

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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Thousands of Students Educated in 100 Years in Wabash

BY JENNIFER BARTON

On the feast day of St. Bernard of Clairvaux and coinciding with the beginning of the school year, it was fitting that St. Bernard Parish in Wabash celebrated the 100th anniversary of the founding of its school. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrated Mass with the people of the parish, with Father Jay Horning installed as their new pastor at the same Mass.

In his book "History of St. Bernard Church: 1864-2020," Wabash historian Michael Thompson relayed some of the early history of the first and only Catholic school in Wabash County. St. Bernard School opened in St. Bernard's Hall on Sept. 5, 1922, under the direction of Father Edmund Ley, with 40 children in attendance that year. It was staffed by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Tipton. Post-World War II brought expansion to the parish and the need for a new school building, constructed at the corner of Cass and Maple Streets and completed in 1951 when Father Leo Hoffman was pastor. Bishop John F. Noll came to bless the school on Nov. 4 of that year. In 1961, a second story was added.



Jennifer Barton

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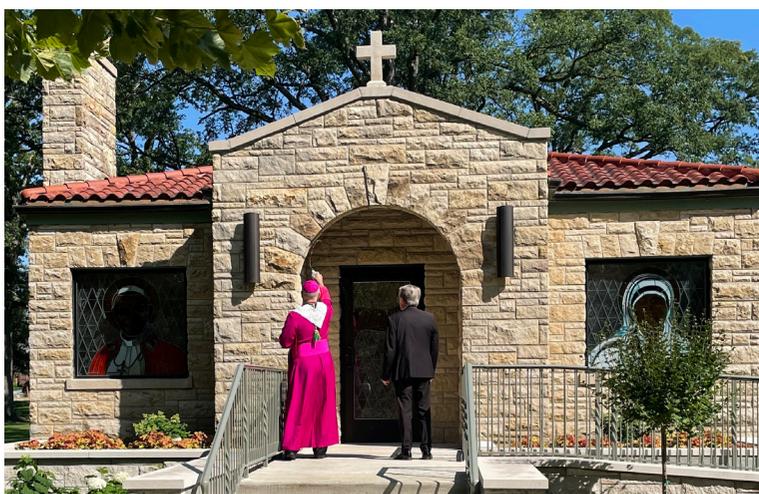
St. Bernard School in Wabash marks 100 years of educating children in the Catholic faith.

New All Saints Columbarium at Catholic Cemetery Blessed

BY NICOLE HAHN

The sun shone brightly as Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades stood at the microphone on Aug. 23, 2022 at the Catholic Cemetery in Fort Wayne. In front of a crowd of about 50 people, he blessed the new All Saints Columbarium, located just east of the Mausoleum Garden on the property. The columbarium has two levels and is the only one of its kind in northeast Indiana.

The upper level features stained-glass windows depicting



Nicole Hahn

the images of revered Catholic saints. It is a temperature-controlled visiting area where people can view the glass-encased niches containing cremation urns out of the elements.

COLUMBARIUM, page 2

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades accompanied by Divine Mercy Funeral Home and Catholic Cemetery Executive Director Casey Miller, sprinkles holy water to bless the new All Saints Columbarium on Aug. 23.

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Photos by Nicole Hahn

Visitors gather with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades to get a first look inside the new All Saints Columbarium on Aug. 23.



Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades blesses the floor-to-ceiling glass niches in the lower level of the All Saints Columbarium on Aug. 23.



St. Augustine and St. Agnes are two of the seven saints depicted in the stained-glass windows of the new All-Saints Columbarium at Fort Wayne Catholic Cemetery.

COLUMBARIUM, from page 1

The lower level has floor-to-ceiling glass-encased niches. Those inurned on that level will be memorialized in granite at the columbarium's entrance.

The Gospel reading before the blessing (John 11:21-27) was significant to the event as it was about when Jesus told Martha that her brother Lazarus would rise from the dead, and how she had complete faith and belief in what He told her, responding, "I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day."

