Annual devotion provides opportunity for local exploration

JOSHUA SCHIPPER

While there are dozens of parishes in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, many Catholics only frequent their home parish to celebrate Mass and partake in the sacraments. A centuries-old Holy Thursday devotion, however, challenges people to visit seven churches in a single evening.

After the celebration of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, April 14, priests will place the Eucharist on the altar of repose for adorers to praise and keep watch, as Jesus asked his disciples to do in the Garden of Gethsemane. Many Catholics within the diocese will travel to seven local parishes to keep watch with Christ as part of this annual international tradition.

The instructions for this pilgrimage are simple: Visit seven churches during Thursday evening’s Eucharistic watch to pay homage to the Lord. Parishes will have Eucharistic Adoration after the conclusion of Mass – prospective participants just need to map out their desired route between parishes.

This long-standing tradition, known colloquially as “church hopping,” also affords Catholics the opportunity to visit other parishes in the diocese that they may not have otherwise attended. As they adore the Lord, they can take advantage of the variety of beautiful architecture and religious art to recall Christ’s passion, glory, and resurrection in preparation for the upcoming Easter season.

Shawn Witchey has participated in the tradition twice, and says that visiting different churches – especially those with cultures that contrast with his home parish – remains a high point for him during the yearly pilgrimage. Witnessing prayer in other languages, Witchey says, was one of the best parts in his experience with church hopping. “It just opens up so much more exploration of the faith and how people do things.”

Witchey says that he also mentions this idea of exploration to prospective pilgrims, emphasizing that Holy Thursday offers...
Meeting migrants, pope warns civilization risks being ‘shipwrecked’

HAL FAR, Malta (CNS) – Saying civilization itself risks foundering because of apathy and selfishness, Pope Francis insisted that migrants and refugees must be treated with care and kindness and recognized as brothers and sisters.

In the shipwrecks that lead to thousands of migrants drowning in the Mediterranean each year, “we see another kind of shipwreck taking place: the shipwreck of civilization, which threatens not only migrants but us all,” the pope said on April 3 at a meeting with about 200 migrants at the John XXIII Peace Lab in Hal Far.

Imagine, he said, “that those sailing on crowded boats or adrift in the sea, on our televisions or in the newspapers, could be any one of us, or our sons or daughters.”

“Perhaps at this very moment, while we are here, there are boats heading northward across the Mediterranean,” he said. “Let us pray for these brothers and sisters of ours who risk their lives at sea in search of hope.”

The day before the meeting, the pope said, there was the report of a rescue of four migrants off the coast of Libya. More than 90 people were reportedly on the boat; only four did not drown.

Pope Francis sat against a shimmering backdrop of shades of blue topped with blobs of fluorescent orange – a backdrop built with plastic bottles and life vests pulled from the sea.

Franciscan Father Dionisio Mintoff, the 91-year-old founder of the center, welcomed Pope Francis, telling him, “Your urgent appeals are closer to the weakest spur us to do better and to continue our daily mission toward those who, for a limited time or permanently, land on our island, to escape from misery and to have a better life.”

The pope spoke after listening to Siriman Coulibaly describe in harrowing detail how they finally made it to Malta.

Doukouale said he left his home in Nigeria five years ago. “After 13 days of traveling, we arrived at the desert. While crossing, we passed dead people and animals, burned cars and a lot of empty water cans. After eight traumatic days in the desert, we made it to Libya.”

He would pay smugglers for a place on a boat, only to have the trip canceled and the money unreturned. Twice he attempted the crossing, only to be pushed back by the Libyan or Tunisian coast guards and detained.

The sixth time he paid, he said, they set sail, and after three days “it was all smiles when the Maltese coast guard rescued us. I couldn’t believe my eyes! Tears of joy flowing freely. My dreams came true!”

“But these were short lived since we were put in detention for six months the same night we landed. I almost lost my mind,” he said, and he wondered, “Why were men like us treating us like criminals and not like brothers?”

“When you run away from a situation of war, conflict and extreme poverty,” Coulibaly said, “you have nothing except for your determination to live a better life and a lot of courage and resilience to face all the challenges you encounter.”

Unfortunately, he said, too many individuals and governments seem to think a migrant ceases being human when he or she leaves home.

“Today we want to remind people in decision-making positions and who hold power, that human rights and dignity are universal and inherent,” he said. “We are ‘fratelli tutti’ (all brothers and sisters, right)”

At the end of the meeting, Pope Francis prayed that God would “free us from fear and prejudice, enable us to share in their sufferings and to combat injustices together, for the growth of a world in which each person is respected in his or her inviolable dignity, the dignity that you, O Father, have granted us and your Son has consecrated forever.”

Located between the Italian island of Sicily and the North African coast, Malta – a tiny nation with fewer than 500,000 residents – has been the first port of call for thousands of migrants and refugees crossing the sea from North Africa in search of a better life in Europe.

Current European Union policies have left Malta and other frontline countries such as Italy, Spain and Greece, on their own to rescue, shelter, verify and try to integrate the migrants.

In his talk at the center, Pope Francis asked, “How can we save ourselves from this shipwreck, which risks sinking the ship of our civilization?”

The answer, he said, is “by conducting ourselves with kindness and humanity” and by regarding people not as statistics but as “what they really are: people, men and women, brothers and sisters, each with his or her own life story.”

The Acts of the Apostles says that when St. Paul was shipwrecked on Malta, he and his fellow passengers “were treated with ‘unusual kindness.’ Not merely with kindness, but with rare humanity, a special care and concern that St.Luke wished to immortalize.”

“Let us respond to the challenge of migrants and refugees with kindness and humanity,” the pope said. “Let us light fires of fraternity around which people who risk an uncertain life can arise again and rediscover hope. Let us strengthen the fabric of social friendship and the culture of encounter, starting from places such as this.”

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a prime opportunity to do so. “It’s not something that most people get to do very often, to visit other churches.

The heart of this tradition is often attributed to St. Philip Neri, who lived in the mid-16th century. St. Philip Neri and his companions initiated the pilgrimage as a counter to the ‘party atmosphere’ that lingered after the pre-Lent Carnival season, according to The Compass News, the newspaper from the Diocese of Green Bay in Wisconsin. The Penn State Newman Community website states that pilgrims would pray and travel to the seven churches of Rome on the initial outset of this tradition, which is likely the origin of the tradition’s numeric specifications.

The number seven also has particular significance in Scripture as a symbol of ‘perfection’ or ‘completion.’

Some Catholics utilize a list of stations and scriptural readings to amplify the solemn meaning of their Holy Thursday pilgrimage. These seven stations recall the seven locations that Christ visited between his arrest after the Last Supper and subsequent death on Good Friday.

The Compass News explains that these stations and their corresponding readings include: Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane; Jesus bound and taken before Annas; Jesus taken before the High Priest, Caiaphas; Jesus taken before Pilate; Jesus taken before Herod; Jesus taken before Pilate again and Jesus being given the crown of thorns and led to his crucifixion.

The Eucharistic watch on Holy Thursday recalls a particular aspect of Scripture as well. In the Gospels, Jesus asks his disciples to keep watch with him in the Garden of Gethsemane. In a similar way, modern disciples of Christ keep watch in anticipation of the remembrance of Jesus’ impending passion and death.

Matthew wrote in his Gospel: “Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, ‘Sit here while I go over there and pray.’ He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress.

