those around him who may need his prayers or words of comfort and eternal salvation.

Recently, he has learned the importance of being deliberate in prayer and words; never to simply say "I'll pray for you," but to actually take the time to do so. "Mean it when you say it, and people will realize that. And to me, that's how we evangelize, is mean that we want to be a help in your life," he said.

While Till is not a preacher by nature, he takes very seriously Jesus' command to "go and make disciples," and part of doing that is by helping others on their own journeys. "I've always been pretty good with

people, but I try more and more to be an instrument to show God's love, to show the things God wants us to show other people, to be to each other ... compassion and all the things we should have.

Another way that he helps bring people into the Catholic Church is by handing out Matthew Kelly's books and CDs to those he finds receptive and in need of spiritual guidance. "There's always an opportunity to spread the faith, but we have to be aware of our surroundings and aware of the needs of people."

Read the story of Till's return to the faith here: todayscatholic.org/love-of-the-eucharist-draws-grandfather-to-reconciliation/



Jennifer Barton

Till speaks with Father Wimal Jayasuriya prior to Sunday evening Mass at the Cathedral on December 12.

Advertise in Today's Catholic!

RE/MAX RESULTS

Andrea "Andy" Hall
260-417-5093
AHallResults@gmail.com

Caitlin Berghoff
260-403-9898
CaitlinBerghoff@remax.net

Each Office Independently Owned and Operated

SERVICE DIRECTORY

Advertise in Today's Catholic

With a variety of options for web and print advertising, let us help you reach YOUR demographic. Call 260-399-1449

PNC Bank Building

LEONARD J. Andorfer & Co., LLP

110 W. Berry Street, STE 2202
Fort Wayne 46802
(260) 423-9405
Fax: (260) 422-9206

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

- Tax Planning and Preparation
- Corporations, Individuals and Partnerships
- Estates and Trusts
- Auditing Services

Visit us at www.ljandorfer.com

Closest Concepts
YOUR STORAGE SPACE SPECIALISTS

Catholic Family Owned since 1988 • Jon & Shelley Ross – St. Joseph Roanoke Parishioners

Fort Wayne 260-483-6763 Indianapolis 317-849-8444

www.closestconceptsinc.com

NOTRE DAME FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Matt Kaiser
Director of Business Services
NMLS# 1087744

Business Development Direct (574) 400-4919
P.O. Box 7878 Fax (574) 575-4538
Notre Dame, IN 46556 mkaiser@NotreDameFCU.com

800/522-6611 • NotreDameFCU.com

HOOSIER PHYSICAL THERAPY

MICHAEL F. BARILE
DC, PT

3030 LAKE AVE SUITE 26
FORT WAYNE, IN 46805

PHONE: 260.420.4400
FAX: 260.420.4448

www.hoosierpt.com

Katie Brown
REALTOR® | Broker

260.437.5025
www.katiebrown.net
katie@katiebrown.net

@KatieBrownFortWayne
@Katie45Brown

Call me when you're thinking of making a move!

Peerless CLEANERS

Ft. Wayne, Auburn, Angola & Warsaw

4121 Hillegas Rd.
Ft. Wayne, IN 46808
260.422.9374

JUST FILL THE BAG, WE'LL DO THE REST!

*FREE Pick-Up & Delivery
*Select areas of Ft. Wayne Only

www.peerless-cleaners.com

Member FDIC LENDER

USB UNION SAVINGS BANK

David Egts

Low Closing Costs & Great Rates
"MORTGAGE CLOSING COST CRUSHER"

260-418-6191

CERTIFIED RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE PROFESSIONAL

Expertise you can rely on.

Mike Kendzicky
Michael Kendzicky
Samantha Hengen, CFP®

Private Wealth Management
4220 Edison Lakes Parkway, Suite 100
Mishawaka, IN 46545
574-247-6830 . 800-866-9022
rwbaird.com

BAIRD

©2018 Robert W. Baird & Co. Incorporated. MC-260563.

1 FULL SERVICE PRINTING

CREATIVE ARTWORK

EDDM/STANDARD MAILING

OFFSET ONE, INC.

www.offset1.com

260-456-8828 | 1609 S. Calhoun St | Fort Wayne, IN 46802

LINDA RILEY
Senior Loan Officer
NMLS: 234665

C: 574.551.9330
O: 574.268.9033
F: 574.268.2955

310 Enterprise Drive
Warsaw, IN 46580

lriley@ruoff.com
ruoff.com/lindariley

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

Marriage enrichment

MISHAWAKA — Fun, fellowship and marriage enrichment will be offered at Queen of Peace Parish Friday, Jan. 14, from 6:15-8 p.m. "Game Show Edition: Supermarket Chopped" will have three "show couples" compete in supermarket-sweep-type games to earn extra time for their Chopped competition. Watch these couples work together while playing the game and cooking. Audience members should learn a lot and be entertained. Light snacks will be provided. RSVP by Jan. 11. at tinyurl.com/2022QofPDate1. RSVP is required for free babysitting.