In his homily, Bishop Rhoades talked about how people often think of St. Peter's profession of faith when Jesus asked, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter's response was: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." He said that Martha also had a great profession of faith, and hers was at a time when not all Jews believed in the resurrection. He added that her response became "the occasion for one of the most beautiful things that Jesus said in the Gospels ... 'I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in Me even if he dies will live and everyone who live and believes in Me will never die.'"

Faith was the main focus of the entire ceremony. Bishop Rhoades said that the columbarium, the other chapels and buildings on the Catholic Cemetery grounds, and even inside Divine Mercy Funeral Home are filled with images of the Catholic faith. "What's beautiful is that the columbarium is named in honor of all saints," he stated.

The two saints featured in the stained-glass windows at

the front of the columbarium are St. John Paul II and St. Teresa of Calcutta, two saints that Bishop Rhoades met in person and said were his favorites. Other saints featured are St. Augustine, St. Sebastian, St. Teresa of Avilla, St. Agnes, and St. Martin de Porres. They were chosen, according to the bishop, because they were holy men and women who believed like Martha that Jesus is the resurrection and the life.

Bishop Rhoades said there was some discussion and a little debate about which saints would be depicted and then joked that in the end, "I basically exercised my episcopal authority and said that I'm going to choose which

saints are depicted, so if you don't like some saint that is in there, you can blame me."

As those saints depicted in the stained-glass windows of the columbarium have been canonized, it can be known that they are in heaven, so "it's beautiful as we go and pray for those who will be inurned here, we pray they will join the company of saints, we pray for the faithful departed."

The event culminated with Bishop Rhoades circling the outside of the building and blessing it with holy water, and then proceeding inside each level to complete the blessing.

For more information about the new All Saints Columbarium, visit divinemercyfuneralhome.com or call 260-426-2044.

More photos are available at www.todayscatholic.org



exercised my episcopal authority and said that I'm going to choose which

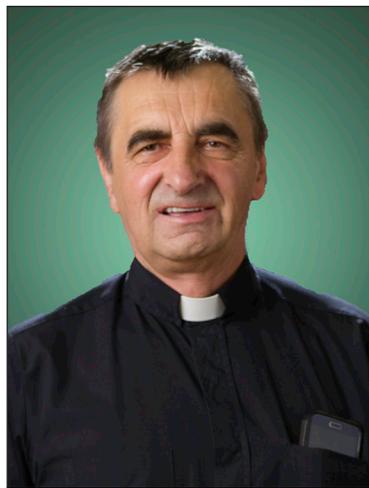
'Until We Reach Our Eternal Home' – Retired Priest Laid to Rest

The Catholic community of Holy Family Parish in South Bend suffered the unexpected loss of their priest in residence, Father Jan Klimczyk, on Monday, Aug. 22.

Father Klimczyk, who retired from active ministry in 2015, served in many capacities and locations throughout the diocese in his time in northern Indiana, filling the needs of the diocese wherever his bishop called him. He left his native Poland to spend roughly 20 years of his 41-year priesthood serving the people of northern Indiana.

Born in Kazimierza, Poland, Father Klimczyk attended seminary at the Papal Theology Academy in Krakow, being accepted into seminary by St. John Paul II when he was still Archbishop of Krakow. Father Klimczyk was ordained in 1981 and spent 10 years serving in his native country before coming to St. Adalbert Parish in South Bend for his first assignment in the diocese. He was incardinated into the diocese in 1994. He lived his vocation to his last days, celebrating Mass for the Queenship of Mary with the schoolchildren.

