

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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Bishop Rhoades visits Marian High School on patroness' feast day



Derby Photography

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrates Mass in Marian High School's gymnasium during his pastoral visit on Feb. 11, the feast of the school's patroness, Our Lady of Lourdes.

BY DENISE FEDOROW

It was a rainy start to the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes on Friday, Feb. 11, but Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades received a warm welcome from the staff and students at Marian High School in Mishawaka. "It's wonderful to be with you on your feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes," the bishop told them at morning Mass, and stated how he always looked forward to coming to the school. He recalled being there in the fall to dedicate the newly built grotto and said that it's a good place to go and pray and to "celebrate her love for the Son and her love for us."

Mary's humility

The bishop's homily focused on the Magnificat proclaimed in Luke's Gospel. He asked the students, "Did you ever hear your favorite song on the radio and say, 'that's my song?' We just heard in the Gospel Mary's song, the song she proclaimed at the Visitation. Mary's song is called the Magnificat because in the

first words of her song she says, 'My soul magnifies the Lord.'"

He told the students that Mary's song has become the song of the Church and that it's prayed every evening in Vespers, the evening prayer of the Church. He then encouraged the students to see the Magnificat as their own song, as their school is named after Mary, and she serves as its patroness.

"This song that came from Mary's lips also came from her heart. It reveals her soul. It is woven from the threads of scripture, the Word of God that she reflected on and pondered in her heart," he said.

He continued, "Mary's greatness consists in the fact that she wants to magnify God, not herself. She was totally humble.

"We see Mary's great humility at the Annunciation; she called herself 'the handmaid of the Lord.' She placed herself completely at God's disposal and with great faith said, 'Let it be done to me according to your word.' And so God chose her to be His dwelling place in the world. He became flesh in her womb."

The bishop said that God

chose Mary of Nazareth from among all the women in the world because he was attracted by her humility. "Mary recognized this and said in the Magnificat, 'for He has looked with favor upon His lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed.' What Mary has prophesied has come true. Two thousand years later we call her the Blessed Virgin Mary and our Blessed Mother."

"Mary makes Satan so angry because she is the humblest of all creatures and he is the proudest. She's also the most obedient to God and he's the disobedient rebel. In our fight against the work of sin and evil in our lives and in the world, one of our strongest weapons is to pray to Mary, the lowly young virgin of Nazareth. The devil runs away from those who are close to her."

Returning to the Magnificat, Bishop Rhoades explained that Mary shows how when God breaks into history, He turns it upside down, particularly in reversing the fortunes of the poor and the mighty in the next life.

He also referenced the first reading from Isaiah 53:1-5 about

the Suffering Servant "who was spurned and condemned, stricken and pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins. Of course, this is prophecy about Jesus. Jesus is the Suffering Servant of God who was crushed for our offenses. He was humiliated in His passion and crucifixion. This sounds like a terrible defeat, and it was, but not for God, but for Satan. Because Jesus defeated him with love. He defeated sin by loving us to the end and being obedient to His Father."

He spoke of how Mary shared in Jesus' pain and suffering and her heart was pierced, but her Immaculate Heart triumphed, and she was assumed body and soul into heaven. As the Magnificat can teach Catholics much about holy living, Bishop Rhoades invited the students to pray it daily and even gave each of them a gift — a holy card of the Magnificat.

Visiting Classrooms

After Mass, Bishop Rhoades visited several theology classes.

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Synod listening sessions give Catholics a voice

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Faithful Catholics from around the diocese have come together in the last few weeks at various locations – people from different parishes, of varying ages, both religious and laity, single and married, English- and Spanish-speakers. The numbers have varied by location, but all of them have one thing in common: a deep love for the Catholic Church and a desire to hear and be heard.

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has been making progress on fulfilling Pope Francis' call to ensure that members of the Church have a chance to contribute to the upcoming Synod on Synodality in 2023. The first step in the process is more than halfway to completion within the diocese with the listening sessions being held in each vicariate. "The focus is listening, and that's really what I see," said Anne Therese Stephens, synod coordinator for the diocese.

A synod is simply a meeting of bishops, called by the pope to aid in a particular matter. The difference in the Synod on Synodality is that Pope Francis has requested an additional step in allowing the people, including laypeople and clergy, to give their feedback on how the Church is building community among its members and other Christians. Armed with this information, the bishops will meet next year for the official synod.

To collect this information, Stephens and other members of the diocese came up with several questions for participants to pray over before attending a listening session at the appropriate site for their vicariate. As of this writing, four of the six sessions have taken place. Stephens has attended most of these sessions and stated that "generally, they've gone well. The feedback I've gotten from people is that they've enjoyed hearing how concerned people are;" that the participants are "very invested and deeply in love with the Church and wanting to bring the Church to her fullest potential."

Overall, there have been two themes that Stephens has routinely heard being brought to the bulk of the conversations. "I think evangelization and just educating people," she relayed. "There's this drive to move in that direction. And then the other is an increase for knowing the real presence of Jesus, like in adoration."

Members of Vicariate E were invited to attend a listening session at St. John the Baptist Parish in Fort Wayne on Feb. 7. Father Andrew Budzinski emceed the evening, and reminded those present that a listening session was "not the time for theological debate," but a time to listen to



Photos by Jennifer Barton

the guidance of the Holy Spirit and to make their voices heard. The roughly 80 participants were then broken up into smaller groups of around 10 people along with a volunteer moderator and note-taker for an hour's worth of discussion.

Stephens reported that the number of attendees had varied so far, with around 130 at St. Anthony de Padua in South Bend being the largest crowd she had witnessed. The diocese has provided a Spanish-language translator to host groups more comfortable speaking in that language and the listening session at St. Patrick in Ligonier on March 8 will be bilingual.

Understanding the purpose of the synod may be difficult, but Stephens said, "I think that Pope Francis wanted the people who don't normally speak to speak." With that being the case, including bilingual sessions makes certain groups feel more comfortable in participating.

Due to her job as an advocate in the Tribunal, Stephens was a good choice to coordinate the synod at the diocese level. She is comfortable reading testimonies and putting them into orderly documents. It will be her task to condense all of the notes from the listening sessions into a 10-page document to be sent to the Vatican by June. She received instruction on the process last fall. "After reading the documents, my intention was to try to bring as much truth into it and make it as holy as possible, and keeping the mission of the Church in mind," she said.

SS. Peter and Paul Parish in Huntington hosted the listening session for Vicariate F, which encompassed many of the smaller cities in the surrounding area. Father Tony Steinacker emceed the event and invited several other priests from parishes within the vicariate to attend. Discussions sometimes roused passionate feelings of joy and fervency for the Eucharist, and



Members of parishes within Vicariate F of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend discuss the idea of journeying together at the synod listening session at SS. Peter and Paul Parish in Huntington on Feb. 12. People came from all walks of life to contribute their thoughts in advance of the meeting of bishops in 2023.

for the beauty of Catholicism, although no one seemed angry, merely ardent for growth within the Church.

Drew Stuart, one of the facilitators for the day, shared some of the things that he noticed from discussions with his group. "There was a desire to share and be heard," he said, indicating that Father Dale Bauman brought a lot of good ideas to the forefront. "There was also a desire to help others understand the importance of the faith."

Even beyond the synod,

Stuart stated that the people in his group had "a desire to keep doing this; it was a great experience." The big takeaway that he saw was for parishes to share ideas and work together more, rather than "reinventing the wheel."

There are still two upcoming listening sessions for Vicariate A at St. Pius X in Granger and Vicariate C at St. Patrick in Ligonier. For more information on the listening sessions and the Synod on Synodality, visit diocesefwsb.org/synod/.

Catholic Charities appoints new CEO

The Board of Directors of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is pleased to announce the appointment of Daniel Florin as Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately. Florin has been serving as interim CEO since July 2021.

"Dan has been outstanding in his service as Interim CEO," Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades said of the appointment. "I am most pleased that he will now continue as the permanent CEO. The service of the poor and needy is an essential part of the Church's mission, and I have every confidence in Dan's heart for the poor and his superb managerial skills to continue the growth of outreach of Catholic Charities in our diocese to the poor and needy."

Florin comes to the position of CEO with extensive financial and business management experience. He served as chief financial officer of Biomet, Inc., from June 2007 until Zimmer's acquisition of Biomet in June 2015, at which time Florin was named executive vice president and chief financial officer of Zimmer Biomet Inc. until his announced retirement in July 2019. Florin earned an accounting degree from the University of Notre Dame, and holds a CPA and MBA.

Florin left the corporate world two years ago "to focus on faith, family and to give back to the Church." He then joined the board of Catholic Charities in



Provided by Catholic Charities

After serving as interim CEO of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend since last summer, Daniel Florin has been appointed to the position in a full-time capacity.

2020.

"I am humbled to have this opportunity to serve as CEO of Catholic Charities for the diocese, as we commemorate 100 years of serving all those in need as Christ would have us do," said Florin. "Over the past seven months, I have seen firsthand

the dedication of our team, as they walk alongside and provide support to the most vulnerable in our community."

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am honored to have Dan lead Catholic Charities as CEO," says Paulette Davis, president of the Catholic Charities



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Monday, Feb. 21 - Wednesday, Feb. 23: Visiting Seminarians; Mount St. Mary's University, Emmitsburg, MD
 Tuesday, Feb. 22: 1:30 p.m. – Board of Directors Meeting; Mount St. Mary's University, Emmitsburg, MD
 Friday, Feb. 25: 1:30 p.m. – Seminarian Admissions Committee Meeting; Sacred Heart Parish, Warsaw
 Sunday, Feb. 27: 2 p.m. – Rite of Election; St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend

board of directors. "Dan's servant leadership, combined with his vast business experience will advance the mission of the agency well into the future."

Dan and his wife Kelly have seven children and seven grandchildren and are parishioners of St. Pius X in Granger. Their son, Brian, is in 3rd year theology at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

As interim CEO, Florin was already performing the full duties of the CEO, including aiding in the resettlement of refugees from Afghanistan, with Catholic Charities being the only agency in northeast Indiana providing this service.

Florin reports that Catholic Charities has also been seeing an

influx of people seeking counseling services and plans to look at their staffing levels to possibly increase staff numbers to meet this need within the 14 counties that they serve. He also hopes to create partnerships with other agencies in the area to grow their outreach services and to "serve more people."

"It's not a hand-out, but a hand-up," he stated. "We bring hope to their lives."

For now, he hopes merely to bring "a sense of stability to the team" and to "serve clients with love and compassion as we're called to do," he said.

Catholic Charities will mark their 100-year anniversary this year and Florin looks forward to celebrating in proper style.

Detroit-area Ukrainian Americans pray for peace in homeland

BY DANIEL MELOY

SOUTHFIELD, Mich. (CNS) – As Russian military forces continued to assemble along the Russia-Ukraine border, U.S. President Joe Biden and other world leaders looked for a potential diplomatic solution to defuse tensions between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

In the meantime, Detroit-area Catholic and Orthodox Ukrainian-Americans and their supporters called upon the most powerful weapon in their arsenal: prayer.

They gathered at St. Mary the Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Southfield, outside of Detroit, for an ecumenical service on Feb. 5.

It was an opportunity for the Ukrainian community to show a united front in supporting their homeland while calling on local leaders to stand in solidarity with Ukraine. About 46,350 Michigan residents are of Ukrainian descent.