Farther in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will emulate this eucharistic watch, with parishioners filling the role of the disciples, ‘keeping watch’ for varying durations. Prospective pilgrims should check with the seven parishes they wish to visit for specific adoration times. Those who feel as though travel may not be possible or those looking for a different devotion in which to partake that evening can check with their home parish to see if there is a Holy Hour yet to be filled during the right watch.

The Holy Thursday ‘church hopping’ tradition remains a solemn, powerful and exciting way to contemplate Christ’s passion, death and resurrection as the Church closes this season of Lent. Regardless of the individual parishes visited, no matter the local culture, the same Lord stands ready to greet all visitors in Eucharistic Adoration on the evening of Holy Thursday.
Pope apologizes for treatment of Indigenous in Canada, promises visit

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Expressing “sorrow and shame” for the complicity of Catholics in abusing Indigenous children in Canada and helping in the attempt to erase their culture, Pope Francis pledged to address the issue more fully when he visits Canada.

Saying he was impressed by their devotion to St. Anne, the grandmother of Jesus, the centerpiece of the popular Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage, scheduled this year for July 25-28, Pope Francis told them, “This year, I would like to be with you in those days.”

The Shrine of St. Anne, on Lac Ste. Anne, is located in central Alberta, not far from Edmonton.

“For the deplorable conduct of members of the Catholic Church, I ask God’s forgiveness and I want to tell you with all my heart, I am very grieved,” the pope said.

The Gospel calls Christians “to welcome, love, serve and not judge,” he said, and it is “a frightening thing” when, in the name of that faith, Christians act the opposite.

“Through your voices,” he told the delegates, “I have been able to touch with my own hands and carry within me, with great sadness in my heart, the stories of suffering, deprivation, discriminatory treatment and various forms of abuse suffered by many of you, particularly in residential schools.”

Pope Francis said that it is “chilling” to think of how much thought and effort went into designing and running a system aimed at instilling “a sense of inferiority” in the students and the attempt “to make someone lose his or her cultural identity, to sever their roots, with all the personal and social consequenc-es that this has entailed and continues to entail: unresolved traumas that have become inter-generational traumas.”

“I feel shame and sorrow for the role that some Catholics, with educational responsibilities, have played in all that has hurt you, in the abuse and disrespect of your identity and culture and even your spiritual values,” he said.

Those values were on display during the meeting in the Apostolic Palace, which began with representatives offering their prayers.

First Nations’ Elder Fred Kelly, wearing a feathered headdress and offering a prayer in Nischnawbe and English, prayed for the gifts of “love, kindness, respect, trust and humility from the one Creator.”

Métis Elder Emile Janvier, a residential school survivor, recited his prayer in Dene-Michif, asking the Creator for healing of “the hurts of the past” and for strength in moving forward “in forgiveness and reconciliation.”

Marty and Lizzie Angotealuk, members of the Inuit delegation, led the singing of the Lord’s Prayer in Inuktitut.

During the individual meetings earlier in the week, elected leaders of the groups asked Pope Francis for a formal apology for the Catholic Church’s role in suppressing their languages, cultures and spiritualities and, particularly, for the Church’s role in running many of the residential schools that were part of the government’s plan of forced assimilation and where many children were emotionally, physically and sexually abused.

The leaders also asked Pope Francis to go to Canada to make that apology and requested his help in getting access to more of the school records so a full history of the schools could be written and so the children in unmarked graves could be identified.

But the major part of the private meetings with the pope were devoted to the survivors of residential schools telling their stories.

Pope Francis thanked the delegates for “opening your hearts and for expressing the desire to walk together,” and he assured them that he brought all of their stories to his prayer.

And, he said he looked forward to learning more about them and meeting their families when he visited their lands, but, he said, pointing to the Inuit, “I’m not going in winter.”

Thanking the pope for agreeing to go to Canada, Bishop Raymond Poisson of Saint-Jérôme, Quebec, president of the Canadian bishops’ conference, told Pope Francis, “We are ready today to help you pack your bags!”

The recent history of the Catholic Church, he said, “is marked with the stigma of mistakes and failures to love our neighbor, in particular toward members of those nations who have been present in Canada for centuries.”

An acknowledgment of the Church’s failures makes “our desire for reconciliation” even stronger, he said. “Our presence here is a testimony to our commitment for one another and to each other.”

Pope Francis gave each delegation a bronze olive branch as a sign of peace and reconciliation, according to the Canadian bishops’ conference.

The Assembly of First Nations gave the pope a liturgical stole, beaded with orange crosses, and a pair of snowshoes made of black ash with caribou and artificial sinew.

The Métis National Council gave him a memory book with a piece of sterling silver and a cross carved from a baleen of a bowhead whale and riveted to a piece of sterling silver and a pouch made from sealskin with an ivory button.

Delegates representing Canada’s First Nations, Métis and Inuit are pictured in the Vatican’s Clementine Hall during a meeting with Pope Francis on April 1, 2022.
Afghan refugee families find welcome in Fort Wayne

BY KEVIN KILBANE

One family group had a relatively easy time getting to the Kabul airport for their evacuation flight out of Afghanistan last August. The other rode to freedom on the last U.S. plane leaving the chaotic scene at the airport. All are happy to be in Fort Wayne, where they have felt welcome and have received help from Catholic Charities and other groups to start building a new life.

The families spoke with a writer for Today’s Catholic with help from Naseer Youssufi and Mari Muradi, Afghanistan natives who settled in Fort Wayne in 2000 and 2004, respectively. Both women now work as interpreters with the Catholic Charities organization serving the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Youssufi and Muradi speak both Dari and Pashto, the two main languages used in Afghanistan.

The Shirzai family flew out of Afghanistan on the last U.S. plane to leave the country, said Munawar Shirzai, 29. With him were his wife, Jamilla, 25, and their children, Shoghla, 5 1/2, Kalsom, 4 1/2, Mohammad, 2 1/2, and Yusuf, 1.

The family lived in Paktika Province in southern Afghanistan, said Munawar, who knows English. He began working with the U.S. government there in 2007 while still a teenager. He can’t discuss details about the work he did, but he continued assisting the U.S. government all through the refugee evacuation in August.

The United States military evacuated nearly 125,000 Afghan residents, which included individuals and members of those individuals’ families who could have been targeted for death or retaliation by the Taliban.

“We had a normal life, and then the Taliban came,” Mohammad said. “Then we left the situation because the situation was getting bad because the Taliban were getting everywhere.”

When the Taliban took power, my life was in danger,” he added. “I left my house and everything back there and came here.”

Brothers Mohammad Farahmand, 32, and Ahmad Farahmand, 27, also left Afghanistan for their safety. Mohammad, who worked as a mediator in talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban, had served in the Afghan Army for three years and also worked as a driver for an Afghan government official.

They are part of a big family group who lived in Balkh Province in northern Afghanistan. Their father was the chief of their community, which Mohammad said lost about 50 people while they fought against the Taliban. One of their uncles was killed, and a cousin was beheaded.

“I have really bad memories about the work he did, but he is doing ok, but not really,” Mohammad said. “We will always be appreciative of the American Army for saving our lives.”

They worry about their family members still in Afghanistan. That includes Ahmad’s wife and children, their parents, two brothers and two younger sisters, who were in 11th grade and college when the Taliban took over. The Taliban recently announced young women no longer can attend school beyond the sixth grade.

Their family members are not living in one place, but moving from one location to another every few days to protect their safety, the brothers said. Ahmad’s wife and children, ages 6, 4 and 7 months, are with his parents.

“My mom and dad, they are ok, but not really,” Mohammad said. They miss their sons. “Whenever we talk to them, they are crying,” he said.

