Bishop Rhoades celebrates Catholic faith in Nigerian visit

The Catholic faith is alive in areas of Nigeria, an African nation located along coast of the Atlantic Ocean, the homeland of several missionary priests currently serving in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades has visited the country previously and returned this July, visiting the Dioceses of Awka and Nnewi along with Father Francis Chukwuma, to ordain more than a dozen men to the priesthood. During his visit to the Diocese of Nnewi, he celebrated Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Ozubulu, confirming 99 children alongside Bishop Jonas Benson Okoye, the diocese's bishop. Parishioners at St. Francis of Assisi presented Bishop Rhoades with several gifts, including a statue of the Blessed Mother. See more photos on page 16.
Buildings gain new life devoted to Blessed Mother

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Tucked along the main road into northeastern Indiana’s lake country — Indiana State Road 9 — lies a cluster of buildings in Rome City. Beautiful in architecture, but strange in location, these are a curiosity often forgotten or ignored by those driving past in search of sun and fun. What once was a sanitarium for the ill is now a sanctuary for devotion to the Blessed Mother. This is the Patrons of America Center, and hundreds of pilgrims visit the grounds each year to view its beautiful statue and observe First Saturday devotions.

In Mary’s appearance to the three children at Fatima, she asked that reparations be made to her Immaculate Heart, so wounded by sins committed in the world. She called Catholics to devote five consecutive first Saturdays of the month to confession, receiving Communion, praying the rosary and meditating upon the mysteries of the Rosary, all of which the Patroness of America Center promotes regularly. Pilgrims from around the diocese and other areas flock to Rome City for confessions and morning Mass every First Saturday. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will dedicate the new altar at the upcoming Mass on August 6.

A sliver of history

The center has a complex history. From the late 1800s to early 1900s, sanitariums were the “it” thing in medicine to treat infectious diseases, mostly tuberculosis. Records show that the Sisters of the Precious Blood out of Dayton, Ohio, founded a sanitarium at Kneipp Springs in 1901, where the artesian springs allegedly had curative properties. According to the Patrons of America website, the name “Kneipp” came from Father Sebastian Kneipp, who helped develop Kneipp Water Therapy, said to cure tuberculosis, of which the spring water was a necessary component.

Throughout the years of the sanitarium’s operation, then-Bishop John F. Noll maintained a summer residence at the sanitarium, then Bishop Herman J. Auerling kept an office there. Bishop Noll purchased a tabernacle for the sisters’ chapel. These sisters ran the sanitarium until 1977. By then, most medical sanitariums had become obsolete and were either closing or transforming their spaces into modern hospitals. The property came under the ownership of an organization known as The Way College of Biblical Research until 2000, when the college folded.

Enter Larry Young. Young reported that he ran his sports camp. Sadly, At the time, Young had no idea about the property. He was able to freely access the property. He and his family spent countless hours on the grounds from time to time. Bishop Noll had been damaged and desecrated in the years of The Way, so Young had the sanitarium restored at the same company in Chicago.

The highlight of the Center, however, is the beautiful statue of Our Lady, Patroness of America. “The statue was first commissioned by the BVM Foundation in 2006 and was blessed by then Archbishop Raymond Burke before being displayed at the fall bishop’s conference,” Young said. Afterward, it was on display at the John Paul II Center in Washington, D.C., before being placed in safekeeping for several years. It was not until July of 2020 — “twenty years to the day from my first visit to the property,” Young stated — that it was brought to the west wing of the Mother of Mercy Chapel.

From base to top, she stands around nine feet tall, wearing a robe of pure white and a large gold crown. Her left hand touches her Immaculate Heart. Unique for a statue of Our Lady, Young said, is the lily she carries. St. Joseph is more often pictured holding a lily. Instead of holding it close to herself, here Mary holds it out, as if presenting and offering the flower of purity.

Purity is what it indeed symbolizes. At the First Saturday devotions held monthly at the Center, lilies are given to attendees, a reminder of the spiritual purity that Our Lady called all her children to practice. “We talk about purity, in today’s culture everyone thinks sexual purity, but it’s so much more than that. It is the purity of intent, the intent to always do God’s will in whatever we’re doing,” Langsenkamp emphasized. “So that’s what this devotion in essence is about and that’s what our cause is.”

The lilies’ life spans also serve as a reminder of monthly confession. Around the time the flowers

The Our Lady, Patroness of America statue graces the West Wing of the Mother of Mercy Chapel at the Patrons of America Center in Rome City. The former sanitarium has undergone extensive renovations and gained new life with their First Saturday devotions.

The Our Lady, Patroness of America statue. Jennifer Barton

New life, new purpose

Young and Langsenkamp have made it their life’s work to restore the grounds to their former glory, to honor Mary as the patroness of the diocese and the Americas. Bit by bit, walls have been painted, black mold eradicated, restrooms constructed. Copper pipes had all been stolen, so new water lines were installed, and the HVAC systems replaced.

The chapel is still under renovation. A new altar is being built to replace the original one. The new altar is modeled after one of the stained-glass windows that had once been hidden, through which sunlight once again pours, bathing the chapel in bright, natural lighting. The tabernacle, gifted to the sisters by Archbishop Noll, had been damaged and restored in the years of The Way, so Young had it restored by the same company.

The Our Lady, Patroness of America statue. Jennifer Barton.

O UR LADY OF A M E R I C A
Cross Catholic Outreach is helping
feed Ukrainians, providing other aid

BY JULIE ASHER

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) – “We call ourselves the first suppliers of first responders,” said Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach.

Based in Boca Raton, Florida, the international Catholic charity has assisted the world’s most vulnerable people with $3.5 billion in total aid in more than 85 countries since its founding in 2001 by Cavnar and a small group of his colleagues.

Its disaster relief responses have included building safe homes following devastating earthquakes in Haiti in 2010 and 2021, hurricane relief in places such as Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic, and emergency food and medical supplies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since Russia’s Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine, the charity has been helping Ukrainian refugees, namely across the border in Poland, and those internally displaced in Ukraine.

Most recently, Cross Catholic Outreach provided a cash grant, which funded 816,480 meals destined for these Ukrainians.

According to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, since the war began on Feb. 24, more than 5.2 million refugees from Ukraine have been recorded across Europe as of July 4. Nearly 1.2 million are in Poland.

The agency estimates that 7.7 million people are internally displaced as a result of the conflict, which is equivalent to 17.5% of the entire population.

The meals funded by Cross Catholic Outreach were supplied in partnership with Feed My Starving Children, a Protestant organization based in Coons Springs, Minnesota, and the biggest supplier of an enhanced rice meal called Vitafood, Cavnar told Catholic News Service.

The rice is enhanced with soy protein, vitamins, minerals, flavoring and dehydrated vegetables and has about 2 grams of protein per serving. A dry food, it can be transported easily and is prepared with boiling water by recipients.

This particular rice product is an excellent food that has been used in “situations of malnutrition”, but it also is very good for emergency situations, Cavnar explained. “It is fully nutritious and portable ... and a good way to provide food that is economical.”

Cavnar said Cross Catholic Outreach also is collaborating with Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the papal almoner, to provide food, clothing, generators, ambulances and other relief to internally displaced families and refugees.

The cardinal has delivered two ambulances the charity helped purchase – and which the pope blessed: One was for a hospital in Kyiv and one was for a hospital in Lviv, Cavnar said.

Pope Francis has sent Cardinal Krajewski, who heads the Office of Papal Charities, and Canadian Cardinal Michael Czerny, interim president of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, as his envoys to bring relief, hope and encouragement to suffering Ukrainians.

Cross Catholic Outreach also is working with Caritas to provide internally displaced families with food, water, baby formula, blankets and sanitary kits at three centers in Ukraine in Lutsk, Struga and Nova Uzyva.