"We represent our community's efforts to be ready to step into action should the worst happen to our homeland in eastern



A young girl at St. Mary the Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Southfield, Mich., holds a sign in support of her ancestral homeland Feb. 5, 2022, amid tensions along the Russia-Ukraine border.

CNS photo/Valaurian Waller, Detroit Catholic

Europe," Mykola Murskyj, chairman of the Ukrainian-American Response Team in Detroit, which organized the vigil, told the con-

gregation following an evening of prayer.

Murskyj urged people to "make sure we're organized, pre-

pared, raising awareness, making sure we're all on the same page, uniting our community to stand with one voice together

with Ukraine" before the conflict turns violent.

The response team has coordinated relief efforts for those who have been affected since Russia annexed Ukrainian territory in Crimea in 2014.

Auxiliary Bishop Donald F. Hanchon of Detroit told those gathered that the Latin-rite Catholic archdiocese stood in solidarity with the Ukrainian-American community.

"We unite as strong friends, brothers and sisters of those who are under pressure," Bishop Hanchon said. "We pray our prayers, not just tonight but in the days to come, will be a consolation and an empowerment of those sisters and brothers so far away. I also like to follow the example of holy Mary, Mother of God, the Protectress of Peace, the Queen of Peace."

Ukrainian Catholic churches in Michigan are part of the Eparchy of St. Nicholas in Chicago. Basilian Father Daniel Schaicoski, pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Hamtramck, discussed his parish's connection with Ukraine with Detroit Catholic, the news outlet of the archdiocese. He

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UKRAINE, from page 3

described the parish efforts to raise funds to support soldiers in eastern Ukraine, where a separatist movement emerged. Money has been used for medical supplies and winter clothing as well as to assist families of soldiers who have died.

Father Schaicoski said the situation on the Russia-Ukraine border is another development in a series of Russian incursions into Ukraine's affairs since the 2014 Maidan Revolution, which saw Russia-backed Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich ousted from power.

The government under Zelensky has sought a more Eurocentric policy, steering the country away from Russian influence. In response, pro-Russia factions in Ukraine's south and east – backed in part by Russia – launched separatist movements that have resulted in the Ukrainian government losing control of the Crimea and Donbas regions.

Following prayers during the Feb. 5 vigil, office holders and political leaders discussed the need for an American response to the situation in eastern Europe.

"We hear so many of our American brothers and sisters on the Democratic side of the aisle, the Republican side of the aisle, the independents, the libertarians, asking the same question: 'Why is this our fight?'" said Rocky Raczkowski, chairman of the Oakland County Republican Party.

"But when you look at the men and women who work at the General Motors plant in Warren or the Ford plant in Sterling Heights, there are Ukrainian parts in those vehicles," he said. "When you look at what Putin said about NATO, it's not just about Ukraine's freedom, it's about a free and prosperous Europe."

Rep. Andy Levin, D-Mich., who serves on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, reported on discussions in Washington and what he believes needs to be done to defend Ukraine's sovereignty and ensure peace.

He recounted Ukraine's history, from its attempts to break away from the Russian Empire following the 1917 February revolution, including the 1932 Holodomor Terror Famine, in which 3.5 million to 7.5 million people, mostly Ukrainians, died and its transition to democracy after the ousting of Yanukovich.

Russian and Western leaders dispute the cause of the current situation, from the potential expansion of NATO to Ukraine to the presence of Western forces in the lands of former Russian allies under the Soviet Union. But Father Schaicoski said Ukrainians see Putin's most recent maneuvers as another attempt to project power onto Ukraine.

"Russia has a kind of identity crisis without Ukraine," Father Schaicoski said. "Really, Russia is a younger brother to Ukraine. Christianity, civilization came to Kiev well before it came to Moscow. Moscow actually is

a branch out from Kiev, from Ukraine.

"But for Putin, it's not about Ukraine," he said. "He already has his feet wet in Ukraine, in eastern Ukraine and the Crimea. So he's not looking at Ukraine. He's looking at Poland, the Baltics, Romania, Moldova."

Father Schaicoski is skeptical Russia could fully take over Ukraine, and for that reason he is hopeful for peace.

"If Russia wants to take over Ukraine, they don't need 100,000 troops; they need a million soldiers. Ukrainians are fighters. The Russians have more missiles, more planes, they can take Ukraine out by air, but they'll never take over Ukraine," he said.

"The people in Ukraine right now are creating 'people's armies' in every village. So if the Russians cross the main line, they will have to fight these people. Putin knows it won't be easy, so I don't think he's going to invade. We want peace, because we don't want to hurt the Russians, which is what will happen if they invade."

While the potential for conflict in Ukraine still remains, Father Schaicoski called for prayers for peace, saying "no war is going to be good."

"For now, the best thing is to pray for peace. Because we know every prayer is heard."

Meloy is a staff writer for Detroit Catholic, the news outlet of the Archdiocese of Detroit.



CNS photo/Reuters

Aung Nay Myo, a protest organizer and satirical writer from Myanmar, drinks tea as he looks at a photo of his father on his phone inside a temporary shelter at an undisclosed location in a town in a country bordering Myanmar, in this Jan. 27 photo.

Myanmar cardinal appeals to Mary to protect his country

YANGON, Myanmar (CNS) – Cardinal Charles Bo of Yangon has sought the intercession of Mary for protection, healing and mercy for conflict-torn Myanmar, which has been in turmoil since the February 2021 military coup.

"Our Lady becomes the mother of all people, of all races and all religions. The whole (of) Myanmar came here for healing and celebrating," Cardinal Bo said in a homily at the National Marian Shrine of Nyaunglebin on Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. "But this year we have come here as a wounded nation, a wounded people."

Ucanews.com reported that since 1902, thousands of Catholics, Hindus and Buddhists from across the Southeast Asian country have participated yearly in the Lourdes feast at the shrine, but this year the novena and celebrations were held online due to the coronavirus and political instability.

Cardinal Bo highlighted the five wounds inflicted on Myanmar: the COVID-19 pandemic, the military coup, civil wars, the collapse of the economy and

the displacement of people.

"More than ever we need our Mother of Mercy in Myanmar today. Our pain is her pain," he said. "As a mother, she was with her son at the most needed time. Not abandoning us, she stands with the people of Myanmar today. She is the mother most faithful and most merciful."

The cardinal made his appeal amid protests and armed resistance across the country against the military junta, which has unleashed airstrikes, artillery shelling and burning of civilian homes, forcing thousands of people to flee and seek refuge in nearby jungles or churches. Ucanews.com reported churches and other community institutions are being targeted by junta forces in predominantly Christian Kayah and Chin states.

Catholic bishops in Myanmar have appealed for humanitarian assistance for the thousands of displaced people while seeking "the fellowship of the universal Church and donor community to seek support to all our Myanmar people without any discrimination."

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ava's grace

ICC opposes bill that would place limits on charitable bail funds

The Indiana Catholic Conference is challenging a bill recently passed by the Indiana Senate that would restrict the ability of charitable groups to cover bail costs for people awaiting trial who cannot afford to pay it themselves.

Senate Bill 8 was introduced early in the 2022 legislative session as part of a package of bills aimed at fighting crime in Marion County and elsewhere in the state. The measure aims to regulate charitable bail organizations by requiring that they register with the state Department of Insurance, as bail bond companies do. Additionally, it would limit a charitable group to posting bond just twice in a 180-day period and for bail amounts of \$2,000 or less.

Those restrictions, the ICC and other opponents argue, only widen the gap in a criminal justice system that already places the poor at a disadvantage.

"This is not the way that the criminal justice system should work – that only those who have money have the advantage of being out of jail until their trial, particularly on a nonviolent offense," said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. "Remember that when people are arrested, they are presumed innocent until proven guilty. If they cannot make bail and have to remain in jail until their day in court, they could lose their job, they could lose their house, and families could be put out on the street."

Espada, a former deputy prosecutor in Marion County,

outlined additional concerns in a recent letter to the House committee now considering the bill.

"Because Indiana relies on cash bail, a significant portion of our jails are filled with pretrial detainees – people who are still legally innocent, but who have had bail set against them that they cannot afford to pay," she wrote in the Feb. 7 letter to the House Courts and Criminal Code Committee. "They are subject to the harms of incarceration, including worsened physical and behavioral health outcomes, and a greater likelihood of future justice system involvement."

"The Church cannot support any policy changes that would result in more Hoosiers being incarcerated before their guilt has been established by the court."

Monica Smith, a Catholic and attorney with extensive experience in criminal and civil litigation, was among those testifying against Senate Bill 8 during a January committee hearing. The Indianapolis native, who has long advocated for reforms in the criminal justice system in Indiana and nationwide, currently serves as the associate director of policy and advocacy for the nationally-based Vera Institute of Justice.

"People forget that most Americans don't even have a thousand dollars in their savings account," said Smith, a lifelong member of Holy Angels Catholic Church in Indianapolis. "So any time a monetary amount is set on a person's freedom, it really creates two systems of justice: one for people who have access

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE



BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

to cash and collateral, and another one for people who do not."

Smith is currently dedicated to a Vera Institute project called the "In Our Backyards Initiative," which focuses on incarceration in small cities and rural areas. She said her testimony before the Senate committee was to "highlight that even though it was presented as a package for Marion County, it would have repercussions throughout the entire state."

"One thing that we know now is that rural counties spend 1.7 times more money on pre-trial detention than Marion County does," Smith said. "If more people are held on unaffordable bail and if charitable bail organizations aren't able to assist them, then naturally the pre-trial population is going to rise in those places."

But the primary driving factors behind Senate Bill 8 and a similar measure, House Bill 1300, are some recent murders and other violent attacks in Marion County. Sen. Aaron Freeman (R-Indianapolis), the author of Senate Bill 8 and sponsor of the recently passed House Bill 1300, points to several individuals who went on to commit

heinous crimes after having their bail posted by a national not-for-profit organization called The Bail Project.

The ICC counters that supporters of the bill should consider the criteria used by these charitable groups, including some faith-based organizations.

"Charities only provide bail on nonviolent offenses, and most nonviolent people don't suddenly commit violent acts," Espada said. "So if the measure is in response to murder and other violent actions, why limit these charitable institutions?"

Freeman also questions the leverage that this and similar organizations have when it comes to the primary purpose of bail: ensuring that the accused shows up in court.

"I see a difference between a bail bondsman who has a financial interest in bringing that defendant back and making sure they appear in front of a judge ... and a charitable bail organization that may or may not be in Indiana and may or may not have any ties to the community," said Freeman, a former Marion County deputy prosecutor, during a Senate hearing on his bill. "What incentive do they have to make sure that person appears in court?"

But Smith, who has served as a public defender in several states, argues otherwise.

"I can tell you that in my experience, people are so grateful that a stranger would go out of their way to help them at the worst moment of their life," Smith said. "And the vast majority of people return to court. They

want to have their case resolved. They want to get on with their lives."

In her letter to legislators, Espada noted that "in parts of Indiana, the service provided by charitable bail funds is perhaps the sole intervention available for pre-trial detainees who do not have the means to afford bail."

She also pointed to a pastoral statement from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops entitled "Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice."

"As the bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States remind us . . . 'We seek justice, not vengeance. We believe punishment must have clear purposes: protecting society and rehabilitating those who violate the law,'" Espada stated in her letter. "The ICC believes that the restrictions on charitable bail funds in Senate Bill 8 would not further the protection of society and the just rehabilitation of the incarcerated, but merely prohibit charitable institutions from performing more acts of mercy."