Their father also is feeling sick because it is winter in Afghanistan, and the places they have been staying aren’t warm, he added.

Munawar Shirzai said his parents also remain in Afghanistan but seem to be doing ok. After the Taliban took control in August, they came to his parents’ home and threw his father in jail for three days to question him about the whereabouts of his sons, but then released him. Munawar said he and two of his brothers worked with the U.S. government. His brothers also left during the evacuation. One brother was resettled in Fort Wayne and the other in Oklahoma.

After leaving their homeland, the Shirzais and the Farahmands all eventually landed in Washington, D.C. From there, they moved to one of the temporary camps the U.S. government set up at several military bases around the country.

The Shirzais were housed for 45 days at Fort Pickett in Virginia before arriving late last year in Fort Wayne, Munawar said. The Farahmands stayed temporarily at Camp Atterbury in southern Indiana before being arrived last fall to join a friend already living in Fort Wayne.

The Shirzais didn’t worry about where they would be resettled, Munawar said. “I am happy to start a normal life,” he added.

Catholic Charities has been a huge help, Munawar said. The agency initially housed the Shirzais in a hotel, but quickly found them a rental house.

Catholic Charities assists them with managing their resettlement funds so they can pay rent and utilities while they get established in Fort Wayne.

The aid that Catholic Charities provides is personal, as staff members know the Shirzais to enroll oldest daughter Shoghla in kindergarten. Munawar and Jamilla worried about how she would adjust, but she loves it, he said.

Staff also helped Munawar apply for and obtain his Indiana driver’s license and a car. He recently earned his Commercial Driver’s License and began searching for a job driving a truck.

Two volunteers from Catholic Charities come to their house regularly to help Jamilla learn English, he said. Volunteers also take the family to medical appointments and other needs.

The local Islamic community has also been very welcoming to the new Afghan families, said Mohammad, whose family practic es the Islamic faith. Islamic community members have provided the Shirzais with food, clothing and anywhere else they need to go.

“The Shirzai family is among the Afghan refugee families being resettled in Fort Wayne by the Catholic Charities office serving the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Family members are parents, Jamilla, left, and Munawar, and their children, from left, Yusuf, Mohammad, Shoghla and Kalsom.”

Ways to provide assistance

The diocesan Catholic Charities office works with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to resettle refugees from a variety of countries, carrying out the Gospel calling to welcome the stranger and to care for those in need. Local officials expect to resettle about 125 Afghan refugee families in the Fort Wayne area and around 30 in the South Bend area.

One of the best ways to help Afghan refugee families is to donate everyday living items they need, such as cleaning supplies, toilet paper, diapers, toiletries, bed sheets (especially twin size), blankets and towels. They can be dropped off at one of three Catholic Charities offices: Archbishop Noll Center, 915 S. Clinton St., in Fort Wayne; 1817 Miami St. in South Bend; and 107 W. 5th St. in Auburn.

To view Catholic Charities’ Amazon Wish List of items needed to help Afghan refugee families set up their households when they move into an apartment or house, visit www.ccwfb.org/refugee-volunteer.

The Shirzais are part of a big family group who lived in Afghanistan last August. The other rode to freedom on the last U.S. plane leaving the chaotic scene at the airport. All are happy to be in Fort Wayne, where they have felt welcome and have received help from Catholic Charities and other groups to start building a new life.

Mohammad Farahmand, left, and his brother, Ahmad, have started building new lives in Fort Wayne after being resettled here with help from the Catholic Charities office serving the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Both now have jobs and have received Indiana driver’s permits as they talk toward obtaining a driver’s license. However, they remain concerned for the safety of family members still in Afghanistan.

The Shirzai family is among the Afghan refugee families being resettled in Fort Wayne by the Catholic Charities office serving the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Family members are parents, Jamilla, left, and Munawar, and their children, from left, Yusuf, Mohammad, Shoghla and Kalsom.

Volunteers from Catholic Charities come to their house regularly to help Jamilla learn English, he said. Volunteers also take the family to medical appointments and other needs.

The local Islamic community has also been very welcoming to the new Afghan families, said Mohammad, whose family practices the Islamic faith. Islamic community members have provided the Shirzais with food, clothing and anywhere else they need to go.

“Almost every day,” Munawar said. “We are trying to learn English to improve ourselves,” Mohammad said. The brothers and Mohammad’s wife all work at a local manufacturer.

They currently live at Catholic Charities’ Cabrini Center, a former nursing home that Catholic Charities purchased, largely with volunteer help, to house and serve Afghan refugees. The Farahmands hope to move soon to an apartment or rental home, Mohammad said.

Along with helping them find their jobs, Catholic Charities gets them to medical appointments and anywhere else they need to go.

Working toward greater independence and self-reliance has motivated the brothers to receive their Indiana driver’s permits, and Ahmad may get his license soon, as well. They each hope to eventually purchase a car.

Mohammad hopes to study for a career in information technology.

Ahmad plans to work, save money and get his education on hold while he focuses on one goal: “I’m trying to find a way to get my family here,” he said.

“That is more important to me. My kids are not safe.”
Bearing the cross of infertility – Springs in the Desert retreat walks with couples, individuals

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Living with infertility is an ordeal nearly unfathomable to those who do not share it. Today’s culture praises those who limit their families or have no children at all, but those couples who suffer from infertility endure daily the pain of not having children.

“CHERISHED – A Retreat for Those in a Season of Infertility” will be offered on Mother’s Day weekend, Saturday, May 7, at the Sacred Heart Parish Center in Notre Dame. It is presented by the ministry Springs in the Desert and welcomes both couples and individuals to spend time with others facing the same difficulties; to grow and support each other in the journey of life “without fear of judgment.”

The nature of infertility, Springs in the Desert founder Ann Koshute explains, is often “very private; there’s a certain shame that people feel, there’s a lot of different emotions – sadness, frustration, jealousy, all of those things.” She learned this firsthand, as there were no parish or Church support systems that “offered the kind of support and community” people facing infertility needed. So she and a friend founded Springs in the Desert in 2009. Though the ministry is not local to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, the organization became connected locally through the efforts of Stacy Huneck, Youth Minister at St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Fort Wayne.

Not long after Springs in the Desert launched their website, Huneck came across it. Huneck was searching for some kind of support group, but what she frequently found involved matters that were not in line with her Catholic faith – things like IVF treatments. Turning to social media, she connected with Springs in the Desert and began writing for their blog.

She, too, understands the private nature of infertility. Priests have even told her that they know of no one in their parishes who are carrying that same cross. She says, “That might be true, you might not know them, but it’s because they might not have felt comfortable opening up and sharing about their experiences.”

Both Springs in the Desert and local efforts have grown in their mission to walk with couples and individuals facing infertility. Hope for the Journey began in the diocese around the same time that Springs in the Desert came about outside of it. This group works with the diocese’s Marriage and Family Ministry to support men and women within its boundaries to come to terms spiritually with their cross of infertility. Small groups have been meeting virtually during the last two years to fill this need.

Springs in the Desert planned an in-person retreat in the diocese in 2020, but that turned into a virtual event, which Huneck said became a blessing in disguise, as more than 300 people attended, including many from outside the diocese and even some from outside the U.S. Huneck talks to the teens she mentors at St. Charles Borromeo about infertility in the context of women’s identity and role within the Church. She remarked, “So much of why I feel called to live my experience out loud is because we need a diverse body in the Church to represent the full Body of Christ, and it doesn’t have to look one way.”