Additionally, the charity is helping the Archdiocese of Przemyśl, Poland, near the Ukrainian border, to help refugees at its receiving centers, where they are offered food, shelter and trauma therapy, while local partners help families secure living arrangements, employment and school for the children.

Cavnar said Cross Catholic Outreach is receiving steady contributions for its efforts to help Ukrainians from its regular donors, “who know us and trust us,” as well as from people looking to support a Christian agency doing such work.

The charity is helping the world’s needy because it takes Christ’s command to do so seriously, he noted.

“We’re the Church and Christ told us, ‘Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me.’ The Church is doing what she always does – respond to those in need,” Cavnar said.

“I wish it wasn’t needed,” the Church is there,” he added.

Editor’s Note: More information about Cross Catholic Outreach can be found online at crosscatholic.org.

Women in Sievierodonetsk, Ukraine, cook food on a fire in a courtyard of an apartment building June 30, 2022, amid Russia’s invasion of the country.

CNS photo/Alexander Ermochenko, Reuters

Przemysl, Poland, near the Ukrainian border, to help refugees at its receiving centers, where they are offered food, shelter and trauma therapy, while local partners help families secure living arrangements, employment and school for the children.

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Celebrating the Sisters of Notre Dame in carrying out mission

By Katie Murray

For 49 years, the sisters of Notre Dame have blessed the St. Jude community in Fort Wayne. They served the parish and school as teachers, principals and caregivers throughout their time there. On Sunday, June 26, with heavy hearts, the parish said a bittersweet goodbye as the sisters move on to serve and touch the lives of others in need.

The parish celebrated the sisters with a large gathering in the church basement, inviting all parishioners and sisters that served in the past to attend. Everyone reminisced with favorite memories and thanked the sisters for their kindness, compassion and stewardship.

The Sisters of Notre Dame first arrived at the parish in 1973, succeeding the Sisters of Providence, who originally helped open the school with 105 students enrolled in grades 1-4. The new group of sisters were welcomed by the fourth pastor of the school, Monsignor William Lester. As the parish grew rapidly, more sisters from the order were asked to come and teach the students.

They were welcomed with open arms and genuine gratitude from the parish and school. Sister Charleen Hug was the first principal to serve the school and remembers how accepting and supportive everyone was upon their arrival. “The people accepted us so fast and openly. I was very impressed with that. They were just wonderful people.”

When sharing some of her fondest memories, she said, “The whole place was a favorite for me. I loved the atmosphere, people and students. I felt really bad leaving there.”

Sister Kathleen Marie Kneuven was also one of the first to arrive, serving as a first-grade teacher for the first couple of years before being assigned to serve elsewhere. In 1998, she was asked to return as principal and led the school for 17 years before leaving for the final time in 2005.

At a young age, she knew she wanted to become a sister, specifically with the Sisters of Notre Dame. Throughout her schooling, she spent much of her time with them and felt God calling her to be a part of their mission. When asked about her time spent with the students and staff of St. Jude, she had nothing but compliments to share. “I just felt very welcomed. The school had such a beautiful spirit. It was a God-filled school. The faculty always took the initiative to volunteer and to take leadership roles in the school. I felt so blessed. I could never have done it by myself. They were the ones who carried it along.”

In 1985, Sister Richarde Kaufman was called to minister as an eighth-grade teacher and became principal the following school year. “I consider it a blessing that I had a year there to get to know the teachers and staff, the parish and the people and then to become principal. It was such a blessing for me.”

In her six years there, she was amazed at all the people who served the parish for decades. When she attended the celebration, it brought back many memories of some of her favorite people. “Oh, the teachers. Some of those same teachers were there long after I left, and some have just retired recently. And I do say this, a few of them have gone home to heaven already, but my time spent with them was one of the best times of my life.”

All three sisters were very grateful to be missioned at St. Jude. “The sisters that followed me, they all felt the same as I did. Everyone was very accepting and I am very sorry they had to leave. I want to tell them to be the same way to everyone that follows as you were to us,” said Sister Charleen.

Sister Richarde would like to say thank you to everyone she worked with and the others who followed after she left. “Just thank you for providing me with seven wonderful years of my life. Out of my 50 years in the classroom, seven of them were spent at St. Jude. It was a wonderful learning and growing experience and I just appreciated being there with everybody and it was wonderful seeing everybody on Sunday.”

“I also want to say thank you to the parish. It was the happiest time of my life... such a beautiful experience. I want to thank the families, the faculty and the students whom I was so privileged to minister with and minister to. I’m grateful for their love, support and their prayers,” added Sister Kathleen.

The Sisters of Notre Dame will be greatly missed by the St. Jude community and are hopeful that the legacy of their founders will continue in the years to come.
St. Jude youth group encounters Real Presence in service

BY JESSICA SEGYDE

The St. Jude Fort Wayne parish youth group recently completed its annual mission trip. From June 19-24, a group of 34 students, 10 chaplains and visiting clergy participated in the service mission. The weeklong event is akin to summer camp with a focus on Christian service. Groups volunteered at sites throughout Allen County, including homes, thrift stores, churches, schools and other nonprofit agencies.

One change for 2022 occurred on Sunday. This year’s mission trip coincided with the Eucharistic Procession and Festival in Warsaw and the launch of the National Eucharistic Revival. St. Jude Youth Minister Vickie Lortie saw this as a unique opportunity to engage the participants in a diocesan-wide event. Lortie also kept the mission week true to its purpose by providing a service opportunity from the moment the group arrived at Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw.

“This year’s mission trip theme ‘Real Presence’ was realized from the very first actions of our young people. We participated in the diocesan Eucharistic Procession as servants to our fellow pilgrims that required wheelchair assistance,” said Lortie. “Our teens had the tangible experience of being the hands and feet of Christ.”

Sunday evening, the group returned to St. Louis Besancon School in New Haven, a space that was generously offered by the parish for the entirety of St. Jude’s mission week. Each day, participants split into nine work groups and reported to their locations. Work groups consisted of 3-4 students and adult chaplains. Outdoor work was hot, while indoor work often involved both physical and mental engagement, yet morale remained high from morning to night.

Karyl Ewing, a Bishop Dwenger High School graduate and fifth-year participant, had this to say regarding her ongoing dedication to the ministry: “We get a different experience each time. We may not always see the people we’re serving, but we know in our hearts that we’re helping someone. This year’s volunteer work was more behind-the-scenes than frontline. I have learned to trust that God puts us where He wants us to be.”

Students and chaplains were blessed with pastoral guidance throughout the week. Each morning, the group attended Mass at St. Louis Besancon Catholic Church. Celebrants were Monsignor Robert Schulte, Pastor of St. Jude Fort Wayne, Parochial Vicar and Bishop Dwenger High School chaplain Father Michael Ammer and Father Stephen Colchin, former Pastor of St. Louis Besancon. Monsignor Robert Schulte, Pastor of St. Jude Fort Wayne, Parochial Vicar and Bishop Dwenger High School chaplain Father Michael Ammer and Father Stephen Colchin, former Pastor of St. Louis Besancon.

The mission group also made time for fun and the natural evangelization that results from community presence. The mission trip’s schedule included outings to an ice cream parlor in Monroeville, a TinCaps baseball game at Parkview Field, a night of stargazing with the Fort Wayne Astronomical Society and an evening dip at a local swimming hole in New Haven.

Service opportunities were wide-ranging and drew upon multiple talents. Teens had opportunities to share their existing knowledge with those in need and also learned new skills throughout the week. Examples of the needs fulfilled included building crosses for Allen County Right to Life, staining wheelchair ramps with NeighborLink and sorting Christmas ornaments for display at the St. Vincent DePaul Thrift Store. One work group even caught a baby opossum in the office at The Franciscan Center, saving the organization nearly $300 for the cost of humane pest removal. All told, the 2022 St. Jude Mission Trip resulted in approximately 1,300 hours of donated time and service within Allen County.