After his time at St. Adalbert, he did a two-year stint as Associate Pastor of St. Charles Borromeo in Fort Wayne. One of his major accomplishments within the diocese was during his tenure as Pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish in New Carlisle from 2002-2007, where he instituted a restoration project. Father Bob Garrow, current



Father Jan Klimczyk

Pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka, spoke of the work that Father Klimczyk undertook at the parish. The artwork he brought back from a visit to his homeland included a painting of the Last Supper for the altar and an eagle to represent St. John the Evangelist on the ambo. Father Garrow laughs to think that Father Klimczyk might have left a representation of himself at the parish through the St. John painting, as "Jan" translates to "John" in English.

Father Garrow also spoke of how Father Klimczyk shared his Polish heritage with the people of the parish, many of whom were also of Polish descent, through ethnic foods. "He had a great love for the people," Father Garrow said, relating how whenever they saw each other, Father Klimczyk always asked about the people of the parish.

Most of all, Father Klimczyk was always willing to give of himself, even in retirement. "If

there was any time I needed help and he could help, he would."

After his time in New Carlisle, he was sent to Blessed Sacrament in Albion, then to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne in 2012, and again was moved to St. Patrick Parish in Walkerton in 2014. He served as chaplain at Saint Anne Communities Victory Noll in Huntington for a year before retiring to Holy Family in South Bend.

Father Klimczyk was laid to rest on Monday, Aug. 29 at St. Joseph Cemetery in South Bend after the Mass of Christian Burial at St. Adalbert.

A ghost bicycle has been placed in his memory along State Road 2, close to the site of the accident. Teresa Sheppard represents an organization that places bicycles that have been painted white across the Michiana area to memorialize people who are killed on their bicycles and to serve as a notice for motorists to pay attention to those with whom they share the road. "It's a really nice memorial," she said.

Those who knew the deceased person can visit the ghost bike site and place flowers, crosses, or other mementoes significant to that person to honor them. Zip ties will be left at the site for those who might want to secure objects in place. Sheppard said that, "It's meant for people to make their own."

Father Klimczyk said it best himself in his last homily: "May Mary pray for us each until we reach our eternal home."



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, Sept. 4: 10 a.m. – Mass, St. Aloysius Church, Yoder
 Wednesday, Sept. 7: 10:30 a.m. – Presbyterate Meeting, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Warsaw
 Thursday, Sept. 8 through Saturday, Sept. 10: Catholic Medical Association Conference, Denver, Colorado



Priest announcement

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has made the following announcement:

Reverend Brian Carpenter to Parochial Vicar, St. Matthew Cathedral Parish, South Bend, effective September 1, 2022.



Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Statement on Death of Father Jan Klimczyk

We learned on Tuesday of the tragic death of Father Jan Klimczyk in an apparent hit-and-run accident late in the evening on Monday, Aug. 22 in South Bend while he was riding his bike. Father Klimczyk was ordained a priest in 1981 for the Archdiocese of Kraków in Poland and transferred into the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend in 1994. Though retired, he was still serving at Holy Family Parish in South Bend. I ask for your prayers for eternal rest in heaven for Father Klimczyk and for peace for his family and friends now mourning his loss.

Work Experience Partnership Helps St. Vincent de Paul Society Serve Others; Volunteers Gain Job Skills

BY KEVIN KILBANE

The atmosphere is light and cheerful despite the hot, humid weather pushing through the open garage door on a recent morning at the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Fort Wayne's warehouse in Fort Wayne.

About a dozen people served by Easterseals Arc of Northeast Indiana chat, laugh, and joke with each other as they sort donated clothing based on quality and size and tag it for sale in the society's adjacent Thrift Store.

The volunteer opportunity allows Easterseals clients, who have disabilities, to develop work experience and skills they can use to get paying jobs in the community. Their labor and enthusiasm help the St. Vincent

de Paul Society staff carry out their ministry's mission to offer hope and help to all through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

"They give us so much," said David Till, the society's Volunteer Coordinator and Warehouse Manager. "Without them, the store wouldn't be where it's at today. With three of us, we couldn't process the amount of clothes they do. It's a win-win situation."