Koshute concurred. “The diverse ways in which our feminine genius is expressed through fruitfulness in so many different ways, and that’s one of the things we really want to highlight and help especially women on this weekend to see and appreciate for themselves,” she said.

She added that, “we’re very intentional about choosing Mother’s Day weekend because Mother’s Day is probably the hardest day of the year for anyone who’s dealing with infertility.”

Mass is included in the retreat so that women who do not have children are able to fulfill their Sunday obligation without facing the anxiety of a Mother’s Day blessing that most priests like to bestow upon their congregations that day. Koshute described that moment as an instance of extreme isolation for women living with infertility.

“People are uncomfortable with suffering,” Koshute said. “Since a person cannot take away another’s suffering, she stated that what those who have experienced infertility need most is “just your love.”

Both women recommend being present, considerate and compassionate toward those who may be facing infertility. That is what sets her ministry apart from other, non-spiritual infertility support groups. “We like to say that our focus is on Christ, not on conception,” Koshute added.

No matter where couples or individuals are on their journey with infertility, the CHERISHED retreat invites them to attend to find a “spiritual place” of comfort and solidarity. It is also open to those who already have one child or more but are struggling to expand their families, as some people do experience secondary infertility.

“For those of us who don’t have children, we’re a sign of contradiction in the world, too, because we’re a witness, I think, to the holiness of marriage.” Koshute commented. “Not that we have to work harder, but we have to work differently. And I think we’re a sign to families... of the importance of the marriage... We need to recognize that we are witnesses to the good of marriage and to Christ’s love in the world.”

Springs in the Desert took for its patron Simon of Cyrène, who walked alongside Christ, helping Him carry His cross toward its final end.

Registration for the daylong CHERISHED retreat opens on April 11. Those interested can visit www.springsinthesedesert.org.

The first annual Catholic Teacher Award

The Catholic Community Foundation of Northeast Indiana is currently taking nominations for the first annual Catholic Teacher Award. Nominations are due April 15, with an award presentation on May 5.

For more information, contact the school principal or Sarah Shively at sshively@ccfnei.org.
**News Briefs**

**Holocaust survivor dies during Russian invasion of Ukraine**

Family members of Borys Romanchenko attend his funeral in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on March 24, 2022. Romanchenko, a 96-year-old Holocaust survivor, was killed at his apartment during shelling by Russian forces.

**Pope: Inclusion puts normally marginalized people front and center**

**Rome (CNS) — Msgr. Thomas W. Powers, Vicar General of the Diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut, has been named rector of the Pontifical North American College, the U.S. seminary in Rome. His appointment by the Vatican Congregation for Clergy was announced on March 30 and goes into effect on July 1. The current rector, Father Peter Harman, has completed a six-year term. In a press release from the college, Bishop Robert P. Deeley of Portland, Maine, and Chairman of the Board of Governors of the college, which nominates the candidate, said, “Monsignor Powers is extremely well-suited to serve as our next rector, given his extensive experience in seminary formation, his many pastoral skills and his prior work in church governance and administration. We are very grateful for his acceptance of our nomination.” Monsignor Powers said, “I am very grateful to be asked to take on this important role,” and “I ask the Lord to grant me the grace to fulfill this role faithfully and I entrust myself to Our Blessed Mother, Our Lady of Humility.” Father Harman praised the monsignor as “a talented, generous, faithful and holy priest. I cannot think of a better example and spiritual father for the men in priestly formation here at the North American College.”

**Emergency abortion legislation extended in England, Wales**

LONDON (CNS) – Members of the British House of Commons voted to continue indefinitely with emergency COVID-19 legislation to allow women to obtain abortion pills by mail after an online consultation. After the vote, Auxiliary Bishop John Sherrington of Westminster, the lead bishop for life issues of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, said the vote “fundamentally changes access to abortion.” Members of the House of Commons voted 188-108 on March 30 for an amendment to the Health and Social Care Bill to continue the “do-it-yourself” pill option indefinitely. The vote means the amendment will become law in England and Wales. Under the system, after a telephone assessment, women are sent two pills to procure an abortion – the first to induce a miscarriage and the second to cause the uterus to contract and expel its contents. The emergency measure was announced on March 28, 2020, three days after the U.K. government locked down, when women could not visit their doctors in person, and the government intended to end it on June 30, 2022. Before that date, all women seeking an abortion had to obtain the written consent of two doctors, including an in-person appointment, and the pills had to be ingested in a clinical setting in the event of any complications. “Such a move diminishes the seriousness with which these decisions should be taken,” Bishop Sherrington said in a March 31 statement posted on the website of the English and Welsh bishops’ conference.

**After clampdown in El Salvador, some worry human rights in peril**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) – Human rights groups in Washington D.C. sounded the alarm after the Salvadoran government began mass arrests and suspended personal freedoms following a record-breaking spree of homicides by gangs in late March. Almost immediately, El Salvador’s legislative body voted to declare a “state of exception” for 30 days, limiting the right to assembly and due process, as well as stripping privacy in personal communications, saying it was necessary to combat the violence. “A broad state of emergency adopted in El Salvador in the name of security suspends a range of basic rights, opening the door to human rights violations,” said the Washington, D.C.-based Human Rights Watch on March 29. Salvadoran authorities, including national police and soldiers, increased presence around El Salvador, controlling who get in and out of certain neighborhoods, searching houses and sealing property at random and detaining anyone suspected of being a gang member. A photographer from one of the country’s main newspapers covering the situation said that on March 29, soldiers asked him to get on his knees, took away his camera and erased photos in the memory card.

**Kharkiv bishop accuses Russia of terror tactics in Ukraine**

WARSAW, Poland (CNS) – A bishop in Ukraine accused Russian forces of deliberately targeting aid centers and of destroying the port of Mariupol to scare other cities in the country, as tensions escalate. The Russians looked for aid and medical distribution points where people gather – this is why charitable work here is now so dangerous,” said Bishop Pavlo Goncharuk of Kharkiv. “As for Mariupol, this is now completely in ruins – although we didn’t know how many civilians have died there, it certainly runs into thousands. I’m certain it was selected as an example, ostentatiously used as a firing range and shelled to rubble to show what will happen if other cities continue resisting.” In a March 31 interview with Catholic News Service, he said his own city of Kharkiv, with almost 2 million mostly Russian-speaking inhabitants before the war, also remained under constant bombardment despite being largely reduced to “ruins and ashes.” Four-fifths of local Catholics have fled the city’s five parishes, Bishop Goncharuk said, and Masses were no longer being celebrated for fear Russian artillery would deliberately strike them.

**Peter K. Kilpatrick is named Catholic University of America’s new president**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) – The Catholic University of America’s board of trustees has selected Peter K. Kilpatrick as the 16th president of the university, effective July 1. His appointment was announced on March 29. He succeeds John Garvey, who has served as president for 12 years. “We couldn’t be more pleased to name a better candidate to lead Catholic University. Peter Kilpatrick is both a distinguished researcher and an advocate for research,” said Dr. Michael F. von Massow, chair of the university’s board of trustees, in a statement. Smith chaired the search committee to find a successor to Garvey, who announced last September that he would step down from the role he described as “an honor and a privilege” at the end of June. Since 2018, Kilpatrick has been Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs for the Illinois Institute of Technology, a private research university in Chicago. “Serving as president of The Catholic University of America is a dream job for me, bringing together faith and reason in service to the human person and human dignity,” he said in a statement. According to a news release about his appointment, “combining research and faith is important to Kilpatrick,” who became Catholic as an adult.