To follow this and other priority legislation of the ICC, visit www.indianacc.org. This website includes access to I-CAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church's position on key issues. Those who sign up for I-CAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected

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




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Pope restructures the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – As part of ongoing measures to reform the Roman Curia, Pope Francis has approved restructuring the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the oldest of the congregations. Once comprised of a doctrinal office, a discipline office and a marriage office, the new structure will see the doctrinal and discipline offices become their own special sections led by their own secretaries; the marriage office will become part of the doctrinal office. The two secretaries will serve under the congregation's prefect. Spanish Cardinal Luis Ladaria, who has been prefect of the congregation since 2017, will celebrate his 78th birthday April 19. The heads of Vatican offices are required to offer their resignations to the pope when they turn 75. In "Fidem servare" (Preserving the Faith), published "motu proprio," (on his own initiative) Feb. 14, Pope Francis said the main task of the congregation has been to safeguard or "keep the faith." The changes went into effect the same day. Over time, the congregation has seen modifications to its areas of responsibilities and how it is configured, and now, Pope Francis said, further change is needed "to give it an approach more suited to the fulfillment of its functions."

Men must join fight against human trafficking, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Male-female relationships based on "discrimination and submission" lead to the exploitation and humiliation of thousands of women and girls each year, Pope Francis said. "Human trafficking, through domestic or sexual exploitation, violently relegates women and girls to their supposed role of subordination in the provision of domestic or sexual services and to their role as providers of care and dispensers of pleasure, which proposes yet again a model of relationships marked by the power of the male gender over the female," Pope Francis said in a video message. Marking the Feb. 8 International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking and the feast of St. Josephine Bakhita, a former slave, Pope Francis insisted, "The violence suffered by every woman and every girl is an open wound on the body of Christ, on the body of all humanity; it is a deep wound that affects every one of us, too. The thousands of women and girls who are trafficked every year denounce the dramatic consequences of relational models based on discrimination and submission, and it is not an exaggeration – there are thousands of them!" Praising the women and women religious around the world dedicated to fighting human traf-

Ukraine troops prepare for potential Russian invasion



CNS photo/Gleb Garanich, Reuters

A veteran of the Ukrainian National Guard Azov battalion conducts military exercises for civilians in Kyiv, Ukraine, Jan. 30, 2022, amid threat of Russian invasion.

ficking, coerced prostitution, forced marriage and slave labor, Pope Francis said men must get involved as well, "opposing with all our might every form of exploitation in human trafficking."

Retired pope has full support of Pope Francis, aide says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis was among those showing their support for retired Pope Benedict XVI, sending his predecessor "a beautiful letter," according to the former pope's secretary. In the letter, Pope Francis "speaks as a shepherd, as a brother" and "expressed once again his complete trust, his full support and also his prayers," said the secretary, Archbishop Georg Gänswein. The archbishop spoke to the Italian news program TG1 on Feb. 9 about the retired pope's letter in response to a report on sexual abuse cases in the German Archdiocese of Munich and Freising, which the former pope headed as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger from 1977 to 1982. Pope Benedict, who has denied allegations of mishandling four cases of clerical sexual abuse put forth by the report, emphasized in a letter on Feb. 8 his feelings of great shame and sorrow for the abuse of minors and made a

request for forgiveness to all victims of sexual abuse. Archbishop Gänswein was asked to respond to criticisms by some victims' advocates and media in Germany that Pope Benedict's apology was insufficient. "Whoever reads the letter in a sincere way, the way in which the letter was written, cannot agree with these criticisms or these accusations. He asks all victims of abuse for forgiveness," he said.

Republicans introduce immigration bill, but GOP divided over it

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) – Republicans are divided on an immigration bill introduced by members of their own party that would grant citizenship to millions who are in the country without legal permission. Congresswoman María Elvira Salazar, of Florida, in a Feb. 9 news conference, talked about the Dignity Act. The bill would help those who were brought into the country as minors without legal permission and others who contribute to the U.S. economy, while it also would focus on reinforcing the border. "The United States has historically been a beacon of refuge for those fleeing violence and oppression or seeking a new life and opportunities," Salazar

said. "In recent decades, our broken immigration system has been exploited, leading to a situation that is unbecoming of our great nation. While the United States is a nation of laws, we are also a nation of second chances," she said. "Through dignity and a chance at redemption, this legacy can continue." Some of the provisions in the proposal include having immigrants pay \$1,000 annually for 10 years into a fund as restitution and that money would help train other workers.

Priest, 79, braves cold to make pilgrimage of prayer for Ukraine by bike

WARREN, R.I. (CNS) – As Ukraine faces a fierce challenge to its young democracy from more than 120,000 Russian forces stacked on its borders, poised to invade at any time, a Rhode Island priest is showing solidarity with the plight of the people of the overwhelmingly Orthodox Christian nation. "Russia is surrounding the Ukraine with troops. What else can I do but pray?" said Father Thomas O'Neill, 79, a senior priest of the Diocese of Providence. Father O'Neill embarked on a pilgrimage of prayer on a morning where the mercury hovered at 15 degrees as he rode his bicycle from his home in Middletown to

St. Patrick Church in Providence in late January. He stopped at churches along the way to offer prayers for peace in the region. A well-read student of history, who spent 20 years of his ministry serving outside the United States, Father O'Neill fears what will happen to the Ukrainian people if Russian President Vladimir Putin directs the vast array of forces he has amassed on three sides of Europe's second largest nation by area to invade Ukraine. During a stop at St. Mary of the Bay Church in Warren, Father O'Neill recounted how, during the era of Soviet leader Josef Stalin, millions of Ukrainians starved to death. The brutal dictator caused a famine by ordering Ukraine's small farms to operate as a collective, usurping their harvests to feed those living in Russia. Stalin's goal was also to punish Ukrainians whose dreams for independence would threaten his total authority.

Since COVID's first storm, octogenarian hospital chaplain still ministering

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Italian Capuchin Father Aquilino Apassiti lived through air raid bombings as a boy during World War II, worked as a nurse for 18 years, spent 25 years as a missionary in the Amazon facing regular outbreaks of malaria and leprosy and survived pancreatic cancer. But nothing was more shocking than seeing the lines of ambulances outside the hospital he worked at and the rows of coffins he blessed piling up in the morgue in early 2020 in Bergamo – the epicenter of the COVID-19 crisis in Italy, registering the highest number of known cases and deaths related to the coronavirus. "I never saw anything like this in my life, not even in the leper colonies where I worked in Brazil," he told Avvenire, the daily newspaper of the Italian bishops' conference. "But I never lost hope. People came from all over the world to help out," he said in an interview published Feb. 11, World Day of the Sick and the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. The 85-year-old Capuchin is still serving as a chaplain at the Pope John XXIII hospital in Bergamo, which had allowed its four chaplains to continue their ministry, but with stricter precautions and limitations.

Vatican confirms pope to visit Malta in April

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis will visit Malta on April 2-3, a Vatican spokesman said. Accepting the invitation of the president, civil authorities and bishops of the Mediterranean country, the pope will visit the cities of Valletta, Rabat and Floriana and the island of Gozo, Matteo Bruni, the spokesman, said in a written statement on Feb. 10.

'The Anatomy of a Heart' parish mission

SOUTH BEND – St. Thérèse Little Flower Parish in South Bend will host a four-night Lenten parish mission about the heart from March 21-24, at 6 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. each evening. What happens when the heart of the Father meets our own heart? Titled "The Anatomy of a Heart," four presenters will speak on the following topics: the heart of the Father, the anatomy of a wounded heart and community, friendship and soft love. The adult track will take place in the gym and a track for children ages infant through 12 will be available in the Upper Room in the parish center. Children ages 13 and older are encouraged to participate in the adult track. Event website is littleflowerchurch.org/lent-2022.

To RSVP, go to: forms.gle/sFDzY-2Bjig3QGQsE7. For questions, contact Abby Kyle at abby@littleflowerchurch.org.

Holy Cross College Mind and Heart lecture series

NOTRE DAME — Holy Cross College presents "The Ministry of Exorcism," a talk by Father Vincent P. Lampert, exorcist for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The event is scheduled for Thursday, February 24, at 7:30 p.m. in

Driscoll Auditorium on campus. This talk is free and open to the public. All visitors to campus are required to wear a mask. Father Vincent Lampert was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis on June 1, 1991. He currently serves as the pastor of St. Michael and St. Peter Parishes in Brookville, Indiana. In 2005, he was appointed the exorcist for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He received his training in Rome and is a member of the International Association of Exorcists. He is the author of "Exorcism: The Battle Against Satan and His Demons" by Emmaus Road Publishing.

MoonTree offers art experiences for older adults

DONALDSON – MoonTree Studios located at the Center at Donaldson is partnering with Jennifer Weinert to offer art experiences for adults ages 65 and older. The series of experiences titled, "Form Your Story" offers older adults the opportunity to learn about multi-media collage, bookbinding techniques and relief printing. Scheduled at MoonTree Studios in the spring, summer and fall,

the first one begins March 1 and continues for six consecutive weeks. Participants will inform the development of their works of art by exploring personal stories, themes and hopes for the future, all while learning the creative art process and aspects of visual art techniques they can apply to their artistic endeavors. Artists will have the opportunity to share their completed works of art at a culminating event. MoonTree is offering space and scholarships. The Marshall County Council on Aging is working with the artist to provide transportation to those with a need. The public can register for the programs or obtain additional information by visiting www.moontreestudios.org or calling 574-935-1712.

St. Anthony de Padua students learn about sacred architecture

BY ERIN LYNCH

When Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades visited St. Anthony de Padua school in South Bend for his pastoral visit, he was amazed to hear about the third-grade class building replicas of church buildings from across the world for a class project. He said he had never heard of a project like it in all his years as a bishop. The third-grade students were thrilled to be able to tell him about the churches they were building, letting him know whether the churches were classified as Gothic or Romanesque.

Abby Stopczynski, the third-grade teacher, came up with the project idea last year, and this is her second year presenting the class project. When asked what inspired it, she said, "We talk so much about how the Catholic faith is the good, the true and the beautiful. As the Catholic Church in general, we've always done a great job talking about how the faith is true and why it's good. However, we don't dive into enough of the beauty. Where we experience true beauty, we can experience God. My hope is that the students make this connection and also realize that beauty, time, talent, and effort is never wasted on God."

On Friday, Feb. 11, the third-graders brought their projects to St. Anthony de Padua Church and set them up in the vestibule. After morning Mass, they each stood by their projects and proudly told their fellow schoolmates, parents and parishioners about the churches they had chosen to replicate. These churches stayed on display through the weekend so that parishioners could view them after every Mass. One of the students, Johnny, built a replica of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. He said he hoped to visit the church one day and that



Gabe Rauch

Students in Abby Stopczynski's third-grade class at St. Anthony de Padua School in South Bend recreated smaller versions of Catholic churches throughout the world and presented them to classmates and parishioners on Feb. 11. One student's creation, St. Mark's Basilica in Venice, is seen here on display in the St. Anthony de Padua Church vestibule.

he loved building it because "if you made a mistake, you just got to try again and at the end, you got to make it more beautiful." Another student, Morgan, built St. John Cantius in Chicago and said she built it so that she and her mom could go visit the church. She specifically loved being able to see the altar.