Life Defenders workshop by Mike Spencer

GRANGER — St. Pius X and Right to Life Michiana will host pro-life speaker Mike Spencer at St. Pius X, 52553 Fir Rd., Saturday, Jan. 8, from 9 a.m. until noon for a Life Defenders workshop. This workshop equips attendees to be gracious, persuasive and effective ambassadors for life when speaking about the contentious issue of abortion. Seats are limited and advanced registration is required. Learn

more and sign up at stpius.net/respectlife. Contact Ashley Logsdon at 574-272-8462 or alogsdon@stpius.net.

Afghan Refugee Simulation

WARSAW — Ever wonder what is life is like for a person who is fleeing their home and country? Catholic Charities' Afghan Refugee Simulation gives a glimpse into the life of a refugee and helps to understand the situations they face by actively participating in small groups discussions. The presentation will also provide information on the specific aspects of the local Catholic Charities' Refugee Resettlement Program. The Afghan Refugee Simulation will be Sunday, Jan. 16, at Sacred Heart gymnasium, 125 N. Harrison St., from 3- 8 p.m. To register, visit www.sacredheartwarsaw.org. Contact Katie Owens at 260-602-3285 or k.owens@shcwarsaw.org.

Saint Mary's College Choir at Mass

FORT WAYNE — Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades has invited the Saint Mary's College Women's Choir to participate in Mass at the

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, 1102 S. Clinton St., Sunday, Feb. 20, at 11:30 a.m. All are invited to attend.

2022 Rekindle the Fire men's conference

FORT WAYNE — Join men from across the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend for a Rekindle the Fire conference Saturday, Feb. 26 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum. This year's speakers are Tim Staples, Nathan Crankfield, Father Wade Menezes and Jason Shanks. Visit www.rekindlethefire.net for information.

The CrossWord

January 2 and 9, 2022

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

REST IN PEACE

Auburn

Machelle Pepple, 64, Immaculate Conception

Fort Wayne

Judy Baatz, 79, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Daniel Bireley, 70, St. Vincent de Paul

Carol Cornell, 77, St. Vincent de Paul

Irma Vanderbosch, 94, Our Lady of Good Hope

Huntington

Sister Mary Joan Ginsterblum, OLV.M, 102, Archbishop Noll Memorial Chapel

Max A. Rupley, 92, SS. Peter and Paul

Mishawaka

Daniel Bezi, 85, Queen of Peace

Lorainne DeGeeter, 95, St. Bavo

Elizabeth Piraccini, 94, Queen of Peace

New Haven

Darlene A. Lothamer, 84, St. Louis, Besancon

Joseph L. Morris, 83, St. John the Baptist

Kathleen S. Rosengrant, 75, St. Louis, Besancon

South Bend

Elena Arroya-Najar, 1 hour, St. Adalbert

Maria Cabrera, 52, St. Adalbert

Genevieve

Dyszkiewicz, 97, St. Adalbert

Barbara Dudeck, 81, Holy Family

Winfield A. MacDonald, 95, Christ the King

Dorothy Putz, 84, St. Adalbert

Walter Regulinski, 75, Holy Family

John Rozycki, 82, Holy Family

Wabash

Miriam Fierstos, 97, St. Bernard Wabash

Daniel Roland, 75, St. Bernard Wabash

Warsaw

Ann M. Sullivan, 53, Sacred Heart

Sensory-friendly Mass celebrated each week at St. Vincent de Paul

FORT WAYNE — A sensory-friendly Mass is celebrated every Sunday at 1:30 p.m., at St. Vincent de Paul Church, 1502 E. Wallen Rd. A sensory-friendly Mass provides a safe, comfortable and stigma-free setting for children and adults with sensory challenges, mental illness or any kind of disability to feel engaged and experience Mass in a meaningful way. Parishioners and nonparishioners are welcome. Questions about offering

a sensory-friendly Mass at your parish? Contact Allison Sturm at asturm@diocesefwsb.org or 260-399-1452.

Belonging Catholic schools meeting: Ministry with Persons with Disabilities

FORT WAYNE — A meeting is offered the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. via zoom to connect with others interested in helping children with disabilities attend Catholic schools in the diocese. To get the link, call 260-399-1452 or email asturm@diocesefwsb.org.