**TODAY’S CATHOLIC**

April 10, 2022
Seder meal planned

FORT WAYNE – St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Fort Wayne will host a Seder meal on April 13 at 6 p.m. The Seder meal is a ritual meal commemorating the events of the Exodus. The observance of the Seder meal celebrates not only the tradition of Christ’s last supper, but the Church’s Jewish heritage. The parish will furnish the lamb and wine for the meal. There is no charge for dinner, but each person is asked to bring a dish to share among the eight people at their table. Reservations are required by Sunday, April 10. Register at saintv.org/seder or the church offices at 260-489-3537.

Spirituality of life series announced

NOTRE DAME – The Notre Dame Office of Life and Human Dignity at the McGrath Institute for Church Life partnered with the Sisters of Life to produce “Into Life: Love Changes Everything,” a 12-part video series. This series features the ministry work of the Sisters of Life, who accompany women facing unexpected pregnancies and the pro-life theology of their mission. The program is free and can be used for 12-week group study or personal use. It can be accessed at intolifeseries.com.

FAME Festival awardees

FORT WAYNE – Three students from Fort Wayne Catholic schools received recognition as Mayor’s Choice awardees at the annual Foundation for Art and Music in Education (FAME) Festival in Fort Wayne: eighth-grader Felicity Barton from Queen of Angels, third-grader Savannah Galbraith and eighth-grader Lauren Galbraith, both from St. Charles Borromeo. Their artwork will be featured alongside other Mayor’s Choice Award winners in the basement level of Citizen’s Square in downtown Fort Wayne from April 21-May 12.

Morning of reflection and renewal

FORT WAYNE – On Saturday, June 11, the Seven Sisters Apostolate will present “Getting to Know Our Patrons: Madonna of the Grapes, St. John Vianney and St. Margaret Clitherow.” This event will take place at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in Fort Wayne beginning at 8:15 a.m. with Mass and a light breakfast to follow in the Msgr. Kuzmich Life Center. This will provide an opportunity for members of the Seven Sisters Apostolate to renew their commitment and share fellowship with others. A relic of St. John Vianney will be available for veneration. There is no cost, but attendees must register at bit.ly/ssrenewal22.

Catholicism in Africa talk

Father Augustine Onuoho, Parochial Vicar of St. Pius X in Granger, is seen with parishioners of St. Stanislaus Kostka in New Carlisle when he came to give a presentation at the parish about the Catholic Church in Africa, and more specifically, his home country of Nigeria. Nigeria is the largest nation in Africa, by population with a sizable Catholic population in the southern regions. Many priests from Nigeria are sent to the U.S. as missionaries.

‘Flood drill’ prank pulled on students

After morning prayer and announcements at St. John the Baptist School in Fort Wayne, principal Mary Keefer very seriously told the students that they would be having a flood drill. Students were to lay down on their desks in case the classrooms flooded. Though confused, students did as they were told and laid on their bellies across their desks so that they could swim if needed. After a couple minutes, Mrs. Keefer, came back on the announcements to call “April Fools!”

Earning their merit badges

Members of Cub Scout Pack 10 from St. Pius X Catholic Church in Granger are presently working toward their Light of Christ and Parvuli Dei elective awards. These awards help scouts to develop their relationship with God. Pictured are scouts who recently attended a “behind the scenes” tour of St. Pius X, led by Sally Flask.
Praising God the first priority of pastoral visit to Decatur

Even amid the solemn atmosphere of the Lenten season, excitement ran high at St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church and St. Joseph Catholic School in Decatur as Bishop Rhoades came for Mass and his pastoral visit on March 31. Concelebrating morning Mass were Father David Ruppert, Pastor of St. Mary of the Assumption, and Parochial Vicar Father Jose Panamattathil Chandy, VC, along with Father Jonathan Agbedo from nearby Geneva and recently retired priest and Decatur native, Father Stephen Colchin.

At Mass, Bishop Rhoades thanked Brian Baker, St. Joseph School principal, and others for offering their hospitality that day. Several students engaged with the bishop during his homily, eagerly raising their hands to answer his questions and participating in the Mass.

Bishop Rhoades' homily focused on giving praise and adoration to God and God alone. He illustrated this point by referencing the first reading for the day, the story of the golden calf, when the Israelites turned from God in the desert and fell into idolatry. “God had done so much for them; He had saved them from slavery and was bringing them to the Promised Land, and what did they do? They rebelled against Him.”

He explained the sin of idolatry and how people fall into it even today by placing other things like money and possessions before God. “The most important thing in our life should be God. God is our creator; He’s our savior. Like He saved the people from slavery, He saves us through His son Jesus. He gives us eternal life. So, we owe Him everything.”

For that reason, the bishop continued. Catholics need to thank God each day for the blessings in their lives. He told the schoolchildren that a wonderful prayer of praise that they could easily say daily is the Glory Be, and he invited them to recite it with him.

He also reminded them that even when one sins, God always stands ready to forgive. “And that’s why we have the wonderful gift of confession, the sacrament of reconciliation.”

Finally, he encouraged them to adore God in the greatest manner possible: by reverently receiving Him in the Eucharist. “With reverence, realize you’re receiving Jesus into our lives, into our souls,” he said. “We thank the Lord for the gift of His Body and Blood. And we can close our eyes and think of how Jesus is in me. Jesus is with me. I just received Him; Holy Communion is an amazing gift. So, it’s wonderful to be with you today to celebrate this great act of worship in which we adore God above all things in holy Mass.”

A unique feeder school system

Though numerous other Catholic schools within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend offer preschool programs, St. Joseph School is the only Catholic school with a daycare on its campus, serving children as young as six weeks old. This was the first stop on Bishop Rhoades’ visit to the school. Here he met with Laura Sutton, supervisor of the daycare and preschool programs.

He was surprised and impressed by the size of the program, which utilizes a converted convent from the days when religious sisters still served the school and parish community. St. Joseph boasts many rooms for children of different ages, from infants to preschool children preparing to transition to kindergarten in the main school building.

What began as a means of providing affordable daycare for teachers at the school became a way to fill a community need, Baker said. Now the daycare operates year-round in that capacity. Sutton informed Bishop Rhoades that around 70 percent of the children in the program are Catholic and that it has become a great steppingstone into St. Joseph Grade School – almost a feeder school in itself. A recent grant from the State of Indiana will give the program a needed financial boost to purchase new equipment and fill other needs to keep the program running strong.

The preschool students were delighted to meet Bishop Rhoades in their classrooms. When he told one group of joyful children that he is the bishop, one boy asked what a bishop was while other students pointed out his pectoral cross. In one classroom, the bishop was invited to sing the alphabet song with the enthusiastic students.

Exploring the Catholic faith

Though he enjoyed his time with the school’s youngest children, the infants in the daycare, Bishop Rhoades clearly relished speaking with the older students about their religious studies, beginning with Michelle Miller’s
second-grade class. Here, the bishop spoke to the second-graders about the importance of their upcoming first Communion.

Similarly, when meeting with members of the student council and the large eighth-grade class, he spoke to them about their approaching confirmation Mass, which will take place in a matter of weeks. Additionally, two eighth-grade girls personally presented Bishop Rhoades with their pre-confirmation letters.

The eighth-grade class was solemn and quiet as two students asked the bishop weighty, thought-provoking questions, one regarding suicide and another about evolution. Bishop Rhoades spoke to the students about the Church’s view on both topics and expounded on the idea of faith and science working together, not against each other.

“I love the complimentary nature of our faith and reason,” he said, explaining that the stories put forward in Genesis are not meant to be scientific, but are religious truths communicated through stories; that Catholics can believe in evolution as long as they are aware that God put souls into the first human beings during the course of it. He also urged the students to never stop learning about their faith, even as many of them transition out of Catholic schools.