Lori Divita, a parent of one of the students, said her daughter picked the Seville Cathedral

and talked about how she constructed the stained glass rose window, a tower, and even attached a crocodile to the side of the tower because the Seville Cathedral has a stuffed crocodile hanging from the ceiling. She noted that her daughter was "amazed that it took over a hundred years for the cathedral to be built and that she loved learning about the history of the church and what it took to build these

beautiful churches."

Father Ben Muhlenkamp, the pastor and interim principal of St. Anthony de Padua, said of the project, "The third graders are so impressive! It is amazing the way they use their imagination and creativity to try and depict the beauty they see in these cathedrals. What an amazing way for children to learn."

He affirmed the students' efforts in learning about the

church building and all the pieces of them and hoped the project inspired the youths to consider becoming church architects.

"The children are so proud to share with their peers what they have learned about their specific cathedral. I just love that we put these on display in the back of the church. Our parishioners love to see them after Mass," he stated.

When asked about the impact of the project, Stopczynski said, "One student who chose Notre Dame Cathedral in Montreal commented that the main church is rich and expensive-looking, while its chapel is made all of

More photos are available at www.todayscatholic.org



wood. He likened this to Jesus being born poor and a carpenter but is really more

like the main church and worth so much more. Connections and thinking like this are why I love to do this project. I get to learn so much from my students. It's truly been such a fruitful project."

When Duncan Stroik, a professor of architecture at the University of Notre Dame and an expert in sacred architecture, heard about the project, he remarked, "Where do people learn about their faith by seeing, touching and hearing the divine? In the house of God. So wonderful for young people to explore what it means to have a sacred place through making models of churches, which are all of our spiritual homes."



Bishop upholds importance of Eucharist to young adults

BY SAMANTHA ROHLOFF

On the second night of the 2022 Theology on Tap winter series, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades was invited to speak to young adults about the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. This Theology on Tap series, entitled “Go Forth,” is a weekly event held on Tuesday evenings at the Historic Woman’s Club located in the downtown campus of the University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne.

Before beginning his presentation, Bishop Rhoades reminded the young adults in attendance about the National Eucharistic Revival, a three-year movement of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops meant to deepen Catholics’ faith in the Real Presence, and how the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will participate in it. At the end of the three-year revival, a National

“May this great mystery of love be the center of our lives, and may we bear witness to it as true disciples of our eucharistic Lord!”

Eucharistic Congress will be held in Indianapolis July 17-21, 2024, the first in nearly 50 years, welcoming thousands of Catholics for a pilgrimage to “together personally encounter Jesus in the Eucharist” and take the encounter back into the world, according to the National Eucharistic Revival website.

The diocese will partake in the National Eucharistic Revival with a eucharistic procession and festival of its own. On June 19 of this year, Warsaw will act as the central location between Fort Wayne and South Bend, said Bishop Rhoades, drawing together members of the diocese from its farthest reaches. There,

a prayer service and music will begin at 2:30 p.m., with the eucharistic procession beginning 30 minutes later. The 2.8-mile-long processional journey will begin at Sacred Heart Parish, stop for prayer and a eucharistic blessing in Central Park and end at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish where Benediction and the festival will be celebrated. The diocese requests participants register in advance.

Beginning his talk entitled “The Eucharist: Presence, Sacrifice, Communion,” Bishop Rhoades expressed his personal love for the Eucharist to the audience. His episcopal coat-of-arms, he explained, displays rays

of light encompassing a eucharistic host. Furthermore, 2004, the same year he was ordained a bishop, St. John Paul II deemed as the Year of the Eucharist.

“The Eucharist is a mystery of faith,” the bishop stated. “The Eucharist contains the Church’s mystery of faith, and the faithful announce this central truth of the faith. We are called to conform our lives to this mystery.” And because it is indeed a mystery, the Eucharist “greatly surpasses our understanding,” he noted.

With that in mind, the bishop also addressed the sad reality that this mystery is not embraced by all Christians or even all Catholics. He explained that one of the reasons for this lack of faith is an acute reliance upon rationalism, which he explained as knowledge of only what one can experience with one’s own senses.

The bishop further clarified, “I think it is important to recognize that reason does have a part to play in growing in our understanding of the Eucharist. As Catholics, we’re never just ‘faith alone.’” He continued, “Without faith, we can’t rise to the truth about the Eucharist. But this faith is not irrational. It transcends reason – it doesn’t just reject it.”

Bishop Rhoades referenced St. John Paul II’s analogy of the healthy relationship that faith and reason hold, in which the two attributes are likened to “two wings on which we can rise to the contemplation of truth.” Faith and reason, therefore, work together.

Later, the bishop explained how transubstantiation plays into this relationship between faith and reason because the process “is above reason, but not against reason. The Eucharist is something entirely supernatural. It’s a miracle. But it is not contradictory or impossible.” Transubstantiation is the process by which ordinary bread and

wine are changed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ while still maintaining the appearance of ordinary bread and wine.

Finally, Bishop Rhoades spoke on the heart and namesake of his talk: the three eucharistic aspects of presence, sacrifice and communion as they relate to the mystery of the Eucharist. The bishop explained the mystery of presence as Christ’s intention, through His institution of the Eucharist, to continue to abide among His beloved disciples even though His bodily ascension was imminent. Through this mystery, He also lives among the faithful through the generations as the sacrament is celebrated and offered at every Mass.

The bishop relayed the meaning of the mystery of sacrifice as the realization of Christ’s death on the cross for His beloved Church – quite literally, the sacrificial giving of His very flesh and blood to save His faithful from sin.

Lastly, Bishop Rhoades explained that the mystery of Communion relates to how the reception of the Eucharist allows the faithful to physically hold Christ within themselves upon consumption, as well as to spiritually undergo the effects of “sanctifying grace, charity and the indwelling of the Trinity.” Furthermore, the bishop noted that the sacrament “binds us into one body by strengthening our unity with Christ and with one another.”

Bishop Rhoades concluded his talk to the young adults with encouragement: “May this great mystery of love be the center of our lives, and may we bear witness to it as true disciples of our eucharistic Lord!”

As with every Theology on Tap session, young adults were given conversation questions following the talk and discussed such ideas as what it means to “live the Eucharist,” as well as how presence, sacrifice and communion correlated with the upcoming Eucharistic Revival.

More details concerning the diocese’s procession and festival, as well as information regarding the National Eucharistic Revival, can be found on the diocese’s website at diocesefwsb.org/eucharist/.

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Renewing wedding vows as a family 'only strengthens the bond,' says son

BY DAN RUSSO

DUBUQUE, Iowa (CNS) – David and Gwen Bormann met in a creamery in 1971. Like aged cheese, the flavor of their love has gotten better over time.

To mark their 50th wedding anniversary on Feb. 12, the couple and all 12 of their children, who are also married, renewed their vows simultaneously at St. Columbkille Church in Dubuque during a Mass.

"None of this could have been possible without God in our lives," reflected Gwen, now 69. "I can't tell you how many times I've prayed to the Virgin Mary to intercede and ask Jesus to help us with our family and honestly, it works. And it will for anybody."

At age 19, Gwen was a self-described "hippy" from Texas, who had lived in multiple states growing up due to her father's job. She came rolling into the small town of Preston, Iowa, on a motorcycle with her friend.

The outspoken teenager was living in Dixon, Illinois, at the time, and traveled the distance of more than 60 miles because her associate was dating someone in Preston and wanted company. That's where she first encountered David, 23, a quiet young man who had grown up on a nearby farm.

"It was early in the morning," recalled Gwen. "I had to use the restroom. The only place open was the creamery where my husband worked. I asked him if I could come in and use the bathroom. When I came out, he asked me out."

David remembers being drawn immediately to his future bride, who he thought was a bit of a "rebel."

"Girls didn't ride motorcycles back then," he reflected. "She said, 'Would you stand guard outside the bathroom?' She was the most honest, sincere person I ever met. As a matter of fact on our first date, I told her, 'I'm going to marry you someday.'"

Gwen was attracted to David's solid nature and his deep Catholic faith. Raised Baptist, she decided to join the Catholic Church to give "more stability" to their future family. Over time, however, she came to appreciate the teachings of the Church on her own terms and became an active member.

"I believed in God (when we got married), but I didn't believe in everything that I heard," she said. "After we started having children, that's when you realize the love of God. That's when you can touch it and hold it and just know it with the kids. They really are miracles."

After marrying at the church in Dixon, the couple moved to



CNS photo/courtesy Bormann family via Archdiocese of Dubuque

David and Gwen Bormann are seen in this undated photo. They renewed their vows after 50 years of marriage on Feb. 12, 2022, in Dubuque, Iowa, with all 12 of their children and their spouses renewing their vows simultaneously.

Preston. Their 12 children – five girls and seven boys – were baptized at St. Joseph's Church in Preston. Work at the creamery was a big part of the Bormanns' life together.

"She worked the night shift," said David, who became a plant manager. "I worked the day shift. I made cheese for 40 years."

The family later moved to Fredericksburg, Iowa, more than 100 miles away, when the cheese-making company's owners moved the production facility. The Bormanns worked hard but didn't worry about the finances of having many children.

"I wanted 10 kids and (David) wanted two kids, so we compromised and had 12," joked Gwen. "We accepted that they were gifts from God and they really are. On Sunday, we went to church and on Wednesday, we went to religion class because that was the glue that held us together."

She added, "It does take a community to raise a family and we had our church community and we had our community in Preston and Fredericksburg."

The Bormann children have a variety of careers. Some went into education, others into health care or business. They range in

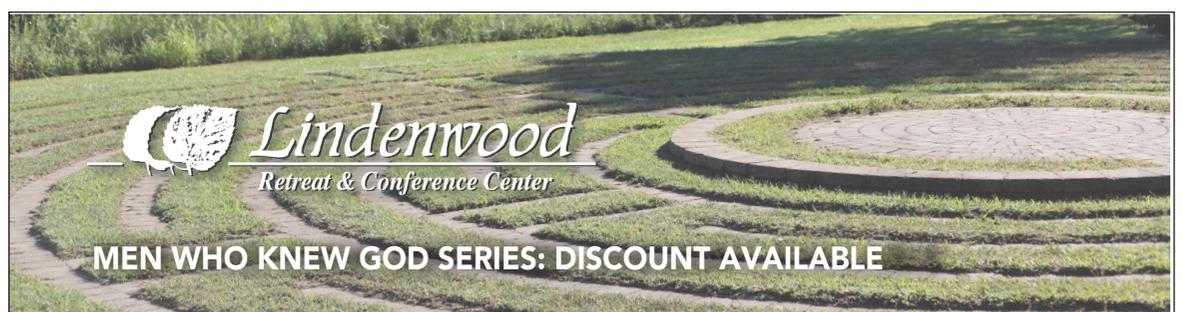
age from 32 to 49. Combined, the family was marking 216 years of marriage.

"Our parents always modeled for us what it means to pray, love and laugh your way through life," said son Phillip Bormann, chief administrator of Holy Family Catholic Schools in Dubuque.

"We have been blessed to witness what a relationship founded in Christ looks and feels like and never questioned the love shared between them or that was shared with others," he said.

Gwen and David moved to Dubuque in retirement to be closer to some of their children. They also enjoy spending time with their 28 grandchildren.