Along with Easterseals Arc, the St. Vincent de Paul Society also has developed volunteer, work-experience partnerships for clients of Benchmark Human Services in Fort Wayne and Fort Wayne Community Schools students from the FWCS Career Academy at Anthis, Till said.

All of the volunteers have disabilities. With their help, however, donated clothing gets



Kevin Kilbane

David Till, Warehouse Manager and Volunteer Coordinator for the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Fort Wayne, said partnerships with Easterseals Arc of Northeast Indiana, Benchmark Human Services, and Fort Wayne Community Schools' Career Academy at Anthis are a "win-win" because volunteers from the partner organizations gain job skills as they help the St. Vincent de Paul Society process clothing donations quickly for selling in the society's Thrift Store.

processed quickly and out on Thrift Store racks and shelves for sale, said Till and Lara Schreck, local St. Vincent de Paul Society Executive Director. As a result, the store's clothing sales have increased by 40 percent to 50 percent during the past six months, Schreck said.

"These groups are helping us help others!" Schreck said. Revenue from thrift store sales goes back into the community to assist people in need with food and payment of rent or utility bills.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society cares for those in need through 22 volunteer service groups at Catholic parishes throughout northeast Indiana, including operating 10 food pantries, Schreck said. The service groups provide care

Indiana's Abortion Ban: SB1 Unpacked

Tuesday, Sept. 6
6:30-7:30 p.m.
St. Joseph Church
230 S. Spring St., Mishawaka

Having trouble understanding Indiana's Abortion Ban SB1? Join Voices for Life and University of Notre Dame Law Professor and former law clerk for Justice Samuel Alito, Sheriff Girgis, for a lecture discussing the content and consequences of SB1. Reception to follow with light refreshments.

Contact: Melanie Lyon
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Saturday, October 1, 2022

7:30 a.m.: Sacramental Confession,
Holy Rosary, 1st Saturday Devotions

9 a.m.: Holy Sacrifice of the Mass
@ Cathedral of the Immaculate
Conception

11 a.m.: Breakfast at Grand Wayne
Center with Guest Speaker
Dr. Paul Kengor
Author of *The Pope and The President*
and *The Devil and Karl Marx*

Tickets: Adult ~ \$15 ~ Children 6-10 ~ \$5
5 and younger: FREE
RSVP @ FatimaFWSB.org

Indiana Woman's True Story 'Reclaims Beauty of Adoption'

BY NATALIE HOEFER

EDINBURGH, Ind. (CNS) – Melissa Coles received a call in the late summer of 2019. She didn't listen long before she figured it was a prank call and hung up. When the person called back, she hung up again.

"On the third call, they had all the producers on the line – Kirk Cameron and the Kendrick brothers," she said, referring to Alex, Shannon, and Stephen Kendrick, producers of Christian films such as "Fireproof," "War Room," and "Courageous." "They said they wanted to make (the documentary) 'I Lived on Parker Avenue' into a movie."

Coles knew the 2018 YouTube documentary well – she was one of its subjects.

"It's three powerful stories wrapped into one," said Coles: the story of her decision against abortion; the story of the son she offered for adoption; and the story of the couple who adopted him.

Cameron told Coles he saw the documentary and "fell in love with it." He told the Kendrick brothers about the documentary and asked their thoughts on him making it into a movie.

"They said, 'Not only do we like it, we love it and we want to be part of it,'" Coles told The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Three years after that call, their vision has become reality. The film "Lifemark" will show in select theaters throughout the country Sept. 9-16. A novel of the same name is also now available.

Coles calls "Lifemark" "a meaningful, faith-based film that reclaims the beauty of adoption. You're going to laugh, you're going to cry, there's drama, there's four-wheel driving, and skydiving – I'm an adrenaline junkie," she admitted.

But Coles, born and raised in Columbus, Indiana, was hesitant to say "yes" to the film at first – unlike her instant "yes" in 1993 when something told her to get up from an abortion table.