A family community

During the bishop’s visit, members of the student council had the opportunity to share with him the things that they liked most about their school. Overall, their answers centered around the faith and education gained at St. Joseph, as two students enjoyed the youth group, two reminisced on a trip they took to Camp Potawatomie in which they learned about the Underground Railroad and one student’s favorite thing was the recent confirmation retreat, presented by the Franciscan University of Steubenville.

During a conversation with the bishop between classes, Baker spoke highly of his students at St. Joseph and how well they represent their Catholic upbringing when they enter Bellmont High School, which most students will attend. St. Joseph students perform well both academically and in the field of sports, he stated.

Baker has reason to be proud of his school and its students, as he is also a product of St. Joseph and a faculty member for 19 years in addition to sending his own children to the school.

As the only Catholic school in Decatur, Baker says the family atmosphere at St. Joseph is unique. “I’m sure every school says it, but it feels like this is just such a family. It’s a small community; everyone seems to know one another and there’s a lot of relatives within the building.”

The three-story school building holds a student population of more than 300 children, with a newer gymnasium built across the street a few years ago. St. Joseph School has been educating the children of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish for generations. The school building is nearly a hundred years old, but the school itself dates back to 1881. The daycare program is in such demand within the community that Baker is looking at ways “to best grow but keep things convenient for the parents,” he said.

The school gives back to the community by raising money for local charities as well as participating in CRS Rice Bowl initiatives. Traditionally, the seventh-grade class performs a living Stations of the Cross on Holy Thursday, setting the mood for the Easter celebration, and this year will be the first to be held in two years.

St. Joseph School will continue to meet the spiritual and academic needs of the Catholic population of Decatur for years to come, giving praise and honor to God for all He has done for His children.
Dead-end roads lead police officer to true path

BY SAMANTHA ROHLOFF

“I was not raised in a particularly religious household,” said Keirsh Cochran, a native of Franklin, Indiana. But as a third-generation law enforcement officer, he was taught to maintain “a strong moral compass” from an early age. Cochran is preparing for his first Communion and confirmation this year at SS. Peter and Paul Parish in Huntington during the Easter Vigil.

His route to the Catholic faith followed a winding trail. Around his high school years, he stumbled upon a variety of world religions, looking for answers that would lead him in the right direction. Channeling a passion for history and knowledge, he read the entire New Testament, large parts of the Quran and even some of the writings of Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha and founder of Buddhism. He also explored atheism.

One firm goal that Cochran did set for himself was the military life – it was his dream to join the Air Force. “I actually never made it in,” he explained. “I enlisted, and I was going through my final physical before shipping out to basic training. That’s when they caught the hearing loss.”

This hereditary yet unexpected hearing problem prevented him from grasping one of his biggest aspirations, and he described the moment that his life’s plans were altered as “devastating.” But it was in this darkness that Cochran discovered Christianity as his way forward.

Assemblies of God Fellowship church. He joined the Fort Wayne Police Department and became a church board member for First Assembly of God, which, he noted, is the state’s biggest Assemblies of God church. Even after all his searching and conversion, he still felt lost.

Cochran had sensed a pull to Catholicism while attending Huntington University as an undergraduate student. “As a relatively new Christian, I went to our campus pastor, and I said, “Hey, I think I need to be confirmed into the Catholic Church.” This unfortunately fell by the wayside, but not for long.

After receiving the 2019 Young Alumnus Award from Huntington University at the age of 29, Cochran became Chief of Campus Police for his alma mater, making him “the youngest active Chief of Police in America,” he said.

Working in Huntington meant that he and his wife would need to look for a closer church community. As they searched, his desire to become Catholic resurfaced once more. He attended Mass, joined RCIA and kept advancing toward Catholicism in a step-by-step sequence. Before even beginning his Catholic journey, he read the whole Catechism of the Catholic Church in anticipation.

Of the many elements that drew him to the faith, he described Church history as one of his favorites. He was fascinated by how Catholicism contains history dating further back than what his previous church would ever acknowledge how Catholicism is the only chute of Christianity that has remained unchanged since its founding by Christ himself.

Cochran’s love for the Eucharist is another reason why he’s becoming Catholic. In fact, it is this particular sacrament he is most looking forward to receiving. “It feels like, at this point, the same way that it did when I was engaged and we were about this far out from the wedding,” he explained. “And I’m just ready to be married … I’m just so unbelievably ready for the Eucharist and that full communion that comes with it.”

When the time came to enter the Catholic Church, Cochran knew he had to make one last important decision. “I want to get as close to Christ as possible, and to do that, you kind of go to the trunk of the tree, which is the Catholic Church,” he said. By this, he acknowledged how Catholicism is the only chute of Christianity that has remained unchanged since its founding by Christ himself.

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As the day of his entrance to the Catholic Church draws near, he longs to complete his journey home, knowing that nothing can keep him from the love of God. “It feels like Easter can’t come soon enough,” he said.

Way of St. Joseph Pilgrimage

Mishawaka — South Bend

Saturday, April 30 @ 9 a.m.

Honor St. Joseph by participating in a family-friendly walking pilgrimage. The Way of St. Joseph will begin at 9 a.m. at St. Joseph Parish, Mishawaka, wind its way along the River Walk, and end at St. Joseph Parish, South Bend. There will be three other on-ramps during the pilgrimage.

Learn more and register: diocesefwsb.org/joseph-pilgrimage

St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Mission

Thy Kingdom Come

April 24-29
Confessions: 6 p.m. Presentation: 7 p.m. Confessions: 8 p.m.

Topics include: Confidence in God and St. Joseph, Patron of the Church; God’s Divine Mercy; Lukewarmness is the Devil in Disguise; The 4 Last Things; Humility: The Path to Heaven

Presented by
Father Jewel Aytona, CM

Divine Mercy Sunday
6 p.m. Confessions/Adoration
7 p.m. Divine Mercy Conference
8 p.m. Confessions

ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA PARISH
55756 TULIP RD., NEW CARLISLE, IN 46552
WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) – Catholic actor Mark Wahlberg, who plays the title role in the upcoming movie “Father Stu,” said the real-life Montana priest is “having me continuing to carry on his message.”

“Father Stu,” in theaters April 13, tells the story of Father Stuart Long, a priest who had been ordained for only four years before he died from an incurable muscle disorder, and the lives he touched along the way before and after his ordination.

Some of those he touched were, in truth, pummeled, as Stuart Long was an amateur boxer, compiling a 15-2 record before he gave up the ring.

In those days, pre-Father Stu was the kind of guy who wouldn’t take no for an answer — and often assembled a string of expletives before rejecting any rebuff to his pursuit of whatever dream he was following at the time. But the priest, who grew up unbaptized, had a near-death experience following a motorcycle accident and determined the priesthood was his true calling.

“I’ve made a movie about a remarkable man, and I know that they had campaigned to get him ordained and petitioned to have him canonized,” Wahlberg told Catholic News Service in a March 31 phone interview from Los Angeles. “I’ll push and campaign for Stu, absolutely.”

He said an archbishop, whom he didn’t name, came to him while he was trying to make the movie: “He told me, ‘Father Stuart Long did more in his four years than I have in my 40 years of service,’” citing the priest’s “dedication and service to God.”

Wahlberg, also a producer of the movie, said if the real-life Father Stu, as he was best known, had seen his life condensed into a two-hour movie, “he’d be right at the top of my list.”