Chaplains and students alike tend to return year after year once they undertake their first mission trip. Marissa Stieber, a third-year chaplone, finds that her dedication to the ministry is reinforced after each week of service. “The kids are always surprising me,” Stieber said. “Sometimes I consider taking a year off, but by the end of the mission week, I always think, ‘Why do I ever doubt this?’”

Ewing offered the following advice to those considering committing to the St. Jude mission trip in 2023, “Prepare for the week with an open heart. You will do a lot of hard work, but it’s worth the reward.”

For up-to-date information about Eucharistic Revival events and resources in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, visit diocesefwsb.org/eucharist or diocesefwsb.org/euaristia.

For information at the national level, go to eucharisticrevival.org.
WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) — The chairmen of two U.S. bishops’ committees said a measure passed by the House on July 15 is “the most urgent and important legislation on demand bill our nation has ever seen.” They implored lawmakers “who see abortion as an ultimate, legitimate ‘solution’ to the needs of women to abandon this path of death and despair,” urging them to join the U.S. bishops in prioritizing “the well-being of women, children and families” by providing material resources and “personal accompaniment” so “no woman ever feels forced to choose between her future and the life of her child.” Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, and Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, Chairman of the USCCB’s Committee for Religious Liberty, made the comments in a joint statement on July 18. In a mostly party-line vote of 219 to 210, House members approved an updated version of the Women’s Health Protection Act of 2022, which would codify a right to abortion in federal law. An earlier version was passed in March by the House, but it failed to pass in the Senate. The bill, H.R. 8296, would impose abortion demands nationwide at any stage of pregnancy and would eliminate pro-life laws at every level of government — including parental notification for minor girls, informed consent and health and safety protections specific to abortion facilities. “Answering the needs of women by promoting taxpayer-funded elective abortion, as this bill would do, is a grave evil and a failure to love and serve women,” said Archbishop Lori and Cardinal Dolan.

Bishop urges Catholic educators to see importance of the Eucharist

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) — Addressing Catholic educators at an annual national conference, Bishop Thomas A. Daly of Spokane, Washington, urged them to make sure their work was always rooted in the importance of the Eucharist. The bishop, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Catholic Education, said schoolteachers should help their students more deeply appreciate the sacrament amid the current National Eucharistic Revival. Launched on June 19, the Feast of Corpus Christi, the revival is a three-year initiative of the USCCB to revitalize Catholics’ understanding of and love for Jesus in the Eucharist. At the National Eucharistic Congress that will close the revival in 2024, Bishop Daly said, “there will be a great emphasis on the work that Catholic schools can do and how they might help the next generation ... to appreciate, to know and to love Jesus Christ” in the Eucharist. The bishop gave the opening address of the 10th annual Conference of the Institute for Catholic Liberal Education held July 11-14 at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. A news release from the institute said the annual conference brings Catholic educators together “to deepen their understanding of the nature and purpose of Catholic education and its roots in the classical liberal arts tradition.”

After fires set, pastor encourages people to remember ‘we are the Church’

BETHESDA, Md. (CNS) — A Catholic church in the Washington, D.C. suburb of Bethesda was one of three houses of worship along the same road to be victimized by vandalism the weekend of July 9-10. Firefighters responded at around 2 a.m. on July 10 to multiple fires set inside St. Jane Frances de Chantal Church, which also was vandalized. Twenty-four hours earlier, firefighters responded to multiple fires set outside North Bethesda United Methodist Church a few blocks away. Pete Piringer of the Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service said in a statement that firefighters found a “significant active fire” inside St. Jane Frances de Chantal, which is in the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. Piringer added after firefighters extinguished the blaze, investigators determined the fire was arson, with multiple areas set on fire or attempted to be set on fire there. In a tweet, Piringer noted that investigators also found damaged headstones and broken wood pieces scattered near Wildwood Baptist Church, a few blocks beyond the Methodist church. Piringer said an open investigation was underway involving the two fires and noted the similar circumstances, locations and apparent times of the vandalism. No motives or suspects were immediately announced by investigators. The fires and vandalism at St. Jane Frances de Chantal caused Sunday Masses to be shifted to the school gymnasium. Two vans and cleanup crews could be seen outside the church that afternoon.

Biden administration urges to expand immigration status for Venezuelans

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) — Immigration supporters expressed a mix of gratitude and disappointment with a Biden administration decision on Temporary Protected Status with regard to Venezuelans. On July 24, the Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas announced that the agency was extending the level of a humanitarian immigration program for another 18 months for Venezuelans currently eligible for TPS benefits, but did not extend the benefit to those who arrived in the U.S. after March 8, 2021. The move left many organizations puzzled. “Venezuela is a country in turmoil – in midst of an unprecedented social and economic collapse that has led to hyperinflation, starvation and the second largest migration crisis in the world,” said the Catholic Legal Immigration Network in a July 11 news release. “TPS was established to protect those who are unable to return to their home country, and the ongoing crisis in Venezuela makes it clear that humanitarian protection for Venezuelans remains urgent and necessary,” it said. Anna Gallagher, CLINIC’s Executive Director, said the decision leaves approximately 250,000 Venezuelans in the U.S. without relief. DHS said approximately 343,000 individuals “are estimated to be eligible for TPS under the existing designation of Venezuela,” and said it would continue to work with “international partners to address the challenges of regional migration while ensuring our borders remain secure.”

Missionary priest’s hunger strike protests Hong Kong activists’ detention

HONG KONG (CNS) — An elderly Catholic missionary in Hong Kong has launched a three-day hunger strike outside a high-security prison demanding the release of politicians and activists incarcerated under the city’s Beijing-imposed controversial national security law. Father Franco Mella, 74, a member of the Milan-based Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions, has vowed to abstain from food as he started his protest near the Shek Pik prison on Lantau Island in Hong Kong on July 14 amid sweltering summer heat. Reuters reported: “The weather is so hot, So, they are suffering inside, and the message (is) we are with you, do not lose hope. Let us continue to fight for everybody’s freedom,” Father Mella said. With temperatures in the mid- to upper 80s Fahrenheit, the missionary said his decision to begin his fast has become even more challenging for the priest.

Protesters celebrate Sri Lankan president resignation

People dance as they celebrate the resignation of Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa during a protest in Colombo on July 14, 2022. The formal announcement of Rajapaksa’s resignation was made in a televised address by the speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena the following morning. CNS photo/Adnan Abidi, Reuters
St. Mary’s Heritage Fund grants awarded for 2022

Parishes:
- St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel, $2,000: Parish food bank
- Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, $8,500: Tuition subsidy for Burmese children
- St. Mary Mother of God, $1,200: Ave Maria House bus passes
- St. Mary Mother of God, $8,000: Ave Maria House security
- St. John the Baptist, New Haven, $10,000: Tuition assistance
- Queen of Angels, $2,500: Leading those in need to the love of Jesus

Schools:
- Holy Family, $4,000: Kindergarten tuition assistance
- Bishop Luers High School, $5,000: Tuition assistance
- Marian High School, $5,000: Financial aid
- Our Lady of Hungary, $5,000: Staff salary and tuition assistance
- St. Matthew Cathedral School, $2,950: St. Philip Neri after-school program
- St. Aloysius School, $5,000: Tuition assistance
- St. Anthony de Padua, South Bend, $2,000: Classroom door locks
- St. Joseph Hessen-Cassel, $2,500: Tuition assistance
- Mishawaka Catholic School, $5,000: Part-time mental health counseling
- Queen of Angels, $15,000: Tuition assistance
- Huntington Catholic School, $8,600: Spanish teaching and translation
- St. Michael School, $5,000: Tuition assistance
- St. John the Baptist, South Bend, $2,500: Pre-k and kindergarten tuition assistance
- Holy Cross, $2,500: Tuition assistance for pre-k students
- St. John the Baptist, New Haven, $5,010: Counselor for 2022-2023 school year