"Renewing our vows as a family only strengthens the bond between us and most importantly, it demonstrates for our children what we hope for their future," said Phillip Bormann. "It is our turn to show them what love is all about, just as our parents did for us."



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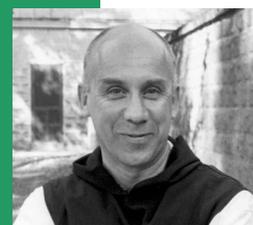
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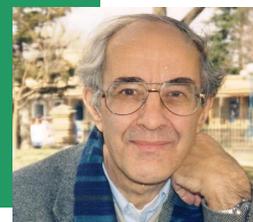
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Angelic Warfare Confraternity prays for purity

BY DEB WAGNER

As the world becomes more sexualized, easy access to the internet and various social media platforms through cell phones and computers make it easy for youths and adults to become plagued by sexual temptation and pornography, which attacks the virtue of purity and the beauty and dignity of each person. Software programs such as Covenant Eyes are used by many people to shield their loved ones from sensitive and corrupt information. However, programmers simply find ways to get around the software to tempt those who struggle with this addiction once again. But those who fall prey to temptations of the flesh are not alone in their battles.

The Angelic Warfare Confraternity is an official apostolate of the Dominican Order and a fellowship of men and women of all ages who are bound to one another in mission and love. Members of the confraternity are dedicated to pursuing chastity and purity together under the patronage of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

According to the records of his canonization, after his brothers' failed attempt to lure him from his chosen vocation with the



aid of a prostitute, St. Thomas Aquinas fell into a mystical sleep and had a vision. Two angels came to him from heaven and bound a cord around his waist, saying, "On God's behalf, we gird you with the cord of chastity, a girdle which no attack will ever destroy." Many witnesses told of his evidently high degree of purity and chastity. The angels' gift preserved St. Thomas from sexual temptation and bestowed upon him an enduring purity that elevated all his thoughts and actions.

Jackie Oberhausen is pastoral associate of Our Lady of Good Hope Parish and works closely with the youth ministry. She said that "once people are exposed to pornography, they could struggle with temptations." This is especially true of young adults, whose brains are still developing.

Pornography is so prevalent that once a college student



approached Oberhausen and explained that explicit, sensitive material can be heard coming from individual rooms when walking down the hallways of his college dormitory. A group of Bishop Dwenger students have formed a group to become each other's accountability partners to resist temptation against unchaste thoughts and behaviors.

Oberhausen approached

Father Daniel Whelan, parochial vicar of the parish, about starting an Angelic Warfare Confraternity at the parish. To become a member, a person must be inducted into the Confraternity by a Dominican priest or a priest who has received the faculties of the Dominican order. Father Whelan recognized the great value of the Confraternity and received the faculties needed to induct individuals into the Confraternity. The prayers that a member commits to pray daily include two short prayers and 15 Hail Marys. Each Hail Mary has a particular petition or intention that coincides with the values of the Confraternity.

The 15 intentions that the Angelic Warfare Confraternity pray for themselves and other members are as follows: for the current social and cultural climate, relationships, modesty in all things, the five senses, sensuality, the imagination, the memory, the power of estimation, affectivity, the intellect, the will, the conscience, the heart, for self-surrender and for love. This set of prayers takes only a few minutes and may be included in a daily rosary. Those who struggle against impurity, as well as those who want to assist those who do, have declared that the prayers give great protection

and fortitude in living out the virtue of purity. All who belong to the Confraternity pray for all other members. What a blessing and gift it is to have more than a half a million people praying for each other every day.

Members of the Confraternity also agree to wear a sign of their belonging, such as a thin cord with 15 knots like a rosary, or a medal with St. Thomas Aquinas on one side and Our Lady on the other.

Various saints and blessed, such as St. Aloysius Gonzaga, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, Blessed Columba Rieti, and Blessed Stephana Quinlan have belonged to the Confraternity. Anyone can join the Confraternity and these saints in praying for purity.

It is a simple way to do so much good; to become inducted, receive prayers, wear a cord or medal to remind one to pray and to change the values of today's society. Parents and their families as well as individuals are invited to join in prayer through the Angelic Warfare Confraternity. Father Whelan will be setting future dates for induction into the Confraternity.

For questions about the induction ceremony, contact Jackie Oberhausen at jackieo@olghfw.com.



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Having faith to meet challenges of growing older

BY VINCE LABARBERA

As people grow older, many are faced with numerous physical, psychological and social role changes that challenge a sense of self and the capacity to live happily. Depression and loneliness are considered to be the major problems leading to impaired quality of life among the elderly.

In addition, despite advances in health care, many elderly people have chronic, incurable progressive diseases and need assistance with the activities of daily living. The greatest challenge facing many people as they age is the prevention of physical disability and the extension of "active life expectancy."

Common conditions in older age include hearing loss, cataracts and refractive errors, back and neck pain and osteoarthritis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, depression and dementia. As many age, they are more likely to experience several conditions at the same time.

In addition, with the COVID-19 pandemic completely upturning many aspects of "normal" life, an increased level of anxiety is to be expected, which also can be debilitating. How do people walk the line between being cautious and being unduly worried or obsessing over worst-case scenarios all the time?

The notion of positive spirituality can decrease some of the feelings of helplessness and loss of control that people experience with illness, as well as reduce stress and bring about increased feelings of purpose in life. Spiritual activities such as daily prayer, reading Scripture, attending Mass and devotions, frequenting the sacraments and serving the poor all can reduce feelings of isolation. And the community aspect surrounding spirituality can have positive outcomes for older adults.

Acknowledging spirituality is important because it may influence well-being in later life and allow aging adults to adjust accordingly with some aspects of growing older. Moreover, having a positive perspective, being able to cope, having active independence, meaningful relationships,

The notion of positive spirituality can decrease some of the feelings of helplessness and loss of control that people experience with illness, as well as reduce stress and bring about increased feelings of purpose in life.

freedom, having a relationship with God and a sense of spirituality are some of the aspects cited by older adults as contributing to 'successful aging.' Yet the extent of these opportunities and contributions depends heavily on one factor: health.

"We are a people who pray not only with our lips and our voices but also with our bodies," said the late Father LeRoy Clementich, CSC, in his book titled: "Seasons of the Spirit."

"Many people who join the community for Sunday liturgy come with special needs," Father Clementich continues. "They come to pray and worship, but they need special and loving attention particularly in terms of access and physical space. The seating arrangements in our churches do not always adapt themselves well for those who are elderly and infirm, or for those who are physically or mentally disabled.

"As Christians, as God's people, we ought to be able to say: 'Come as you are. There is room for everyone,'" Father Clementich concludes.

Meet some elderly Catholics, many with infirmities, from throughout the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend who try to participate in the Sacred Liturgy despite some limitations.

Mel Vachon

Mel Vachon thinks all the football he played at St. Andrew Elementary School and Central Catholic High School in Fort Wayne along with high and low hurdles competition probably contributed to the deterioration of his knees later in life. At age 62, in anticipation of retiring from SuperValu Inc. Food Marketing Division the next year, he had a double knee replacement. Five years later, one of those knees again had to be

replaced. Now at age 79, he suffers pain and immobility in both knees. It slows him down but it doesn't stop him from participating in daily Mass.

"I was blessed with the opportunity to attend Catholic schools and I'm grateful to the Lord that I can still do some things," he remarked. Those "some things" include a variety of religious activities. In addition to attending the 12:05 p.m. daily Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in downtown Fort Wayne, he assists with leading the rosary and other prayers before Mass. He's a proclaimer of the Word on Thursdays and serves at Mass on Fridays. If someone fails to show for either of those ministries, Vachon fills in. In fact, he has served Mass at the Cathedral since his grade school days. He also serves as a sacristan Monday through Friday and helps set up the proclaimer's schedule.

On the first Tuesday of the month, he assists with the Little Flower Holy Hour at 7 p.m. in the St. Mother Theodore Guerin Chapel from September through June. And on First Fridays, Vachon can be found at St. Vincent de Paul Church where he lectures at the 11:30 a.m. Mass. He also assists Christine Bonahoom-Nix, administrative assistant in the Diocese of Fort



MEL VACHON

Wayne-South Bend's Vocation Office, with scheduling priests for the Mass celebrated for the intention of vocations to the religious life.

There is pain in standing and walking for the activities in which he's involved, despite working out three times a week for two-and-a-half hours at Planet Fitness. "I'm also thankful I can still do some things with my wife, Gloria. But I would go to church no matter what," he concluded.



DOROTHY AND LYLE FREIMUTH

Lyle and Dorothy Freimuth

Lyle and Dorothy Freimuth will celebrate their 66th wedding anniversary on May 22. At age 88 and 85, respectively, they are beginning to experience the aches and pains of growing older. "We just can't do what we used to," they both indicated. Lyle had to give up golf and Dorothy can't work in her large garden like she used to. She has pain in both knees and even

though the doctors say she's not ready for knee-replacement surgery quite yet, she's fallen a couple of times when a knee gave out. Lyle has had cataract surgery, but still has trouble seeing at night from a deteriorating retina condition in his right eye. Both Lyle and Dorothy are diabetic.

The couple agree that, "Going to church is an important part of our lives." They watched the Mass on television during the pandemic, but returned to attending in person at St. Therese Church, Fort Wayne, as soon as live Mass was made available again. However, the couple has had to give up ministries at St. Therese recently because, admittedly, it was just too much anymore. Both served in the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank at the parish for about 23 years. Dorothy also ran and assisted in preparing funeral luncheons for more than 20 years. Lyle served on the parish council for four years as both a member and as president, and ministered as an usher for six years.

"We sit somewhat apart from each other when at Mass because we can't use the same kneeler," Lyle quipped. "Dorothy can't kneel at all and I have to be careful not to put a kneeler down on her foot."

For years Lyle has opened doors for Dorothy, but now he has to make sure there's not a step up or down ahead of her. "I ask the Lord every day to guide us, guard us, love us and protect us," he said. "And to strengthen our lives, heal Dorothy and comfort her."



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'Strange Rites' and the promise of natural religion

Along with many other cultural commentators, I have been tracing for the past many years the phenomenon of religious disaffiliation, the sobering fact that armies of people, especially the young, are leaving institutional religion behind. It is simply no good denying the statistics, which have been borne out in study after study, and the truth of massive disaffiliation is evident to any priest, minister or rabbi who looks out, week after week, to see ever dwindling congregations. However, I wonder whether the insistence upon the existence of so many "nones" has led to a certain misperception — namely, that all or most of those who have left the churches have simply become atheists, skeptics, and materialists. In point of fact, the closer we look at the "nones," the stranger, more variegated, and oddly religious they seem.

My thoughts on this matter have been prompted by a remarkable book I just read called "Strange Rites: New Religions for a Godless World," written by Tara Isabella Burton. Herself a millennial and in possession of a doctorate in theology and having made her own journey through this world on her way to becoming a Christian, Burton is particularly qualified to explore the rather dense jungle of religions and spiritualities proliferating especially among those under 40. She observes that actually very few of the

religiously disaffiliated would identify as atheists or strict materialists. In fact, a large number of them would fit neatly into the category of "spiritual but not religious." Most SBNRs, though they disdain traditional churches, remain hungry for four elements that religion has classically offered: meaning, purpose, community and ritual. And they have found these values in some odd places.