Coles was 18 when she experienced an unplanned pregnancy. As revealed in "I Lived on Parker Avenue," she and her boyfriend knew they did not have the means to raise a child. They decided to abort the baby.

Soon, Coles was on a table in an abortion facility in Indianapolis with a doctor seated in front of her. As he was selecting a tool to start the abortion, an extraordinary thing happened: She heard a voice.

"It said, 'Get up, get up. It's



CNS photo/lifemarkmovie.com, via The Criterion

Rebecca Rogers Nelson and Kirk Cameron star in a scene from the movie "Lifemark."

not too late," she recalled. "I said, 'I can't do this,' and I literally ran out the door."

Through a private adoption agency, she selected a couple from Louisiana, Susan and Jimmy Scotton, to raise her son, whom they named David.

The documentary records the emotions of Coles, David, and the Scottons in 2013 as they all meet for the first time nearly 20 years after David's birth. It was the first time Coles held her son since the day he was born.

She doesn't deny the pain of giving a child for adoption.

"It's still hard," she said, even after being in touch with her son for 10 years. "I think, 'If I'd been better off when I had him, he'd still be with me today.'"

"Even though I knew I was doing the right thing for David – not me, but David – I'm always going to miss him. There's always going to be this void," she said.

But then she considers her son's life. He is now 29, a law school graduate and newlywed who works as an attorney in Louisiana.

Coles eventually had another child, Courtney. She loves her daughter with all her heart and loves being a mom.

Despite that joy, Coles said she was "angry with God, bitter. My whole life has been a struggle. Why did I have to give up my son? Why didn't (God) give me what I needed to keep him?"

Then she met Shawn Coles, her husband now of 16 years.

"On date number one he called me out on where I stood with the Lord," said Coles, a nondenominational Christian. "I realized I wasn't living for God. I just needed something to wake me up – hence my husband. I didn't give my life to God until I met Shawn."

He helped her learn to trust God. Shawn also was the one

who encouraged his wife to say yes to the "Lifemark" film.

"I had a whole list of reasons not to do it," she said. "I didn't want people to see me at my weakest. I didn't want to be used."

"Then my husband said, 'What if it helps just one person?' So, I agreed to do it."

Working with Cameron and the Kendricks was "just amazing," said Coles. "They allowed me to be involved, read the script and make changes and suggestions."

They even sought her input on the cast, sending her paperwork for the women who applied to play young Melissa and "current" Melissa – "I just don't like saying 'old Melissa,'" she joked. Marissa Hampton and Dawn Long, respectively, were cast as her then and now.

Coles and her husband were invited to spend a week on set at the studio in Georgia so she could offer support while emotional "Melissa" scenes were filmed.

"When you approach the studio building, you feel the Holy Spirit hit heavy and hard," Coles recalled. "It's even more powerful when you go inside. When we were with them, we could see the Holy Spirit at work."

There were roadblocks to making the film as well, she said. The pandemic caused delays, and the producers struggled to find a company to distribute the film "because Kirk Cameron and the Kendricks don't support abortion," said Coles.

But those same pro-life values permeated the project, leading to the saving of one unborn baby before "Lifemark" was even released.

A pregnant woman on her way to an abortion center stopped to investigate a large

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Abiding in Christ In and Through the Eucharistic Revival

BY TIERNEY VRDOLYAK

Jesus calls all to unity in Himself in and through the Eucharist. Here He offers who He is: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:47) and "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day" (John 6:55).

If Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist – body, blood, soul, and divinity – under the appearances of bread and wine, and truly desires to eat this Pasch with his children (Luke 22:15), then how will they respond? Will the faithful fully and with conviction receive the Son of God as Peter did, sharing what He freely gave to all the nations?

The National Eucharistic Revival was conceived through a desire to answer this question. Under the chair of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Evangelization and Catechesis Committee and organizer of the National Eucharistic Revival, Bishop Andrew Cozzens, bishops of the United States have been asked to consider how each diocese might orient itself to be more aware and understanding of the greatest gift it has received – Jesus Christ truly present in the Eucharist – so that members may respond to Him fully in all aspects of their lives: from the diocesan to the parish level, from the school to the family.