Agencies:
- Women’s Care Center, $2,000: Family Focus: Moms and Babies 2022
- A Mother’s Hope, $8,000: A Mother’s Hope program for pregnant, homeless women
- The Rose Home, Inc, $5,040: Resident assistance
- Clinica Madre de Dios, $5,000: Medical assistance
- Catholic Charities of FWSB, Inc, $10,000: Mental health counseling
- Matthew 25, Inc, $7,500: Medications program
- Christ Child Society, Fort Wayne, $2,000: Koats for Kids
- Hannah’s House, $1,000: Gathering room renovation
- St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Joseph Co., $6,000: Food pantry expansion, hygiene and cleaning products
- St. Vincent de Paul Society of Fort Wayne, $5,000: Care Van ministry
- Vincent Village, Inc, $8,500: Youth and family engagement services
- Miss Virginia’s Food Pantry, $4,500: Balanced and nutritional food program
- St. Martin’s Healthcare, Inc, $7,000: Healthcare for uninsured/underinsured of Dekalb & Noble Co.
- St. Martin’s Healthcare, Inc, $16,000: Outreach healthcare program for uninsured/underinsured of Dekalb & Noble Co. residents

Cremation columbaria have become very popular, but few are as beautiful and unique as the new All Saints Columbarium at the Fort Wayne Catholic Cemetery. The only one of its kind in northeast Indiana, this two-level columbarium features stained-glass windows depicting the images of revered Catholic saints.

The columbarium’s upper level offers a temperature-controlled visiting area where glass-encased niches containing cremation urns and other items of endearment can be viewed comfortably and out of the elements. Those inurned in the lower level will be memorialized in granite at the columbarium’s entrance.

For more information about niches in the All Saints Columbarium, call or visit Divine Mercy Funeral Home.

Please join us for the blessing of the All Saints Columbarium with Bishop Kevin Rhoades presiding:

Tuesday, August 23 at 11 a.m.

3500 Lake Avenue, Fort Wayne, IN 46805 | DivineMercyFuneralHome.com | 260.426.2044

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Father John Eze called from a very young age

BY DENISE FEDOROW

Queen of Peace Pastor Father John Eze has one defining statement: “It is all by grace and mercy.” That statement is on a sign on the wall in his office.

Father Eze grew up in the eastern part of Nigeria “in a very strong Catholic home.” His family prayed together and attended Sunday Mass. There was so much love and compassion,” he said of his family home. His father was a catechist helping with missions, establishing schools and churches. Father Eze used to tell people: “Dad was the justice of God and mom was the mercy of God, but I realized both together was synergy — offering both God and mom was the mercy of the church. Father Eze used to tell a catechist helping with missions started calling him “Father John.”

When it was time to go to high school, his diocese announced the opening of a minor seminary. For Father Eze, it “was no difficult decision for me” to choose to attend. His parents, however, did not have the resources to send him. He was so determined to go that he ran away at age 12, jumping in the back of a truck headed to the minor seminary

Father Eze was attracted to the priesthood from a very young age. His godfather was a priest, which had a big influence on him. When he attended Mass at around six years old, he was so overcome with the feeling that he should be at the altar with the priest that he started running forward before his father caught him.

“My arbor was so strong, I was looking forward to a time when I could break away and run faster,” he recalled.

The priest saw the commission he made during Mass and allowed him to come forward.

So he sat on the steps at the altar, and before long his siblings started calling him “Father John.”

When he went to Rome with that same priest, it was his “first experience traveling outside my country.”

Fifteen years of his priesthood were spent in his home country before he came to the United States in 2011 on a visit arranged by a childhood friend from Nigeria. Father Eze always had a desire to visit the U.S., so his friend asked Father Glenn Kohrman, who was at St. Vincent de Paul, Elkhart at the time, if he could come for a visit. At the end of the trip, Father Kohrman asked if Father Eze could come back the next year while he was on sabbatical.

“Though it would be challenging financially, Father Eze was open to the idea and Father Kohrman assured him that the diocese would help him finance it and acquire a work visa.

“‘That was too good to say no to,’ he said, and obtained his bishop’s permission to return.

Sabbaticals in Nigeria and the U.S. differed in length, though, a fact that he was not aware of at the time. When Father Kohrman returned, Father Eze asked if he could petition Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades for another assignment.

The timing could not have been better, as Father Dan Scheidt, then-pastor of Queen of Peace, Mishawaka, needed a priest that he started running faster,” he recalled.

Father John Eze was installed as Pastor of Queen of Peace in July of 2013. A few years after being installed, he came down with a life-threatening illness, ending up in a coma for three weeks and in the hospital for three months. Doctors even talked about taking him off life support but his sister adamantly refused, and he recovered to continue his priests ministry.

The most rewarding part of which, he said, is Eucharistic Adoration. In his younger years, he thought: “If God gives me the grace to be a priest, I’ll make that my vocation — especially Eucharistic adoration — the heartbeat of my ministry.”

He has always had a “great love for clinical psychology” and in 2020, he asked the bishop if he could pursue a master’s degree in mental health counseling, which is studying at Indiana University South Bend. Father Eze had this advice for those discerning a vocation: “It’s God who calls and once God calls you, He gives grace. Do not rely on yourself; trust He’ll carry you through everything. Come to the church, I pray you, and give yourself to God. No man or woman is a finished project — we’re all a work in progress.

He celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination on July 5, and for him, “It feels like yesterday — I must be having fun because time has flown!”

Congratulations on your 25th Jubilee!

Sisters of Providence celebrate jubilees

Four Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods who have ties to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend are celebrating Jubilees this year.

Sister Therese Whitsett is a native of Indianapolis. Currently, she ministers as a volunteer and nursing home visitor in the Indianapolis area. She is celebrating 60 years with the Congregation this year.


Sister Rose Virginia Eichman is a native of Fort Wayne. Currently, she ministers as a visitor to residents in Providence Health Care at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She is celebrating 70 years with the Congregation this year.


Sister Marilyn Herber is a native of Fort Wayne. Currently, she ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She is celebrating 70 years with the Congregation this year.


Sister Marilyn ministered as a teacher at Central Catholic High School in Fort Wayne from 1967-72.

Sister Marie Esther Sivertsen is a native of Winthrop, Massachusetts. Currently, she ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She is celebrating 70 years with the Congregation this year.


During her time in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Sister Marie Esther ministered as a teacher at Cathedral School in Fort Wayne from 1957-58. Sister Marie Esther has ministered at other locations in Indiana, as well as in Illinois, North Carolina and Massachusetts.
Sister Colleen Bauer, SSND, celebrates golden jubilee

BY DENISE FEDOROW

Sister Colleen Bauer, SSND, just celebrated two milestones — retiring from teaching after 49 years — of which were spent at St. John the Evangelist Catholic School in Goshen — and her golden jubilee of 50 years as a religious sister.

Sister Colleen recently reflected on both of her milestones. She grew up in the Roanoke area, one of six siblings — five girls and one boy. They lived in the country and her family was very involved in the Church. Her mother taught religious education and her father was one of the first lectors at St. Joseph Church in Roanoke.

As for how her vocation as a religious sister came about, she said, “I never in my life thought I’d become a sister. It was the farthest things from my brain.”

That changed when she started attending Huntington Catholic High School. There, sisters from two orders were her teachers: the Franciscan sisters from Mishawaka and the School Sisters of Notre Dame from Milwaukee/Mequon Wisconsin. The sisters were “very life-giving” as she got to know them better. She was already familiar with sisters as she had an aunt and a cousin who were Holy Cross sisters.

But it was a “gradual process” that brought her to her vocation. “I think the idea first came to me. I was very surprised and shushed it away,” she admitted. “It kept coming back though, shushed it away,” she admitted.

That has always been a high point of Sister Colleen’s career. “We talk about how they’ll be something I’d enjoy, it was easy from then on.”

She considered it more seriously her senior year of high school. The difficult part was deciding which order to join. After much deliberation, she decided on the School Sisters of Notre Dame because she felt they were more invested in her.