For instance, there is, Burton shows, a vibrant community that has grown up around their common love for the Harry Potter stories, which they treat as practically sacred texts and with whose characters they deeply identify. She makes the incontestable but still startling observation: "Given that 61 percent of Americans have seen at least one Harry Potter film, it is very likely that more Americans can name the four Hogwarts houses than can name the Gospels." Still others find the four religious values in that farrago of beliefs and spiritual practices that goes by the name "New Age." Think of the communities and rituals that have formed around "UFOs, Reiki, acupuncture, crystal healing and the kind of creative visualization ubiquitous in the New Thought movement." Others discover meaning in their shared commitment to social justice and their concomitant disdain for those individuals and groups who stand athwart the achievement of racial, political or gender equity. Among some



WORD ON FIRE

BISHOP ROBERT BARRON

radical feminists, witchcraft has taken on a tremendous spiritual significance: "Combining progressive feminist politics with a fervent opposition to institutional Christianity . . . modern witchcraft embraces its power to transgress."

In the course of her well-written and fascinating study, Burton gives many more examples of the sometimes-wacky contemporary quasi-religions that have supplanted the traditional institutional faiths. Though it might surprise my readers a bit, this Catholic bishop would like to say something positive about all of this. The secularization hypothesis, first proposed by atheists and skeptics in the 19th century and reiterated ad nauseam by elite commentators today, holds that, as secularist science, technology and education advance, religion will inevitably decline. Not only has this hypothesis been proven wrong in many parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America, where various forms of traditional religion are booming;

BARRON, page 13

How does idealism and perfectionism negatively affect marriage?

The Church chose the week leading up to Valentine's Day to focus on and honor marriage. I hope to produce a series of articles on that topic. We begin with some problematic features of culture that make marriage difficult.

Those who seek to strengthen Holy Matrimony and stem the tide of failed marriages propose many remedies, among them better catechesis, improved marriage preparation, and greater emphasis on the sacrament in sermons. All of these are fine ideas and necessary steps, but let's also ponder a deep but often unexplored root of the trouble with marriage today: idealism or unrealistic expectations.

Although we live in cynical times, many people still hold a highly idealistic view of marriage: that it should be romantic, joyful, loving and happy all the time. It is an ideal rooted in the dreamy wishes of romantic longing, but an ideal nonetheless. *Amor omnia vincit!* (Love conquers all!) Surely, we will live happily ever after the way every story says!

Here's the problem: Many want their marriage to be ideal, and if there is any ordeal, they want a new deal. Yes, many are wandering about thinking, "I still haven't found what I'm looking for," to borrow from a U2 song.



COMMUNITY IN MISSION

MSGR. CHARLES POPE

There is no such thing as an ideal marriage, only real marriage. Two sinners have been married. A man and a woman with fallen natures, living in a fallen world that is governed by a fallen angel, have entered into the sacrament of holy matrimony. Like the graces of any sacrament, those of holy matrimony are necessary not because things are wonderful, but because they are oftentimes difficult. Marriage is meant to sanctify. Like baptism, it offers graces that unfold gradually. The graces unfold to the degree that, and at the speed with which, the couple cooperates with God's work.

It takes a lifetime of joy and challenge, tenderness and tension, difficulty and growth, in order for a husband and wife to summon each other to the holiness that God gives. Some of God's gifts come in strange packages. Struggles and irritations are often opportunities to

POPE, page 13

Conversion a matter of the heart



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Luke 6:27-38

The First Book of Samuel is the source of this weekend's initial reading in the Liturgy of the Word. Ancient in origin, scholars trace its beginnings to six centuries before Christ.

This reading focuses on David, whom the Hebrews regarded as the divinely commissioned, and divinely protected, leader, without peer, of the people.

Also revealed is the development of the people, and of the kingdom of Israel. It was not all a story of sweetness and life. Plentiful are accounts of strug-

gle, intrigue, and perplexity.

Through it all, basically, God guided the people. Relying upon this guidance, the people would survive and flourish, and God's representative, namely David, would survive.

For the second reading, the Church presents St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. This passage also is a story of development, not of a nation, such as the kingdom of Israel, but of human hearts. Tarry not with the earthly but aspire to spiritual good.

The Apostle Paul is remembered, justifiably, as the great evangelizer of Early Christianity, who took the message of Jesus far and wide.

Many heard him, and followed him: Titus, Timothy and Phoebe, for example, and they in turn became legends in the Church.

Others, it must be noted, ignored Paul, or rejected him. Indeed, he was resented so much in some circles that he died a martyr.

His appeal to turn to Christ meant turning away from all that seemed natural and obvi-

ous. This fact was nowhere more evident than among the Corinthians.

St. Luke's Gospel supplies the last reading. This gospel is the favorite biblical source for Catholics committed to the social doctrine of the Church because it is blunt and uncompromising as it calls for total conversion to Christ, as conversion means taking every step to redeem the world by bringing the mercy and justice of the Lord to real life.

Luke's idea of conversion was revolutionary, because it demanded not only absolute dedication but an acuteness in perception and a subjection of instinct.

Love your enemies! Offer the other cheek! Give to everyone who asks of you! Do unto others as you would have them do to you!

These words are hard. They were as hard for Luke's first audience as they always have been for humans, including people today. Many say that they do not make sense. They certainly are not the way of the world.

The bottom line is that genuine Christianity very often actu-

ally runs against the current, pursuing the spiritual treasure of the Gospel rather than the presumptions of earthly life.

Reflection

In less than two weeks, the Church will observe Ash Wednesday, calling us to Lent.

Lent is much more than "giving up candy." It is about achieving an absolute transformation in life, in assessing reality, making judgments and behavior.

Such transformation was not easy or quick for the Hebrews of Samuel's time, or for the Corinthians to whom St. Paul wrote, or the Christians who first read the Gospel of Luke.

Simply stated, honest discipleship is hard. It calls for a "revolution" of heart, mind, and action, revolving from selfishness and earthly assumptions, indeed even instincts, to uniting with the Lord in every respect, in every thought, every sword, and every deed.

The Church offers Lent as a process to accomplish this transformation, this "revolution" in heart and soul.

By using Lent as a tool, an incentive, and an aide, the Church urges us to this absolute commitment to, and union with, Christ, appealing to us to follow the Lord, to redeem ourselves, and, in the process, to redeem the world around us.

As we approach Lent, we should ask ourselves what is its purpose and what does it mean, truly, profoundly, personally? Ash Wednesday is coming.

READINGS

Sunday: 1 Sm 26:2, 7-9, 12-13 22-23 Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10, 12-13 1 Cor 15:45-49 Lk 6:27-38

Monday: Jas 3:13-18 Ps 19:8-10, 15 Mk 9:14-29

Tuesday: 1 Ot 5:1-4 Ps 23:1-6 Mt 16:13-19

Wednesday: Jas 4:13-17 Ps 49:2-3, 6-11 Mk 9:38-40

Thursday: Jas 5:9-12 Ps 103:1-4, 8-9, 11-12 Mk 9:41-50

Friday: Jas 5:9-12 Ps 103:1-4, 8-9, 11-12 Mk 10:1-12

Saturday: Jas 13-20 Ps 141:1-3, 8 Mk 10:13-16

POPE, from page 12

grow and to learn what forgiveness, patience and suffering are all about. These are precious things to learn and to grow in. Frankly, if we don't learn to forgive we are going to go to hell (see Mt 6:14-15). Even the best marriages have tension; without tension there is no change.

This may not describe the ideal, happily-ever-after marriage, but it describes the real one: full of joy, love, hope and tenderness, but also sorrow, anger, stress and disappointment.

The real problem does not necessarily come from our ideals about marriage, which are good to strive for, but from the fact that we conceive of these ideals within a hedonistic culture.

Hedonism is the "doctrine" that the chief goals of earthly life are happiness and pleasure. (The Greek word hedone means "pleasure.") In the hedonistic view, any diminishment of pleasure or happiness is the worst thing imaginable, a complete disaster. Many insist on a kind of God-given right to be happy and pleased. Even some devout Christians fall prey to these exaggerated notions and excuse some selfish and sinful behaviors by saying, "God wants me to be happy doesn't He?" When the Church, or an individual, suggests that someone should

do what is difficult, they react, not with puzzlement, but with downright indignation, as if to say, "How dare you get between anyone and what makes him or her happy!"

Our notion of an ideal – happy, fulfilling, blissful – marriage is seen through the lens of hedonistic extremism. If the ideal marriage is not found, many feel a need – a perfect right – to end it in search of greener pastures.

This is just more evidence of our instant gratification culture that is used to "rush shipping," "buy it with one click," and "download now." If the ideal marriage is not evident very soon, the disappointments and resentments come quickly.

There is a saying that "unrealistic expectations are premeditated resentments." How quickly unrealistic notions of the picture-perfect marriage are dashed on the shoals of reality.

Somewhere, not only in the Church's marriage preparation programs but also in our work of assisting personal formation, we need to teach that unrealistic expectations are ultimately destructive. Our ideals are not the problem per se; we must become more sober about our conception of these ideals through the lens of hedonism and instant gratification. Growth takes time. Life moves through stages. Marriage is hard, but so

is life. Cutting and running from the imperfect marriage — as some do rather quickly today — is not the solution. Sure enough, one imperfect marriage leads to another and perhaps yet another.

In the past, even the relatively recent past, people tended to stick things out, to work through some differences while agreeing to live with others. We would do well to regain something of this appreciation that earthly life is a mixed bag; that there are going to be challenges. Marriage is no different. Though we may idealize it, we should be aware that we are setting ourselves up for resentment and disappointment if we don't balance it with the understanding that marriage is hard because life is hard.

Clearly there are many other problems that contribute to today's high rate of divorce, but an overlooked root is the expectation of an ideal marriage. Yes, many want their marriage to be ideal, and if there is any ordeal, they want a new deal. We would do well to remember that in a world full of adults behaving like this, it is the children who really get a raw deal. This is a deeper and less discussed cultural root of our divorce problem, a deep wound of which we should become more aware.

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

BARRON, from page 12

it has also been proven wrong in the West, where religion, despite the thousand predictions of its disappearance, continues to reassert itself. What we see in Harry Potter religion, New Age spirituality, Wicca and witchcraft, etc., are attempts to find community and purpose precisely in a ritualized relationship to some power appreciated as transcendent. We can blithely condemn all of this, or we can see it as expressive of what the Catholic tradition calls "natural religion," which is the instinct, deeply rooted in each of us, to search for meaning in the ultimate sense. Despite the claims of the ideological secularists, it is just not that easy to stamp out religion. In the face of obstacles both exterior and interior, it

finds a way.

Now, this does not mean for a moment that Christians should be satisfied with the "blooming, buzzing confusion" of natural religion, especially the kinds on offer today, but we should, as St. Paul, St. Irenaeus, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, G.K. Chesterton and Pope Benedict XVI did in their own day, meet it and engage it with the word of revelation. One of the marks of the natural religious attitude is that the seekers are always in control of the conversation: they set out to find ultimate meaning – on their own terms. Burton in fact argues that this tendency is especially prevalent today, when seekers claim the right to rewrite sacred texts and reconfigure sacred rituals to suit their personal preferences. But

a revealed religion, like Catholic Christianity, holds that God has spoken. Our quest is real, and it can be holy, but what finally matters is that God has answered it – on His terms.