The priest “had four years to complete his mission here and now he has eternity … having me continuing to carry on his message,” Wahlberg said. “Who knows how long I’ll have?”

Asked what his Catholic faith means to him, Wahlberg replied, “Everything. Everything. There’s so many wonderful things that happened to me — the good, the bad and everything else in between. I’ve been able to appreciate and have gratitude because of my faith. After I’ve done my last interview, I’ll know how to articulate it.”

He added, “This message, this conversation and this commitment to service does not stop when the movie comes out. It’s only a start.”

Wahlberg said this film is different from his other projects because of “how this child (the movie) came into the world, and what it’s doing for people. How it’s touching people … in a good way for everybody. Everybody is finding something they can personally relate to.”

He said, “We were really inspired by Stu’s story. And it’s just a matter of finding the right person to put it on the page, which was not an easy thing to do,” given that many decades of Father Stu’s life had to be condensed into a two-hour movie. Wahlberg talked with screenwriter Rosalind Ross.

“Even though she wasn’t raised Catholic, she could really appreciate someone trying to find their calling,” Wahlberg told CNS. He said he asked Ross, “Why not take a crack at it?” After Ross came back with the script, Wahlberg told her, “This is the script – and I want you to direct,” giving Ross her first directorial assignment.

Ross’ longtime partner, actor Mel Gibson, is cast as Father Stu’s dad, who did his young son no favors. His mother is played by Jacki Weaver, who won an Oscar for her role in “Silver Linings Playbook.” Longtime actress Coloie Camp, an executive producer of “Father Stu,” has a memorable scene as a motel desk clerk. And if you look behind the scruffy beard, that’s Malcolm McDowell playing Monsignor Kelly, the seminary rector.

Wahlberg said he had to go to extremes to play Stuart Long as a boxer and as an infirm priest. “I was kind of in shape” at the start of filming,” he said. “I had just done an adventure racing movie. I had to reacquire my skill from ‘The Fighter,’ the 2010 movie in which he played real-life boxer Micky Ward. “I just started consuming 7,000 calories a day for the fighting scenes” that make up most of the opening scenes of “Father Stu.”

Wahlberg later had to ramp that up to 11,000 calories a day “to try to show how Stu’s physical being deteriorated and how his spirit soared.”
Gender politics and the Supreme Court

has barred discrimination “on the basis of sex” at educational institutions receiving federal funds. But in 2016, the Obama administration issued guidance claiming that “sex” should be defined in terms of a student’s self-identification.

That policy was enjoined by a federal court, which found no basis for the new definition in the law’s text or history. The Trump administration then reversed the Obama policy, saying it did not “accord with the biological differences between men and women.” Finally, President Joe Biden has expressed interest in restoring the Obama policy, with final regulations expected this spring.

The outcome of this dispute may determine whether Title IX continues to ensure equitable support for women’s athletics at American colleges. Recently, University of Pennsylvania student Wiremu Te Ariki, after changing his name to Lia and identifying as a woman, won the NCAA women’s swimming championship.

Even transgender advocate Caitlyn Jenner has said that Thomas is not the “rightful winner” of the case, and that allowing biological men to compete against women is “not good for women’s sports.” Many states are trying to block this case, but a contrary federal law could block their efforts. This will end up in federal court.

The question before Judge Jackson’s answer, though, is that she suggested this is a question of biological fact, not of personal choice or legal dictate, which is what the Trump administration said. Perhaps the senator should have thanked her for this excellent answer and moved on.

Supreme Court justices have sometimes ignored the relevance of biological facts. In 1973, for example, they said, “We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins” because “those trained in the respective disciplines of medicine, philosophy and theology are unable to arrive at any consensus.” But it is biology that is “the study of life.” The court ignored the ecology textbook to create a new “right” to extinguish life before birth.

Pope Francis has spoken against gender ideologies “that attempt to subdue women who are inseparable aspects of reality,” in the apostolic exhortation “Amoris Laetitia.” (No. 56). He urges us not to ignore Johnson the gift of our Creator. The church’s theology reminds us that biology is real. On this one point, we saw a moment of non-partisan clarity at the hearing.

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

Why doing what is right in your own sight is such a bad idea

What does the Bible think about our current cultural fascination with finding our own voices, setting our own agenda, doing things according to our own lights? Is the Bible for or against this dramatic and personal life? Might I suggest we look at the close of the book of Judges, a text marked by enough murder, mayhem and massacre, put Martin Scorsese or Quentin Tarantino to shame.

After the death of Samson, that the judges of Israel, the tribes, we are told, drifted into disunity and commenced to manifest shocking violence upon one another. The most remarkable and frankly sickening story, again in a book filled with such stories, concerns the outrage at Gibeah. We hear of a man from Ephraim in the north who had taken a concubine from Bethlehem in the south. When the woman escaped and returned home, the man came after her and took her back into his possession. He then set out with her and came to the town of Gibeah. We are told: “scoundrels” from the city that night surrounded the house. Exactly duplicating the infamous tale from the book of Judges, the mob shouted to the owner of the place: “Bring out the man who has come into your house, so that we may get intimate with him.” With astonishing moral turpitude, the owner of the abode

Finally, President Joe Biden has expressed interest in restoring the Obama policy, with final regulations expected this spring.

The Passion story is the story of our salvation

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Palm Sunday

The church this weekend leads us to the climax of Lent, the observance of Holy Week, by offering the impressive liturgy of Palm Sunday.

Recalling the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, for Luke the utter apex of the entire ministry of the Lord since in Jerusalem the Crucifixion and Resurrection occurred, these readings bring us to the heart of the church’s teaching regarding salvation. Jesus is eternal Lord and Savior.

When the palms are blessed, and the solemn procession, ideally all of the congregation, forms, the Church offers us a reading from Luke. This reading recalls the plans for the arrival of Jesus in the Holy City as well as the arrival itself.

An element of blessed inviolability, of Providence, surrounded the event. Jesus told Pharisees who objected to it all that even if the disciples were silent, the very air would testify the good news of salvation in Christ. God wills that we have, in Christ, everlasting life.

For the first reading in the Liturgy of the Word, the Church gives us the third of the four “Songs of the Suffering Servant” from the third section of Isaiah. Scholars debate the identity of this servant. Was he a prophet? A collective symbol for the people of Israel? In any case, Christians have always seen in these songs the image of the innocent, constantly loyal servant of God, the Lord, and of Israel.

The second reading is from Philippians. These verses are thought to have been an ancient Christian hymn, used in early liturgies, eloquent in declaring intense faith.

As its last reading, the Church dramatically offers a passage from Luke’s Passion narrative. The very rubrics provide for the congregation to be involved: replace the gift of our Creator. The church’s theology reminds us that biology is real. On this one point, we saw a moment of non-partisan clarity at the hearing.

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

Reflection

Few sections of the Scriptures, if any, are as powerful as the four Passion narratives presented to us in the successive Gospels. Luke’s Passion narrative is definitively among these narratives in teaching us and in calling us to Christ.

The first two readings brilliantly focus our minds upon the Redeemer, expected in Third Sunday, proclaimed in Philippines.

On this Palm Sunday, the crown of the Liturgy of the Word is Luke’s awesome proclamation of the Passion of Jesus. The Church takes us most movingly to the Lord’s entry into Jerusalem. He is destined to redeem the world. In divine Providence, salvation had to come. It was promised. Jesus is King. Some people responded. Others did not: ignored, fear, sin or pride.