“I just felt it was perfect for me. Her text-books were from St. James in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and she was there for three years before going to Sacred Heart School in Warsaw where she spent 11 years. Her last 35 years have been spent in the classroom at St. John the Evangelist.

For the majority of her teaching career, she taught second grade, preparing students for their first holy Communion. That’s always been a highlight of Sister Colleen’s career. “We talk about how they’ll be receiving Jesus all year so they are super-prepared,” she said.

Another highlight, she shared, was in Fort Wayne. She then changed her mind,” she said.

As the School Sisters of Notre Dame is a teaching order, a career in education “just fell into my lap. It was perfect for me.”

When asked what she’s loved most about being a sister, she responded, “I just think I was meant to be a sister. I feel like I found my niche and I’ve never looked back.”

Priests, deacons and religious sisters gathered for a photo at the luncheon held in Sister Colleen Bauer’s honor on June 10 at St. John the Evangelist Deacon Art Bleau Parish Center. Front from left: Father Jose Arroyo, Sister Gladys Marie Courtade, Sister Colleen Bauer, Sister Eileen Ennis and Sister Dianne Marie Englehart. Back from left: Deacon Bobby Kirsch, Father Bob Van Kempen, Father Logan Parrish, Father Tony Steinacker and Deacon Christian Nieves.

Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart mark jubilees

Sister Lois Ann Cline, OSF, was born in Shelby, Ohio. She professed her first vows in 1955 as a Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart whose Motherhouse is in Frankfort, Illinois. The first part of Sister Lois’ professional life was spent in the field of education for nearly 24 years. In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, she ministered as a teacher and vice-principal at St. Charles School from 1974-1978. Following that, she served in various positions: Director of Religious Education, Congregation Leadership and Temporal Affairs Assistant, Coordinator of Province Center for Prayer in Frankfort, Illinois and local community hospitality/homemaker. In retirement, Sister Lois continues to share her gifts and the wisdom of her many contemplative experiences.

Sister M. Alexine Knotek, OSF, was born in Fremont. Her home parish was St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in Angola. She professed her first vows in 1985 as a Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart. For nearly 40 years, Sister Alexine ministered in health care as a registered clinical nurse specialist in the field of mental health and as an administrator. In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, she served as Administrator of Ascension Living Sacred Heart Village, Avilla, from 1986-1991. During her tenure there, one of her major accomplishments was the addition of the Alzheimer’s Unit, St. Francis Hall. In addition to the above, she held various other positions: Congregation Archivist, General Secretary and Novice Director. In semi-retirement, Sister Alexine continues to serve as the Motherhouse sacristan, to assist with various needs at the Motherhouse, and to work for a greater awareness and diminishment of human trafficking.

Sister Mary Elizabeth Imler, OSF, was born in Fort Wayne. She professed her first vows in 1985 as a Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart. She taught at Saint Joseph High School in South Bend and at Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne from 1985-1990. Sister Mary was involved in Adult and Ongoing Formation Ministry and was the congregation’s Candidate and Novice Director for four years. During the next five years, Sister Mary was Co-Director of the Portiuncula Center for Prayer in Frankfort, Illinois. She was then called to serve as the General Superior of the Congregation for two terms. Presently, Sister Mary is enjoying serving as Vice President for Mission Integration at the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois. With her Franciscan academic background and love of all things good and beautiful, she is privileged to lead pilgrimages to Assisi and always seeks to install a love of God through the Gospel spirit and values.
Father Jayasuriya glorifies God for years of priesthood

BY ERIKA BARRON

Vocation is a mystery and a gift,” said Father Wimal Jayasuriya, as he reflected on the journey that brought him to the priesthood. This year marks the 25th anniversary of ordination for Father Jayasuriya; 25 years of serving the needs of his community, continuously learning and dutifully allowing the Lord to lead him wherever he is most needed.

Growing up in Sri Lanka, his love of Christ was instilled from an early age. He had God-fearing parents who germinated this love, which was further cultivated by the community – in particular, the exemplary priests of his parish, who lived out their holy vocation in devout service to the people.

“It has become so emotional for me to even recall. They were such good shepherds,” he reflected. Seeing this devotion in his priests lead him to become an altar server in the parish, further nurturing this budding sense of vocation. His parish was one of historical importance, at one time being served by Sri Lanka’s first saint, Joseph Vaz, a priest and missionary from India who was credited with reestablishing Catholicism in the country. The parish also became a center for the first missionaries to Sri Lanka. This history was an important inheritance for the community, both clergy and lay faithful alike.

Sri Lanka is a densely populated island nation off the tip of India where Catholics made up around 7 percent of the population. Here, priestly formation begins with seven years in the minor seminary and seven years in the major seminary. The National Seminary serves the whole of Sri Lanka, with students coming from 13 different countries to study for the priesthood. Father Jayasuriya began seminary at the age of 15. After ordination, his first assignment was at the largest parish in the diocese, spiritual home to 30,000 parishioners, and served by only two priests.

Several years later, Father Jayasuriya received a scholarship for higher education in Rome.

Although he originally intended to study Greek and Hebrew biblical scripture, his bishop saw a need for canon lawyers in the diocese and requested he switch to that. Receiving his doctorate in Rome, he then returned to Sri Lanka at the age of 35, where he was asked to serve as Judicial Vicar. Seeing how underprivileged people were treated both in Sri Lanka and on his studies abroad inspired him to work toward change, beginning in his own office. Father Jayasuriya refused the typical privileges given to those in higher positions within the Diocese of Chilaw, spiritual residence in the bishop’s home. He opted instead to live in a small room in the sacristy. Here he was able to meet the people, some he refers to as “the poorest of the poor.”

His first goal was to change the misunderstanding that annulments were a service only provided to the rich, a sort of costly favoritism. He began to grant annulments efficiently and without asking for money, so much so that more and more people came to seek his aid. The realization that instead of granting annulments, there must be a better means of prevention through preparing people thoughtfully for marriage, beginning at the age when children receive their first Communion.

From this, Father Jayasuriya began a program called Life Formation. Dedicated to teaching the young people of the diocese in a doctrinally sound and appealing way, the youth program was called “What is Love, Sex and Marriage?” This program became so successful that it was not uncommon for a stadium to be packed with upwards of 7,000 young people. The successful program prompted a similar one, this time aimed at Sri Lankan taxi drivers and business professionals.

Father Jayasuriya spent what free time he had in his work for the Lord building his presence for the homeless in the community and providing education and resources to children, regardless of their religion. He was made Executive Secretary of the Diocesan Synod, which became much like a local Vatican II. He visited all the parishes in the diocese within a year and a half, preparing them for the synod.

A man of great education, Father Jayasuriya holds a Doctorate in Canon Law and Master’s in Sociology, and served at the National Seminary as the Dean of Theology and Professor of Canon Law, Theology, Ecclesiology, and Spirituality.

The Lord led Father Jayasuriya to the U.S. on sabbatical and ultimately to the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Here he began serving as an Associate Pastor at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne and First Court Judge in the trial court.

He professed that he can be happy “anywhere because our happiness does not lie in where we are or what we have. It is who we are.”

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades asked Father Jayasuriya to take over as Pastor of St. Mary Mother of God Parish in downtown Fort Wayne. After receiving approval from his own bishop in Sri Lanka, he accepted the task.

St. Mary Mother of God Parish has been serving the needs of the poor in the very heart of Fort Wayne for many years, which was a fitting assignment for a priest with a heart for the needy.

Next year in fact, they celebrate the 40th anniversary of the St. Mary’s Soup Kitchen, a mission shared by the parish, the diocese and the Christian community as a whole. Father Jayasuriya reminds his parishioners, “The way we do everything should be an example. If we want to change the world, we must change ourselves first.”