Again, it would be easy enough to write off the frankly weird forms of religiosity that Burton describes, but this would be seeing the glass as half-empty. Rather, we Catholics should rejoice that the religious instinct remains vibrantly alive in the SBNRs. And then we should eagerly engage that instinct with the liberating challenge of the Gospel.

Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for February 20, 2022

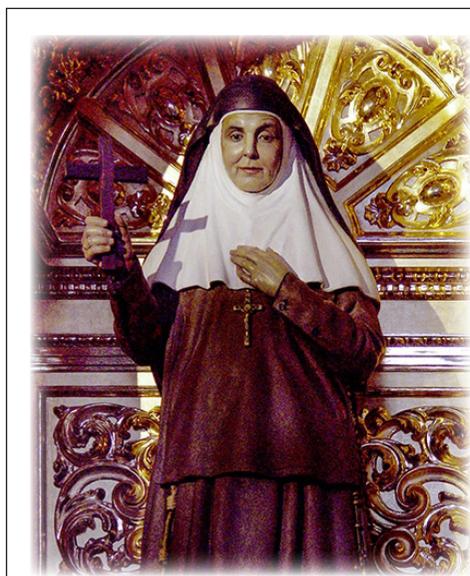
Luke 6:27-38

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C: "Turn the other cheek." The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

ENEMIES	BLESS THOSE	CURSE
PRAY FOR	STRIKES	CHEEK
OFFER	TAKES	GIVE
LOVE YOU	CREDIT	SINNERS
LEND	KING	SELFISH
MERCIFUL	FATHER	JUDGED
FORGIVE	GOOD MEASURE	SHAKEN

REWARDS

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



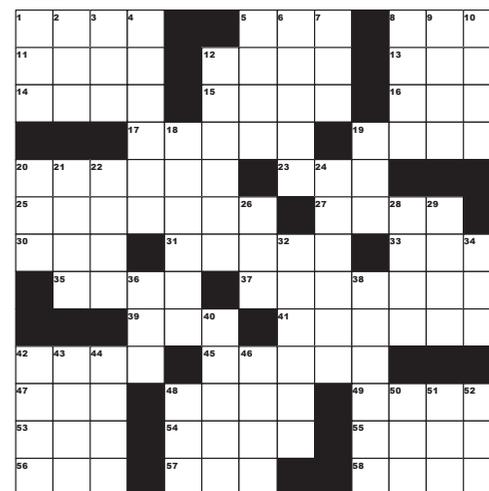
**ANGELA OF THE CROSS
 (ANGELA DE LA CRUZ)**

1846-1932 FEAST MARCH 2

Maria de los Angeles Guerrero Gonzalez, called Angelita, grew up in Seville, Spain. With little formal education, she was placed in a cobbler's workshop making shoes. But she was drawn to religious life and tried the Discalced Carmelites and Sisters of Charity before illness forced her return to home and the shoe factory. After patiently discerning a call to be poor among the poor, Angelita and three like-minded women moved into a small rented house in 1875, forming the Company of the Cross. They prayed and meditated, but were always available to serve the poor and dying. By the time of her death, Madre Angelita's Company had spread from Spain to Italy and Argentina. She was canonized in 2003.

The CrossWord

February 20 and 27, 2022



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Readings: 1Sm 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23/ 1Cor 15:45-49 / Lk 6:27-38 & Sir 27:4-7/ 1Cor 15:54-58/ Lk 6:39-45

ACROSS

- 1 Restaurant listing
- 5 Chinese sauce
- 8 Extremely high frequency (abbr.)
- 11 "___ this rock"
- 12 Body of an organism
- 13 "___ of Galilee"
- 14 Attire
- 15 The first man
- 16 The fiery ___
- 17 St. Patrick was
- 19 And Sidon
- 20 Of the backbone
- 23 ___ Wednesday
- 25 Summon (2 wds.)
- 27 Combos of dried

leaves

- 30 Escape key
- 31 Religious man
- 33 Pod vegetable
- 35 Native of Thailand
- 37 "Those who trust in God"
- 39 Dit's partner
- 41 Beside where a tree is planted
- 42 "Meek and ___"
- 45 "Remember the ___"
- 47 Time period
- 48 Follow Commandments
- 49 Hawkeye State
- 53 All Souls month
- 54 Triumphs

- 55 Lump of dirt
- 56 Genetic acid (abbr.)
- 57 Type of partnership
- 58 Give impression of

DOWN

- 1 Stein
- 2 Environmental agency
- 3 Neither's partner
- 4 As they did with the raised Lazarus
- 5 Turfs
- 6 City in Nebraska
- 7 Thanksgiving veggie
- 8 Spot
- 9 Jesus is "___ of all things"
- 10 Destiny
- 12 Boat worker
- 18 Craft paper from palms
- 19 "___ Twelve"
- 20 Compass point
- 21 Insect
- 22 Type of worm
- 24 "...roots stretch to this"
- 26 Eve's beginning
- 28 Church part (domed)
- 29 Visionary
- 32 "I am with you ___"
- 34 TV annoyances
- 36 Insert
- 38 Unemotional people
- 40 Religious garb
- 42 Fishermen do to nets
- 43 He shall rule with a rod of ___
- 44 "Stand in a ___ waste"
- 46 "Even sinners ___ to sinners"
- 48 Night bird
- 50 Spanish sports cheer
- 51 Opposite of "Blessed" in Gospel
- 52 Admiral (abbr.)

Golden retriever, her owner share joy with students

BY JOHN SHAUGHNESSY

INDIANAPOLIS (CNS) – The golden retriever named Millie slowly crossed the classroom, heading straight for the high school student who sat alone, looking stressed and anxious. When she reached the youth, Millie raised her eyes toward him before sitting at the student's feet. A moment later, the youth reached down to the golden retriever's smooth, silky fur and began petting Millie in a rhythmic motion. With each caress, the stress and anxiety on the boy's face melted away.

That moment of calm transformation is a scene that Katherine Eckart has witnessed repeatedly in the three years she has brought Millie – a certified therapy dog – into the schools where she teaches art classes.

For the first two years, Millie and Eckart were a team at St. Joan of Arc School in Indianapolis. This year, they have been combining their talents at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.

And Millie's impact is the same whether she's connecting with children in grade school, teenagers in high school or teachers in both settings.

"A therapy dog is there to comfort, to ease anxiety and stress," Eckart told *The Criterion*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. "There are studies that show when humans

and dogs are together, it boosts the endorphins of people. All the studies on therapy dogs and schools show it helps attendance, it gives kids a purpose to come to school, and it helps their interactions.

"If a child isn't comfortable around humans, maybe they're comfortable around the dog," she added.

During her two years at St. Joan of Arc School, Millie could often be found in the library where children would lie on the floor with her and read books to her. As a school librarian, Aly Schroeder saw firsthand the impact Millie had on the children – and the adults in the school.

"You didn't even need to be having a bad day for her to make it better," Schroeder said. "A few minutes with her would do wonders for someone who was grumpy, having a bad day or needed to reset. Sometimes, the kids would even start talking about what was bothering them."

"She helped the kids who didn't have a loving start to their day for whatever reason. It's hard to quantify, but it's powerful."

Millie continues to melt hearts at Bishop Chatard. Students drop by Eckart's art classroom at different times of their school day to see Millie and pet her.

And when eighth-grade students spend a day at Bishop Chatard to see what the school is like, their student hosts often make a visit with Millie a part of



CNS photo/John Shaughnessy, *The Criterion*
Katherine Eckart and Millie, her certified therapy dog, are seen at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis Nov. 8, 2021.

the day.

"We all love Millie," said Kylie Nagel, a senior at Bishop Chatard. "She's the best dog to have around. She's so calm. When she comes up to you, it's almost like she's saying, 'Pet me!' For me, it's, 'Of course, Millie!'"

Still, no one appreciates Millie more than Eckart, who has been teaching for 10 years.

"I get to bring her to work

every day. That's changed my whole outlook on teaching," she said. "It's amazing to watch how she affects the kids. She helps kids want to be in school. If a kid needs a second away from class, she calms them. When they see her in the hall, there are immediate smiles on their faces."

The same is true for teachers. Millie sometimes wanders away from Eckart's art room and roams into other classrooms, drawing smiles from teachers who tell Eckart, "I needed this little moment to relax."

Eckart first had the idea of using Millie in the classroom about four years ago when she saw how her dog, now 8, interacted with her nieces and nephews.

"When she was 4 or 5, she calmed down energy-wise," Eckart said. "I saw her grow up with my nieces and nephews – and saw her temperament around them. I thought it would be cool to bring her to school, and the kids would love her."

Eckart approached St. Joan's principal, Janet Andriole, about the possibility. Andriole was enthused, but also concerned about the liability. Eckart enrolled Millie in a six-week training organization called "Paws and Think."

Certified and insured, Millie started school and has been receiving high marks ever since.

As the other half of the team, Eckart doesn't mind that Millie gets most of the attention. She's

just glad to share the experience with Millie.

"I grew up with dogs, always had goldens growing up," said Eckart, who is 33 and the mother of an infant daughter. "She was my first dog as an adult. I got her when I was 25, before I was married. She has taken me from young adulthood to being a parent. I wanted to have babies before she moved on. That's why we got another dog – to keep her young. I get to spend all my days with her."

All of her own education took place in Catholic schools – St. Pius X School in Indianapolis, Bishop Chatard High School and the former St. Joseph College in Rensselaer, Indiana.

Loving her art classes as a 2007 graduate of Bishop Chatard, Eckart envisioned her dream job – to return to the school to teach art and immerse herself in that Catholic community.

"I knew I loved the sense of community I had in Catholic schools growing up," she said. "I knew I wanted to be in that same environment teaching. I think it helps me stay strong in my faith. We get to go to Mass. We get to pray before class and at the beginning of the day. ... It's all around you. It keeps my own faith in check."

Shaughnessy is assistant editor at The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

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.

Little Flower Holy Hour

FORT WAYNE — Little Flower Holy Hour for Vocations will be Tuesday, March 1, from 7-8 p.m. at the St. Mother Theodore Guerin Chapel, 1102 S. Clinton St. The March holy hour will be led by Father Stephen Felicichia. Contact Christine Nix at 260-422-4611 for information.

Online NFP support group

Are you looking for some support and fellowship in using natural family planning? Join a monthly online support group for NFP users in the diocese. Meet over Zoom on the 4th Wednesday evening of the month from 8-9:30 p.m. February's gathering will

take place on Wednesday, Feb. 23. Email Caty at cburke@diocesefwsb.org for the Zoom meeting link and passcode.

40 Days for Life spring campaign

FORT WAYNE — Beginning March 2, join other Christians for 40 Days for Life – 40 days of prayer and fasting for an end to abortion. Stand and peacefully pray during a 40-day vigil in the public right-of-way outside Planned Parenthood at 2930 Lake Ave. and help spread the word about this important community outreach. Welcome Paster Chad Clark on Wednesday, March 2 of Bluffton Wesleyan Church, who will be offering an opening

day prayer beginning at 10 a.m. at the site. Rain or shine. Contact Annemarie DeVille at 260-797-3144 or annemariedeville@gmail.com for more information.

Knights of Columbus Fish Fry

ANGOLA — The Knights of Columbus will have a Lenten fish fry Friday, Feb. 25 from 5-7 p.m. in the parish hall of St. Anthony Church, 700 W Maumee St.