FOREVER FLI LEARNING INSTITUTE
 Providing lifelong learning to senior adults since 1974
 54191 Ironwood Road • South Bend, IN 46635
574-282-1901
ForeverLearningInstitute.org

Welcoming Dr. Emily Krach, D.O. to our Credo Family



- Dr. David J. Moran, MD
- Dr. Emily M. Krach, DO
- Cassandree A. Herber, FNP-C
- Nicholas M. Lesch, PA-C
- Dr. Andrew J. Mullally, MD

CREDO FAMILY MEDICINE (260) 4- FAMILY
credofamilymedicine.com
 PRIVATE • INDEPENDENT • PRO-LIFE

A trusted local team that treats you like an individual

At D.O. McComb & Sons, we offer personalized funeral and memorial services arranged by our compassionate staff. We believe every final tribute should be as unique as the life it represents.

Serving Fort Wayne families since 1925.



McCOMB & SONS
 FUNERAL HOMES

260-426-9494 McCombCares.com

Seminarians handily defeat priests at Cupertino Classic

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

The seminarian team defeated the priests by more than 20 points in the annual Cupertino Classic basketball game at the University of Saint Francis Hutzell Center Monday evening, Dec. 27. The loss spoiled chances for the priests to become back-to-back champions after winning the previous matchup in late 2019.

The 2021 installment of the battle marks the return of the tradition after its cancellation in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fans from across the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend showed up to root for their priests and seminarians, and they nearly filled the university's gymnasium. Several onlookers held signs to support their favorite players.

This year also marked several firsts for the friendly competition. The University of Saint Francis hosted the event for the first time after a five-game run at diocesan high schools. The occasion also offered an opportunity for fans to celebrate Mass and worship in eucharistic adoration at the university's chapel prior to the 6:30 p.m. tipoff.

After a few minutes of warm up shots by both teams, Father Andrew Budzinski led the pre-game prayer.

"We ask your blessings upon these athletes, priests and seminarians," he prayed. "We also ask for your blessings, Lord, upon those young men sitting in the stands whom you are calling to the priesthood. And those young women you are calling to religious life."

Then, following the singing of the national anthem, the clash began.

As always, the priests brought several talented players to the court, including Father Terrence Coonan and Father Matthew Coonan, as well as the recently ordained Father Benjamin Landrigan, who had been a dominant player for the seminarians in years past.

The priests' athleticism, however, was quickly outpaced by a strong showing from the opposing bench.

The seminarians played an aggressive game and always seemed to be one step ahead of their ordained opponents. By the end of the first quarter, they led the priests by 5 points. The seminarians held that lead at the end of the first half, with their rivals answering 17 of their 22 points. The gap would widen in the second half.

During halftime, several

Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration who had been cheering in the crowd played a game of knockout, which is a short, basketball-derived game. Halftime also provided the perfect opportunity for Father Stephen Felicichia, one of three commentators at the competition, to interview seminarian David Langford and Father Thomas Zehr for Redeemer Radio, which broadcast the game for those who could not make it in person.

Only a few minutes into the third quarter, the seminarians increased their lead. By the end of the quarter, the seminarians had scored 16 points and the priests could only answer 9 of those. Going into the fourth quarter, the seminarians led the priests by a widening margin, 38 to 26.

The trend continued through the final quarter of the game as the seminarians ran away with the score.

Between the third and fourth quarters, a section of the crowd performed a rollercoaster wave, which added to the joyous and exciting camaraderie of the evening.

As the final quarter rolled on, the priests' chances of staging a comeback grew evermore bleak. At the last buzzer, the seminarians had defeated their ordained brothers by a score of 55 to 34.

Before Father Budzinski presented the Cupertino Classic trophy to the seminarians, the players and crowd chanted the Salve Regina while facing an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Started in 2014, the Cupertino Classic basketball game is an annual friendly competition between diocesan priests and seminarians that brings awareness to vocations to the priesthood and religious life. The game is named for St. Joseph of Cupertino, a 17th-century Franciscan monk who was known to levitate when in prayer, especially when Christmas carols were sung at Mass.

The monk is a particularly fitting patron of the Cupertino Classic. As Catholics continue to celebrate the Christmas season, they came together in community for an evening of entertainment and prayer.

And, perhaps, St. Joseph of Cupertino interceded for the seminarians Monday evening, allowing them to levitate a little higher for rebounds.

More information for those discerning priesthood or religious life can be found by visiting diocesefwsb.org/vocations.



Above, members of the faith spend time in adoration at the Chapel of St. Francis of Assisi before the annual Cupertino Classic basketball game between diocesan priests and seminarians in the University of Saint Francis' Hutzell Center Dec. 27. At right: a seminarian possession during the game.



Photos by Joshua Schipper



Father Matthew Coonan strategizes with his brother priests during a timeout. From left are Father Jay Horning, Father Coonan, Father Jonathan Norton and Father Thomas Zehr.



The seminarians were victorious over the priests this year, defeating them by more than 20 points. From left are Brian Florian, Eric Plude, Greenan Sullivan, Patrick Ernst, David Langford, Jacob Schneider and Andrew Barnes.



The symbolic Cupertino Classic trophy.