Leading by example has been a common thread in Father Jayasuriya’s life, and he has exercised this with a deep humility and gratitude for the many opportunities the Holy Spirit has placed before him. When asked what his greatest achievement in his 25 years of priesthood has been, he responded, “To serve as a priest, that is the achievement.”

Congratulations on the 25th anniversary of your ordination!

Father Wimal Jayasuriya

With thanksgiving to God for your many years of service.

May your life as a priest continue to be sustained by His grace and always be filled with His joy.

We wish you all the happiness in the years ahead!

— Your St. Mary Mother of God family

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Father Jacob Gall believes people need to base their life on the rock of Jesus Christ. He has relied on that rock during a long and full life.

Born June 21, 1927, he started life on his family’s large farm near Milford, north of Warsaw. His parents lost that farm during the Great Depression, but bought 40 acres southwest of Warsaw where they raised corn, cattle, hogs and chickens. The family later added a second farm between Culver and Plymouth, where they grew cucumbers to sell for pickling.

Father Gall grew up with a strong faith life, but not Catholic. His father was a part-time Church of God congregation near their farm. The future Father Gall began pondering faith from an early age.

As a boy, he remembers asking his mother about the meaning of eternity. He will always remember her answering him by sharing a story from her family’s Dutch heritage: God made a little bird that never dies. The bird has the job of picking up one grain of sand at a time from the Earth’s oceans, rivers and lakes and taking each grain to the top of a mountain. When the bird has moved all of the grains of sand to the mountaintop, that is just the beginning of forever and eternity, his mother said.

As a youth, Father Gall also spent hours thinking about spiritual life while directing a two-horse team plowing his family’s farm fields with a single-blade plow.

“I was always impressed by Jesus’ words, ‘I am the way, the truth and the life,’” he said.

At age 17, he asked his father to sign for him to enlist in the U.S. Navy before turning 18. His father did.

“We believed in God, we believed in family and we believed in country, and we would give our lives for any of them,” Father Gall recalled. One of his two brothers served with the U.S. Army in Europe during World War II. He also had four sisters, though one was stillborn.

Father Gall’s seven years of Navy service took him to Guam, the Aleutian Islands, Italy and Japan, where he treated U.S. Marines wounded during the Korean War.

During his final year of service in Japan, he joined about 10 other hospital corpsmen in a Bible study. He also read the book “Faith of Our Fathers,” which shared the history of the Catholic Church and the Protestant Reformation. The book inspired him to take catechism classes with a Catholic chaplain.

“I was always interested as a Christian in going back to the time of Jesus,” he said, noting how other Christian faiths began after the Reformation.

Father Gall was baptized a Catholic in April of 1952 by a Japanese Catholic bishop. After baptism, he felt a strong call to explore a vocation to the priesthood. He pursued that call after returning home in June of 1952.

Then age 25, he completed high school at Plymouth High School and attended three years at Our Lady of the Lake Seminary on Lake Wawasee near Syracuse. He continued with six years of study at St. Meinrad Seminaries in northwest Indiana. He was ordained on May 26, 1962, a few weeks prior to his 35th birthday.

“It’s a great honor to be a priest,” he said.

He began his ministry as Associate Pastor at St. John the Baptist Parish in New Haven. He then served at each Sacred Heart Parish in Fort Wayne, St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Decatur and St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Elkhart.

He moved on to spend nearly 14 years as pastor at St. Peter Parish in Fort Wayne. One highlight included leading the parish in preparing its old school building for use by Montessori and Head Start preschool programs.

In his next assignment, Father Gall served more than 16 years at Immaculate Conception Parish in Kendallville before retiring at age 77 in August of 2004. However, he continued helping out at parishes on weekends and during priests’ vacations.

In 2010, at age 84, he took on the responsibility of celebrating Mass on Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings at St. Mary of the Angels Oratory at Big Long Lake in LaGrange County. He retired from making that 100-mile round trip in June of 2017.

Father Gall believes one of priesthood’s greatest gifts is being able to consecrate bread and wine to transform them into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, just as the Lord instructed His apostles to do.

Father Gall has always turned to the Scriptures for guidance in his life and ministry.

He finds great encouragement in the story of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples. By speaking of washing others’ feet, Jesus urges us to help others with their needs, Father Gall explained. By helping others, we also are helping the whole Church.

He also draws strength from St. Paul’s Letter to the Galatians, especially chapters 5 and 6. The passages speak of God’s gift of the Holy Spirit and how to live a good and holy life.

“Without the Spirit,” Father Gall said, “we can’t please God and we can’t do His greatest gifts in gifts He wants to give us.”

Though he has had some heart and lung problems, Father Gall doesn’t worry about the future.

“Whenver the Lord wants me, that will be the best,” he said. “I don’t know what is the best. Only God knows what He wants me to do. I accept His yoke.”

Citing the Gospel verses of Matthew 11:28-30, Father Gall notes that Jesus said, “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

“Jesus invites us all,” Father Gall added, “and if we don’t take it up, that’s our problem.”
Roe and the legacy of abortion

O

n Friday, June 24, the

Supreme Court overturned

Roe v. Wade (1973) and

Planned Parenthood v. Casey

(1992), and, by implication,

a long line of abortion

decisions relying on them.

This ends a regime of almost

half a century, during which the

court invalidated even modest
efforts to regulate or criminalize

abortion — laws on informed

consent, parental rights in the

case of an unencumbered minor,

health protections for women

and so on.

Widely supported laws

against late-term abortions, and
even against mistreating a child

born alive during an attempted

abortion, were attacked. Justice

Sandra Day O’Connor, no pro-life

activist, complained in 1986 that

“no legal rule or doctrine is safe

from ad hoc nullification by this
court” when the case involves

abortion.

The right to abortion, found

nowhere in the Constitution or

in the country’s legal history and
traditions before Roe, was
defined more zealously than

some rights that are explicit in

our founding document. Paralyz-
ning because it was fabricated

from the policy preferences of the

judges themselves, it had no

internal controls against unprin-
ciplled expansion.

Five justices have said this

must stop. They do not respond,

however, by reading a pro-life

policy into the Constitution. In

his concurring opinion, Justice

Brett Kavanaugh says forth-

rightly that “the Constitution

provides that we have not met the needs

of women.”

In any case, women make up

a little more than half the popu-

lation, and a somewhat higher

percentage of the voting public.

Women are not only important

to “abortion rights” now face the

unsettling prospect of debating women

who disagree with them. But that

happens in a democracy, and the

debate will be infinitely more

productive if conducted with

civility and mutual respect.

One group ignoring that

advice calls itself “Ruth Sent

Us,” after the late Supreme Court

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Justice Ginsburg was a promi-

nent advocate for “abortion

rights.” The group claims to

honor her by, for example, target-
ing Justice Amy Coney

Barrett’s church and her school-

age children for angry protests.

But recently I came across “Scal

A Speaks,” a collection of

speeches by the late Justice

Antonin Scalia, who was known for

his biting criticisms of Roe and

Casey. The book’s foreword is

by Scalia’s longtime friend,

Justice Ginsburg. She concludes:

“If our friendship encourages

others to appreciate that some

very good people have ideas

with which we disagree, and

that, despite different people of

good will can pull together for

the well-being of the institutions

we serve and our country, I

will be overjoyed, as I am confident

Justice Scalia would be.”

Ruth did not send “Ruth Sent

Us.” But she and Antonin could

send us to seek common ground

in helping children and their

mothers.

RICHARD DOERFLINGER

worked for 36

years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

To rest is to be human

Richard Doerflinger

God hears the calling of His mercy

In this reading, Abraham, regarding as the father of the Hebrews, but more importantly, God is with him and literally conversing with him. The topic is vice within the Hebrew biblical tradition and Gomorrah. God, the just, insists that this vice will result in a divine retribution on the people of these cities. Abraham pleads instead for mercy. The conversation can be taken as a bargaining process. Abraham asks that the hurdle be lowered. God agrees. Then Abraham asks for a further lowering. God agrees, and so on.