The **CrossWord**
February 20 and 27, 2022



REST IN PEACE

Bremen

Marjorie Shorter, 98, St. Dominic

Fort Wayne

Suzanne Tippmann, 50, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Marcella Rogawski, 98, St. Charles Borromeo

Duwane Tagtmeyer, 78, St. Charles Borromeo

Elaine M. Crosby, 65, St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel

Shelly K. Klinker, 52, St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel

Patrick S. Minnick, 77, St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel

Jeffrey H. Strack, 63, St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel

Gertrude Metcalf, 91, St. Vincent de Paul

Granger
Julie Goepfrich, 69, St. Pius X

Laurence McHugh, 78, St. Pius X

Michael Rach, 72, St. Pius X

Janis Warner, 75, St. Pius X

South Bend
David J. Witucki, 85, Holy Family

Warsaw
Sandra Fitzgerald, 72, Sacred Heart



SAINT ELIZABETH ANN SETON Catholic School

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School is seeking a full-time school nurse immediately!

Those interested in this position should send a resume to

Principal Lois Widner at lwidner@seascsfw.org.

Seeking a principal at **St. Adalbert School** Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend

St. Adalbert School was founded more than 110 years ago by Polish immigrants and today serves a predominantly lower socio-economic Latino student body.

In the Holy Cross tradition, St. Adalbert School strives to cultivate a community spirit and faith life, while nurturing individuals' academic excellence. The principal serves three essential roles at St. Adalbert: the spiritual leader, the instructional leader and the executive manager. As the spiritual leader, the principal supports and models the Catholic identity of the school, leading prayer, developing programs instilled with Gospel values and coaching teachers and students alike in their own personal spirituality. As the instructional leader, the principal creates a collaborative environment that enables teachers to utilize research-based best practices and data to drive student learning. As the executive manager, the principal works with the pastor to manage a budget, increase enrollment to capacity and ensure the facilities and technology meet the needs of the school community.

The preferred candidate:

- Has computer skills and familiarity with the Google Suite (Google Docs, Google Sheets, etc.)
- Has strong written, verbal, presentation and interpersonal skills
- Has experience utilizing progress monitoring assessments such as NWEA MAP and/or using data to drive instruction and student learning
- Has experience working with federal funding programs such as Title I, II, III, & IV
- Has a conversational fluency in the Spanish language
- Has an ENL license or knowledge of ENL academic programing

Requirements:

- Holds a Bachelors or Masters college degree and holds (or is eligible for) an Indiana elementary supervision and administration license
- Has knowledge of the Catholic faith and is a practicing/participating Catholic in good standing with the Church
- Has at least 5 years of experience in Catholic schools as either a teacher or administrator

If you are interested in applying, please contact Father Ryan Pietrocarlo, CSC, 574-288-5708 or rpietrocarlo@stadalbertschool.org

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend seeks a full-time

Publications Manager for the Today's Catholic newspaper

This position plays a key role within the diocesan communication department. In a collaborative spirit of teamwork, this position will advance the mission of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades throughout the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

For more information visit www.diocesefwsb.org/careers



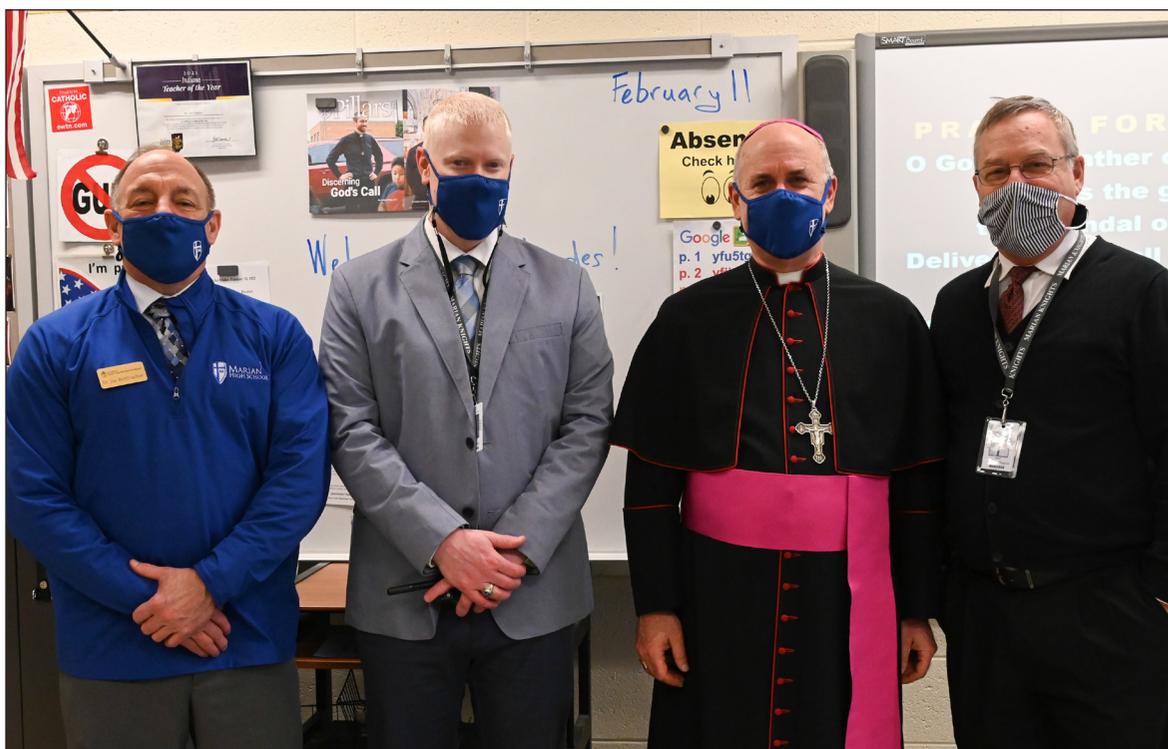
Derby Photography

Marian High School students excitedly celebrate the bishop's arrival at their school.



Denise Fedorow

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades with Marian High School's valedictorians and saluatorians, announced after the school Mass celebrated on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Both the saluatorians and valedictorians had identical GPAs, according to Principal Mark Kirzeder. From left: co-valedictorian Rose Kavanaugh, co-valedictorian Grace Weaver, Bishop Rhoades, co-salutatorian Elizabeth Rhee and co-salutatorian Victoria Tellez.



Derby Photography

Superintendent of Catholic Schools Dr. Joe Brettacher, Marian High School Principal Mark Kirzeder, Bishop Rhoades and theology teacher Tom Dlugosz pose for a photo in Dlugosz's classroom. The bishop talked to the sophomores about ecclesiology.

MARIAN, from page 1

In Ryan Dainty's senior class, the boys were reading The Confessions by St. Augustine. Bishop Rhoades told them that St. Augustine was searching for truth and the meaning of life and kept coming up empty.

He advised the young men: "Think of your own journey — we all go through conversions — they may not be as dramatic as Augustine's. As young men, how are you going to live your manhood? Where are you going to find real happiness and joy and peace? Augustine shows the way."

"Take that with you as you leave here — keep Augustine in mind — go forth with that counter-cultural perspective."

In Mary Ann Hinora's freshman class, the students were learning more about Jesus in the four Gospels. One student asked the bishop what the best and worst parts of his job were. He replied that teaching and celebrating the sacraments — especially the Eucharist — was the best; the challenges are governing the diocese and all the important decisions he has to make. He was also asked his confirmation name and he shared that it was John the Apostle and Evangelist. He pointed out that some stories are only found in John's Gospel — like the Bread of Life discourse and the wedding feast at Cana.

In Thomas Dlugosz and Joel Beck's sophomore classes, the students were studying ecclesiology, including the four marks of the Church and the Acts of the Apostles, which he said some call the Gospels of the Apostles.

Bishop Rhoades told students, "The mission that began then continues today with us to spread the gospel by words and deeds. (Through the sacraments) You receive the same gifts as the Apostles did on Pentecost and the same grace to live and

defend the faith."

The bishop shared lunch with student leaders and in the afternoon met with faculty members.

Academic achievements

Marian High School has 685 students enrolled and its motto is "Learn, Serve, Lead." The school offers 35 dual credit classes, and 89% of last year's graduating class received some college credit. Principal Mark Kirzeder explained that Marian has partnered with several local colleges including Holy Cross, Indiana University South Bend and Ivy Tech Community College to certify teachers and curriculum so they are at the "same standard as those college professors" to enable students to get college credits.

Marian High School also has a program for students with special educational needs, known as the Bernadette Scholars, now in its third year with seven students enrolled.

The program is led by a team headed by Annie Ganser and is an extension of the learning strategies center that creates individualized educational plans for each student. The Bernadette Scholars are mainstreamed for at least one class a day. They also participate in school events and activities, liturgical services, sports and clubs to gain the social and emotional benefits of being an active part of the Marian family. After four years in the program, they will receive a certificate of completion and be included in commencement.

During the bishop's visit, Kirzeder announced this year's top students. There were co-salutatorians and co-valedictorians, as the four students had identical grade point averages. The co-salutatorians are Victoria Tellez, daughter of Victor and Carolyn Tellez of St. Jude Parish, and Elizabeth Rhee, daughter of Dr. Thomas Rhee and Jennifer Tam. The co-valedictorians are Rose Kavanaugh, daughter of Dr. Sandra Cho Kavanaugh and Phil Kavanaugh and Grace Weaver, daughter of Dr. Leroy Weaver and Lorrie Weaver, all members of St. Pius X.

"We're always looking at all areas of our curriculum to ensure we're offering the best opportunities to prepare students for college and career," Kirzeder said.

He recently received the results from the Scholastic Arts and Writing Awards and Marian students received 239 awards, up from 114 last year. He commented, "To reach 100 awards was amazing. To get over 200 is

astounding."

Marian also has a strong athletic department with several sectional and regional wins in different sports this year. The girls soccer team was state runner up, football was regional champs and one female golfer and one cross country athlete went to state. "Those are pretty impressive accomplishments across a range of sports," Kirzeder said.

Service

Marian continues to encourage community service with its Knight Service Day in October. The Knight Service Day began in 2014 as part of Marian's 50th anniversary. Students are asked to reflect on their service and integrate it into lessons. Kirzeder explained that they've had to be flexible with the service aspect, allowing students to perform service within their families.

He pointed out that the goal is to push students "outside their family, school and church community into the larger community so they can find an area of interest, develop a larger project and make connections. Our goal is we will meet the requirements without sacrificing our Catholic identity and high academic rigor. That's what differentiates us from public schools."

Living the mission

"Marian has been able to hire staff whose Catholic identity is the witness they convey to students," Kirzeder remarked. "The number one way we evangelize to our students is the way we interact with them, through the examples we show in the classroom, the athletic fields or courts or the lunchroom. We show the love of Christ through our interactions."

Students pray together three times a day: a reading in the morning, the Angelus and meal blessing at lunchtime and at the end of the day, they say a prayer tied to the theme of the month.

The new grotto was dedicated this fall and a few events have been hosted there, including a football Mass one Friday. "I'm looking forward to spring and better weather where the kids can be outside and really use the space. I'm excited to see how the space will evolve and become part of our culture," Kirzeder said.

Another example of living the mission for Marian is that five graduates are in formation to become either a priest or religious and there is a special wall for students to pray for them.



MARIAN
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