The Diocesan Eucharistic Revival is comprised of Eucharistic Adoration, pilgrimages, and related opportunities to form and ignite the lives of

the faithful within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Chris Langford, point person for the Diocesan Revival, said, "An ancient and true phrase is 'lex orandi, lex credendi,' [which means] that how we worship reflects what we believe."

True beauty is to experience something deeper, richer, and fuller that reflects beauty itself, who is God. The goal of the Diocesan Eucharistic Revival is for people to be born again by the beauty of the Eucharist, in addition to the goodness and truth of Jesus. All of the initiatives flow from this vision.

Langford explained one such initiative at the local level. "Eucharistic Miracles Exhibits will be a highlight for the revival. Our Lord knows what we need, especially in our age of unbelief, of scientism, skepticism, and relativism. He has given Eucharistic miracles throughout the centuries, and especially recently, so that we might again come to believe in Him, that He is who He says He is."

In this Diocesan Year of the Revival, pilgrimage is essential, and a self-guided pilgrimage is currently underway in the diocese, with a different location chosen each month as a site to visit. Monthly locations and "passports" are available to print on the diocese's website. Carl Loesch, Secretary for Pastoral Ministries and Catechesis for the diocese, explains the significance: "Pilgrimage is an important facet of the Christian life. In this particular Year of the Eucharist, the Church offers us this tangible experience, related to the goal of schools.



The goal of our schools is not to get [our students] to graduation, to get to college; it's to help get each person to heaven. Every pilgrimage is a reminder of that."

Kindergarten students at Mishawaka Catholic demonstrate this. Teacher Betsy Williams was inspired to bring her students to adoration, an inspiration that continued into forming an after-school Adoration Club, in which students gathered for prayer before the Eucharist before heading home. As one student was preparing to depart with her mother, Williams proposed, "Isla, tell your mother what you saw today." Six-year-old Isla proceeded to share that she saw a golden ray of light coming down on all the children. Her mother listened in awe of the grace her little one received and so wanted to share.

Being in the presence of beauty, truth, and goodness Himself cannot help but stir the faithful. Suzanne Horban, parishioner and overseer of the

August Diocesan Pilgrimage site, Corpus Christi in South Bend, shared how a visit to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart reflected this. "There is beauty everywhere in the Basilica – the organ, stained-glass windows, painted ceiling with stars, angels, and saints, etc. ... but what most captivated me was the tabernacle. How riveting, just to look."

Pilgrimages are a call to worship, to participate fully in the Eucharistic life of the Church, and parishes, families, friends, and individuals are responding in wonderful ways. Horban shared her experience of pilgrimage, beginning with the Diocesan Eucharistic Procession on Corpus Christi Sunday that ushered in the Eucharistic Revival.

"I received a postcard for the Eucharistic Procession in Warsaw. My husband and I decided to take our family. What struck me most, and my daughters too, was how close we all walked towards the beginning of the procession. After we left the first church, the street was so narrow. We had a sense that this was something special, since there was little talk, and close to silence. What we could all hear was music. The hymn, 'I Receive the Living God,' was sung. The experience of the pilgrimage stuck with me so much that I asked the music minister at Corpus Christi Parish whether this hymn could be the Communion hymn the following weekend."

She was impressed by the size and scope of the crowd that day. She stated that the entire pilgrimage among the thousands of men, women, and children was exhausting and exhilarating, "almost like looking back after having a baby. When you reflect on that experience, you realize the magnitude of how God carried you and the people around you through it all, and you give nothing but thanks."