The two important points are that humans create their own doom. It stands to reason. Look at the despair that deliberately planned warfare brings up affected populations, such as Ukrainians today. Look at the heartbeat that sin brings upon people.

Abraham realizes the deadly effects of human decisions, such as the choices leading to immorality in these cities. Nevertheless, he asks God for mercy. Beyond mercy, he asks God for life. Even Abraham, God, and God extends mercy. This is the sec-

ond and most consoling point.

For its second reading, the Church presents a reading from the Epistle to the Colossae. The Christians of Colossae were no different from other Christians in the Roman Empire’s Mediterranean world or the first century AD.

To them, the Christian faith was new. In the face of such an overwhelming pagan culture, following this faith was a challenge indeed.

Encouraging them, this epistle reminded the Colossian Christians that in Christ they died to the culture and to their own instincts. Baptism drowned their oldness and sinfulness before the pressures of their sur-

roundings and of their nature. In baptism, they died, but they also were raised, and with this raising, with its eternity and strength.

St. Luke’s Gospel supplies us with the last reading. It is the beautiful, white fulfillment of the Lord’s Prayer. No prayer is more loved by Christians now and throughout the centuries. This verse is powerful and profoundly expressive. The first verse is especially telling, setting the stage for all the others. Jesus tells the dis-

ciples to address God as “Father,” not as king, ruler, judge or cre-

ator. It establishes the believer’s relationship with God.

The second part of the reading is reassuring. Jesus insists that God’s door is never closed. God always hears the appeals of people. Loving people with an infinite love, God will give them life. He even gives life to sinners if they repent, and in love, turn to God.

Reflection

The reading from Genesis and the reading from Luke call us to approach God in full confidence that our pleas will be heard. It is particularly comforting when we turn to God about something that we regret and desire to do, and we ask our sins and instead turn to God, our sins will be forgiven.

It is all a beautiful thought, but the Christians of Colossae gave us evidence, as if we need any, that our instincts and all around us can be very difficult to overcome.

Still, we can overcome sin and all that brings sin. Why? If we are sincere in our belief, God will be with us in strength, insight and power. He will show us the way. He will sustain us. He will take us to God. He will keep us safe forever.

READINGS


1 Gl 6:14-18 1 Co 2:8-16


15 Wk: Ex 34:14-17 Jsr 17:1-8 Fs 3:19-24 1 Th 5:17-21

16 Wk: Ps 23:1-3, 5-6 Ml 4:1-10 1 Sd 2:13-17

17 Wk: 1 Cor 2:10-16 1 Th 1:1-20

18 Wk: Fs 9:17-26 1 Tm 3:14-17

19 Wk: Ps 113:7-15 Jsr 19:1-8, 10-16 1 Jdf 2:1-11

20 Wk: Ps 115:9-18 1 Sm 14:1-14

21 Wk: 1 Sm 15:24-35 1 Tm 3:5-12 Pd 4:12-19

22 Wk: 1 Sm 16:1-13 1 Tm 3:13-17, 4:1-5

23 Wk: Ps 1:1-6 Pd 10:3-9

24 Wk: Ps 119:33-40 1 Tm 4:12-16

25 Wk: Ps 119:41-50 1 Tm 5:16-24

26 Wk: Ps 119:51-60 1 Tm 6:11-16

27 Wk: Ps 119:61-70 1 Tm 6:17-18
Gun violence and the deep sadness

Like every other reasonable person in our society, I am horrified sick about the phenomenon of gun violence, and I’m especially concerned about what it reveals regarding the status of young people, particularly young men. Time and again, disgruntled, angry, depressed, self-hating men — boys who have been — are the perpetrators of these awful crimes. As I write these words, images of Robert E. Crimo, the 21-year-old who has confessed to killing seven and wounding dozens more in Highland Park, Illinois, are circulating on social media, and his face has rather burned itself into my mind. He just looks so lost — physically, psychologically, and spiritually. Now, I truly believe that crime is exceptional and so I don’t intend to extrapolate from it to all young people, but evidence has been piling up for too long a time that youths, especially boys and young men, are suffering badly in our society. To give just one example, Derek Thompson’s article in the Atlantic earlier this April of this year reveals that from 2009 to 2021, “feelings of sadness and hopelessness” among American teenagers rose, astonishingly, from 26 percent to 44 percent. And the increase in depression was consistent across all major categories: male, female, black, white, LGBT, etc. In Thompson’s words, “Since 2009, sadness and hopelessness have increased for every race, for straight teens and gay teens; for teens who say they’ve never had sex and for those who say they’ve had sex with males and/or females; for students in each year of high school; for teens in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.”

Huronton, we have a problem.

What is causing this drastic increase in unhappiness? There is, obviously, no one answer, for the issue is multilayered and complex, but Thompson hazards four suggestions: social media use, a related decrease in real social contact, the stress of living in a world to which contemporary media are giving young people far greater access and modern parenting strategies. All are interesting and worth exploring, but I would like to focus on just one of his explanations and then offer a rationale of my own. Social media is making a lot of people — but especially young men and women — crazy and sad. Period. This is the case, first, because social media produces an obsession with body image, looks and popularity, and on the flip side, gives rise to a uniquely toxic atmosphere of judgmentalism, accusation and criticism. Spend just a few minutes on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram or, God help us, Twitter, and you’ll immediately see what I mean. What makes all of this worse is that the devices that communicate social media were designed to be addictive. As a result, even those who admit that Instagram and Facebook are making them sad cannot stop themselves from logging in. A closely related problem is that social media is so dominant in the lives of kids that they effectively suppress an ingenuity that rather naturally bring joy. The average young person spends five or six hours a day on social media, and as a consequence, Thompson says, “compared with their counterparts in the 2000s, today’s teens are less likely to go out with their friends, get their driver’s license, or play youth sports.”

Moreover, as sociologist Jean Twenge has shown, there is a tight correlation between screen time and depression, and for obvious reasons. One of the surest firewalls against feelings of sadness is steady contact with other human beings, but social media precludes this, locking young people into a virtual world. I know this is overly pithy a bit, but contrast the image of a young kid playing a lively game of baseball with his friends with that of a young kid hunching alone over his iPhone. As for my own explanation of the phenomenon of teen depression, I would emphasize a theme that I have been harping on for years: the culture of self-invention. It is now a fundamental mode of the culture that values are generated from within one’s own subjectivity. In a word, each individual determines what is right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful and ugly for him- or herself. There is no “truth”; only my truth and your truth. There is nothing that is objectively beautiful, only what I think is beautiful and you think is beautiful.

But the catastrophe is disastrous both psychologically and spiritually, for it essentially locks a person into the narrow confines of their own range of experience. We need to understand that it is ok to say, “I am tired and need some rest.” Being tired does not make us less human. To the contrary, needing rest reminds us of how human we are.

To appreciate the value of rest, we need each other’s support. This is exactly why being part of a community is important. Not only do we need others to remind us that we need to rest, but we grow as human beings as we rest with our families and friends. We grow as we rest with the created order. Let’s make sure to find the time to rest.

Bishop Robert Barron

言语搜索

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C: Learning the Lord’s Prayer. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

LORD TEACH US
THY NAME
TAUGHT
BREAD
AT MIDNIGHT
THE DOOR
SNACK
PRAY
FATHER
GIVE US
FORGIVE US
LOAVES
GET UP
AN EGG
JOHN HALLOWED
OUR DAILY
DEBT
APRIVED
BE OPENED
SPIRIT

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

SWEEP SEARCH®

Gospel for July 24, 2022


Answer key can be found on page 15

Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

Bishop Robert Barron is an Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the Founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

Bishop Barron

OSPINO, from page 12

others — and the created order.

I must confess that I am among those who derive much pleasure in putting together hours of work, producing something new regularly, sometimes sac- rificing necessary rest. This is exactly why being part of a community is important. Not only do we need others to remind us that we need to rest, but we grow as human beings as we rest with our families and friends. We grow as we rest with the created order. Let’s make sure to find the time to rest.