Finally, the Passion narrative reveals the depth of the Lord’s giving of self, majestic and life-giving despite the intrigue of the trial and the awful crucifixion. Fitzhardinge, because of the Passion narrative, we stand with the enemies of Christ, shouting for crucifixion. God nevertheless loves us with a perfect, uncompromising, unending love. He will forgive us, offering us eternal salvation if simply we turn to the Lord with love.

READINGS

Sunday: Lk 19:28-40 Procession
Is 50:6-7 Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24
Phil 2:6-11 Lk 22:14—2356
Jn 12:1-11
Tuesday: Is 49:1-6 Ps 71:4a Sab-
6ab, 15, 17 in 13:21-33, 36-38
Wednesday: Is 50:4-9a Ps 69:8-10,
21-22, 31, 33-34 Mt 26:14-25
Thursday: Is 61:3-4a, 6a, 8b-9b
891921-22, 25, 27h 15-8 Lk 14:6-21
Jn 18:1—1942
Saturday: Gn 1:1-2 Ps 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 35; Gn 22:1-18
Ps165, 8, 9-10, 11; Ex 14:15-15:1 (Ps)
A more awful thing: Jesus’ lament on the culture of death

In the Stations of the Cross, Jesus says a rather extraordinary thing. He addresses it to the women who have gathered to lament Him:

“Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children, for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.’”

As awful as the crucifixion would be, as mightily sinful as it was, you and I are to have condemned the Lord, Jesus says that something worse is coming, something even more awful. What were you talking about? Is it a prophecy for our times?

When we read any biblical text, we should ask three questions: What did it mean then? What does it mean now? What does it mean to me?


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Children’s Adoration gives parents and children a time to be with Jesus

BY ERIN LYNCH

Every first Saturday of the month, families gather at St. Joseph Church in South Bend to spend an hour in Eucharistic Adoration. This time is set aside as “Children’s Adoration” where families are encouraged to bring their little ones, noises and all, to spend some time with Jesus without worrying about disturbing other parishioners.

Adoration takes place in the Reservation Chapel, behind the altar, creating an intimate and cozy space for children to be able to be just a few feet away from Jesus in the Eucharist. Incense fills the air, signaling to the children that there is something different and important about what is about to happen. Liturgically appropriate coloring pages and crayons are available for the children to be able to color while in the presence of the Lord. Throughout the hour, music plays in the background. Two different songs are sung and families are encouraged to join in. Near the end of the time, rosary chaplets are distributed and a decade of the rosary is said. Benediction then takes place and children are encouraged to run around outside on the grass following the end of Adoration.

On April 2, six families with a combined 17 children gathered to spend this intentional time with the Lord. From a 4-month-old baby up through grade-school-aged children, each child got to experience time with Jesus in an age-appropriate way. The children alternated between kneeling and standing up at the monstrance, laying down coloring a picture of Palm Sunday and rocking back and forth in time with the music. Lorena Smith, a five-year-old participant, said, “I think it’s the best time to pray when we are with Jesus. I feel the most safest when I am with Jesus.”

Father Matt Fase, CSC, the Associate Pastor of St. Joseph Church, led the exposition and benediction of the Eucharist this month and has frequently participated in the Children’s Adoration throughout the past year. He said, “I absolutely love seeing the number of people who come and especially the time it gives the parents. It’s been so beautiful being able to watch the parents be able to pray and not worry about whether their kid is making noise. Being able to give parents that space has really been a beautiful gift.”

Annie Tarr, organizer of the monthly event, agreed with Father Fase’s sentiments saying, “It’s a time where my husband and I can come and pray together and give the kids a chance to simply be around Jesus. But it’s one of the only times that my husband and I are able to make it to adoration together, and I feel that our marriage is being blessed by both of us being in the presence of the Lord together.”

Tarr has been helping organize the Children’s Adoration for about a year now. She became inspired to get involved when her six-year-old daughter Clara asked when Children’s Adoration was going to start back up again after restrictions from the pandemic began to lift. She said, “Our kids have made little comments about the Mass and receiving Jesus that have demonstrated that they understand that this is the most important part of the Mass, but I think being around Jesus in the Eucharist has shown them that this is the source and summit of our faith.”

Shayla Blaschko brought her three children, ages five, three and one, and said, “Children’s Adoration has been such a beautiful way to reiterate to our children that Jesus is for them, and the Church welcomes them here. Our time together at adoration always stirs up questions about Jesus and our faith. I’m so grateful to have this sacred place to worship with my children, to teach them about our faith, and to watch their hearts be set aflame for Jesus.”

Provided by Alexander Tarr

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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.

Masses interpreted for the deaf
SOUTH BEND — Masses interpreted for the deaf take place on the second and fourth Sundays of the month at 11 a.m. at St. Matthew Cathedral, 1701 Miami St. An interpreter for the deaf will also be present at the Chrism Mass on Tuesday, April 12, at 7 p.m. Contact Allison Sturm at asturm@diocecesefwsb.org or at 260-399-1452 for information.

Special Lenten adoration service
MONROEVILLE — St. Rose de Lima Church, 207 Mulberry St., will offer a special Lenten adoration service to pray for the end of war in Ukraine and for world peace. It will begin immediately following the 7 p.m. Holy Thursday celebration on April 14, and go until Good Friday at 1:30 p.m. This is a special time for silent adoration.

Tenebrae service
FORT WAYNE — A modified version of the Tenebrae Service will be held on Friday, April 14, at Our Lady of Good Hope, 7215 Saint Joe Rd., beginning at 8 p.m. Tenebrae, or Service of Shadows, was once part of the Church’s Divine Office during Holy Week. It was a service of psalms and readings. As the service progressed, the 15 candles on a special candelabrum (a “hearse”) would be progressively extinguished, until the last candle was removed from the sanctuary, leaving the church in darkness. The departure of the last candle was accompanied by a strepitus, a “great noise” that alluded to the earthquake when Jesus died, accomplished by the pounding of brevariaries, hymnals or stamping of feet. This is a beautiful opportunity to meditate upon the Word of God and to listen to sacred music to commemorate the Passion of our Lord.

St. Mary to host fish and tenderloin fry
HUNTINGTON — St. Mary Parish, 903 N. Jefferson St., will have a fish and tenderloin dinner with two sides and home-made dessert on Friday, April 22, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. in the gymnasium. Tickets are $12 for adults and $6 for children ages 6-12 and free for children 5 and younger. Dine in or carry out. Contact Mary Till at madmin-till81@gmail.com.

Holy Family Las Vegas Night
SOUTH BEND — The Holy Family Las Vegas Night, 287-7125 or narohaz@aol.com.

SOUTH BEND — The Sacred Heart Cemetery, 24947 Western Ave., will conduct the spring cleanup from Monday, April 11, through Saturday, April 16. Please have all fall and Christmas decorations removed from the graves by this time. Contact Patrick Nowak at 574-287-7125 or narnoza84@gmail.com.

Blessing of the Bikes
ARCOLA — St. Patrick Church, 12305 Arcola Rd., will host the annual Blessing of the Bikes on Saturday, April 30, at noon. Free admission and all bikes welcome! Event held rain or shine! 50/50 raffle, T-shirts, food and drinks served with proceeds going to the youth group.

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Liz has more than 20 years long-term care experience, with her specialty being clinical reimbursement with the MDS process. Liz is very knowledgeable and is passionate about delivering the best care and helping Saint Anne’s to be the premier long-term care facility.

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How the Holy Scriptures shape and inspire our preaching
June 20-22, 2022

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St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

GRANGER
June 7 | 6:30 p.m.
St. Pius X, Granger

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