Horban and her husband also made their way to Fort Wayne one day. "After praying in the beautiful Oratory of St. Mary Magdalene, we discovered there is a Diocesan Museum next to the cathedral, and went in. It was fascinating learning about the people and places within and outside of our diocese through stories. We saw some religious art that still strikes me, especially a statue of Jesus being scourged at the pillar. We have since told other people about the museum."

Whether through participation in the diocesan Eucharistic Procession, a parish-wide pilgrimage, or a family-wide saint study sprung from the month's featured saint, Jesus awaits the faithful in the Eucharist, desiring to be with each one and spread the love of His Eucharistic Heart to all peoples.

For up-to-date information, visit the diocesan website for all Eucharistic Revival events and activities: diocesefwsb.org/eucharist/.

LIFEMARK, from page 4

crowd she saw gathered near the studio, said Coles.

"Raphael (Ruggero), the actor playing David, was giving a talk," she explained. "She was invited to be an extra in the movie. She decided not to go through with the abortion."

That story alone fulfilled Coles' conviction that if the movie helped "just one person," it would be worth the time and sacrifice.

Still, she hopes for more. "I hope the film will help more people see the beauty of adoption and understand how important adoption is," said Coles, adding that she hopes it will help those facing an unplanned pregnancy or a forced abortion know "they have plenty of options."

She said she knows the documentary "saved at least 11 babies from abortion." "If the documentary did that, how much more will the film do?"

Coles also looks forward to the film "expanding the platform" for her pro-life efforts.

In addition to speaking nationally in support of adoption, Coles works with women in unplanned pregnancies, has finished one unpublished book and is writing another as well as a script while "dipping my feet in acting."

She also hopes to create a nonprofit organization to help fund education for students – both women and men – who choose life for their unexpected, unborn child.

"I still feel the void of losing David," she said. "But I think my heart is healing. When I see how I help others by letting God use me as his tool, it increases my healing."

Editor's Note: For more information about "Lifemark," go to www.lifemarkmovie.com. To invite Coles to speak at an event, go to cutt.ly/MelissaColes.

Hofer is a staff writer at The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Eucharistic
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exhibit by Blessed Carlo Acutis

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&
Sept. 11
9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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Pope Creates 20 New Cardinals, Including San Diego Bishop

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – In a ceremony to create 20 new cardinals, Pope Francis encouraged the College of Cardinals to have the same spiritual zeal for all people, whether they are in positions of power or ordinary Christians. “A cardinal loves the Church, always with that same spiritual fire, whether dealing with great questions or handling everyday problems, with the powerful of this world or those ordinary people who are great in God’s eyes,” the pope said on Aug. 20 during the consistory, a prayer service during which he personally welcomed 20 churchmen into the College of Cardinals. Those who have this apostolic zeal are compelled “by the fire of the Spirit to be concerned, courageously, with things great and small,” he said. During the ceremony, each of the new cardinals, including Cardinal Robert W. McElroy of San Diego, California, professed their faith by reciting the Creed and formally swore fidelity and obedience to the pope and his successors. They then approached Pope Francis, one by one, to receive their biretta, their cardinal’s ring, and the assignment of a “titular” church in Rome, which makes them part of the Roman clergy. In his homily, Pope Francis reflected on Jesus’ words to his disciples, in which he declared, “I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled.” Focusing on the image of fire, Pope Francis said that the “flame of the spirit of God” represents his love “that purifies, regenerates, and transfigures all things.” It also evokes the charcoal fire made by the risen Christ for his disciples along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, which created “a familiar setting where the disciples, amazed and moved, savor their closeness to their Lord.”

Ukraine Marks Half a Year of Resistance and Independence, but Worries Loom

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) – As Ukraine approached the 31st anniversary of its independence on Aug. 24, it did so while embroiled in a bitter fight for that freedom, as it hit the six-month mark of defending itself against a Russian invasion. Archbishop Borys Gudziak, head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the U.S., used the occasion to thank U.S. Catholics and other people of goodwill for material and spiritual shows of solidarity as the nation fights to remain free from Russian control. “I want to thank all of you for your solidarity: all Americans, all American Catholics, all people of goodwill.