Hosffman Osipina is a Professor of Theology and Religious Education at Boston College.

Hosffman Osipina

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Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.
Former assistant fire chief aims to create ‘sense of hope’ in 9/11 memoir

BY KURT JENSEN

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) – One of the most vivid memories for those who experienced 9/11 first-hand is the weather that day. A high pressure system produced sunny, intensely clear skies in both New York City and Washington, D.C.

The most pleasant of late summer mornings began impossibly perfect – 9:30 a.m. turned to horror as two planes taken over by terrorists crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center, a third hit the Pentagon and a fourth, with passengers fighting terrorists, slammed into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

The death toll from that day alone was 2,977. Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The first to respond, making it to the North Tower,” said Joseph Pfeifer, a retired assistant chief of the New York City Fire Department, whose station was only half a block away and was the first to respond, making Pfeifer the first senior leader on the scene.

He’s now the Director for Crisis Leadership at the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University.

For as many times as the images of that day have been repeated, Pfeifer points out that the time from the North Tower crash to the collapse of both towers was less than two hours.


Post-traumatic stress from those in the middle of the attack, particularly in New York, is a given even decades later, and Pfeifer has the additional personal burden of grief that his younger brother Kevin was killed in the North Tower collapse, becoming one of 343 firefighters who died that day. Pfeifer had ordered him into the building.

But Pfeifer said he wanted to do more than exorcise his own pain. He wanted to create “a sense of hope, of moving forward, and the only way you do that is through storytelling.”

“The heart of crisis leadership is the ability to sustain hope,” he told Catholic News Service. “Whether it’s 9/11, whether it’s the pandemic or acts of extreme violence, it’s going to take a unified effort of people to come together, to make the future bet- ter.”

Pfeifer has a Master’s Degree in Theology from Immaculate Conception Seminary in Huntington, New York.

In the choking dust of the first collapse, “I bargained with God to see my family again. Then there was complete silence. It was like that muff- led quiet after a first snowfall. For a couple of seconds, I wondered if I was still alive,” Pfeifer wrote.

“...Heartick, I pictured my brother’s calm face as he headed toward his assign- ment. I fought to gain control of my fear and anxiety, to figure out what to do. Nothing I had ever experienced gave me any guidance. I had never felt so helpless.”

He told CNS that as he has promoted the book, the image readers have told him they most remember is of “the helmets of the firefighters” as they struggled to find survi- vors before the towers collapsed. “They made a personal decision to go in to help people.”

“People were lost in that cloud of darkness until they began seeing the light on the firefighters’ helmets,” he wrote. “It became a symbol of hope and created a sense of unity that brought the city and nation together at a time of darkness.”

Pfeifer said he has found, even in the current era of frac- tured politics, “this sense of ‘we’re in this together,’ this sense of unity.”

Catholic Media Association

Catholic Media Association announces awards at convention

Today’s Catholic received seven awards at the annual Catholic Media Association Conference.

The awards are:

Best Annual Report – Catholic Non-Profit Organization: First Place
Catholic Community Foundation Annual Report 2021 – Francie Hogan

Best Seasonal Issue – Print Only: First Place
Burining the Dead – Jodi Marlin, Francie Hogan, Jennifer Barton

Best Photography – Scenic, Still-Life or Weather Photo: First Place
St. Joseph in Winter – Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Best Reporting of Social Justice Issues – Solidarity: Second Place
Mass brings recognition, healing on 175th anniversary of Miami Tribe members’ removal from Indiana – Kevin Kilbane, Joshua Schipper

Best Analysis/Background/Round-Up

Best In-Depth News/Special Reporting – Weekly, 1-5 Full-Time Staff Members: Honorable Mention
Gender incongruence: Diocesan parishes, schools follow Jesus’ example of accompa- niment – Jodi Marlin

Best Personality Profile – Weekly, 1-5 Full-Time Staff Members: Honorable Mention
Pizza champion lets her faith lead – Jodi Marlin
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.

St. Jude movie night on the lawn
FORT WAYNE — St. Jude Parish, 2150 Pemberton Dr., will be having a movie night on Friday, July 22, on the lawn. Ice cream treats provided by Whip & Chill, as well as pizza, drinks and other snacks. Bring your chairs and plan to arrive around 7:30 p.m. with the movie “Big Hero 6” beginning at dusk. In the case of rain, the movie will be held in the church basement. Contact Kris Church at 260-484-6609 or kchurch@stjudewf.org for information.

‘Ask Me Anything’ with Msgr. Heintz
GRANGER — St. Pius X will present a community happy hour “Ask Me Anything” session with Msgr. Michael Heintz on Wednesday, July 27, at Beef O’Brady’s, 12479 State Rd 23, from 4:30-6 p.m. This is a great opportunity for you to invite that non-Catholic spouse, friend or coworker who is curious about your faith. Bring a friend and your best questions. Contact Ashley Logsdon at 574-272-8462 or alogsdon@stpius.net for information.

Blessed Father Solanus feast day Mass
HUNTINGTON — Celebrate the feast day of Blessed Solanus Casey on Saturday, July 30, beginning at noon with a rosary followed by Mass in the chapel at St. Felix Catholic Center, 1280 Hitzfeld St. Light refreshments will follow.

Marriage Encounter experience
SOUTH BEND — Christ the King Parish is hosting a Marriage Encounter weekend on July 30-31. Apply now at wwmn.org. Questions can be sent to the Application Couple at application@wwmn.org or call them at 260-484-1664. There is a $75 application fee with a free will donation requested on Sunday. Visit wwmn.org for details.

Behold: A concert of sacred music
FORT WAYNE — Join a choir of young adults on Saturday, Aug. 6, from 7-8 p.m. as they fill St. Charles Borromeo Church, 4916 Triver Rd., with sacred music. This concert is free and open to all. Contact Jessica Schuster at jessica.schuster.158@gmail.com.

Celebrate the 5th Annual Blessed Solanus Casey Feast Day
July 30 from noon to 3 p.m. Hosted by the Father Solanus Guild at St. Felix Catholic Center, 1280 Hitzfeld St. in Huntington
A new mural of Father Solanus will be dedicated and blessed at the celebration. Copies of the mural will be available for purchase at the bookstore in Solanus Hall. The celebration will include a rosary at noon and Mass at 1 p.m.

Contact Jan Scher at 260-450-3045

The Our Lady, Patroness of America Center
Invites you and guests to the First Saturday Devotion Mass offered by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades in the Center’s Chapel on the Feast of the Transfiguration. August 6, 2022 at 11 AM
The Mass is open seating, so arrive early. Please help us with an RSVP if you are planning to attend. Details and RSVP by calling the office.

Our Lady, Patroness of America Center
2730 E. Northport Road, Rome City, IN
260-303-4990

The Our Lady, Patroness of America Center

The Our Lady of Guadalupe festival
WARSAW — Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, 225 Gilmour Dr., will have a festival on Saturday, Aug. 13, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., featuring authentic Mexican cuisine, live music, DJ, kiddie bounce houses and Mexican bingo. Contact Leo Patino at 574-549-7717 or leopatino@live.com for information.

The Our Lady of Guadalupe festival

REST IN PEACE

TO APPLY, VISIT:
hr.sf.edu/openings

Our Lady, Patroness of America Center
2730 E. Northport Road, Rome City, IN
260-303-4990
Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades poses alongside Bishop Jonas Benson Okoye (left of Bishop Rhoades) and Father Francis Chukwuma, Administrator of Most Precious Blood Parish in Fort Wayne (left of Bishop Okoye) after confirming 99 children at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Ozubulu, Nigeria on July 10. Bishop Rhoades visited the African nation alongside Father Chukwuma, a native of Nigeria, to ordain a large group of new priests.

More photos are available at www.todayscatholic.org