Twenty Men Elevated to Status of Cardinal



CNS photo/Paul Haring

New U.S. Cardinal Robert W. McElroy of San Diego greets U.S. Cardinal James M. Harvey during a consistory led by Pope Francis for the creation of 20 new cardinals in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on Aug. 27, 2022. Also pictured is Cardinal Roger M. Mahony, retired archbishop of Los Angeles.

It is with your help that Ukraine is making this biblical stance (of) David against Goliath,” he said in a recorded video message posted on YouTube on Aug. 23. “And Ukrainians are saying to you and to me and to everybody in the world, ‘We will not be a colony,’” he said. “(Just as) Algeria will not be a colony of France, like Peru and Uruguay will not be a colony of Spain, like the United States will not be a colony of Great Britain, so Ukraine will never again be a colony of Russia. This is what independence means today for Ukraine,” added Archbishop Gudziak, who heads the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia. And while Ukrainians remain defiant, some Catholic organizations sounded the alarm about the difficulties on the ground that have only increased since the Feb. 24 invasion by Russian forces. “The current state of stress is not sustainable – not for Ukraine, not for its neighboring countries, not for the larger global community,” said Sean Callahan, President and CEO of Catholic Relief Services in an Aug. 22 statement.

Indianapolis Catholic is Leading Pope’s Global Plan to Care for the Earth

INDIANAPOLIS (CNS) – John Mundell considers it “an incredible honor” that he was recently chosen as the director of the worldwide effort to put Pope Francis’ encyclical “Laudato Si’, on Care for Our Common Home” into action. At the same time, the member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis feels a great responsibility to help people from around the globe understand the urgent need to care for the world that God has created – the central theme of the papal encyclical issued seven years ago. “The world and the Catholic Church as a whole have not responded adequately to Pope Francis’ core message, which calls for an ‘ecological conversion’ to change our lifestyles and our economy,” Mundell said. “During this same period, we have witnessed firsthand the increasing effects of climate change and biodiversity loss – more intense storm events and flooding, wildfires and record

temperatures,” he continued. “While there are positive signs of progress in some areas and increased engagement with the faithful, much more is needed if we are going to make any positive impact,” he said. Mundell is hoping to help create that positive impact as the Director of the Laudato Si’ Action Platform, or LSAP, which offers concrete plans for a “seven-year journey toward healing in our relationships with God, our neighbors, and the earth itself.”

Church Leaders: South Sudanese Refugees Want to Return, but Need Peace

KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP, Kenya (CNS) – Sitting on a mat with her four children outside her tent in this United Nations camp, Achol Dut, a South Sudanese refugee, said she wants to return to her country and rebuild her life. Her country’s obstacles to peace and stability have prevented her move. “Life is difficult in a refugee camp,” said the 42-year-old mother of six. “Our children spend days without meals, and access to medicines and educa-

tion is hard.” Dut fled her village in South Sudan’s Jonglei state in December of 2017 after government soldiers attacked their village in the middle of the night, killing residents, abducting several people, burning homes, and destroying schools, churches, and hospitals. “I lost my husband and two other children during the attack,” said Dut, noting that she moved to Kenya to save her remaining children from additional attacks. “I had to walk for five days to Kakuma without water and food, and we could sleep in the bush and sometimes in churches and schools.” She is among thousands of refugees who want to return to their country and rebuild their lives. Their desire to return home has prompted religious leaders in South Sudan to start a peace campaign to ensure refugees can return to a peaceful environment. The campaign brings together local leaders, government officials, and leaders from all ethnic groups who, after the training by religious facilitators, are supposed to spearhead peaceful dialogue and reconciliation in their areas to ensure residents live in peace, love each other, and promote social cohesion and interdependence among different ethnic groups.

Philippine Bishop: Country Must Stay Aware of What Happens Under Marcos

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) – A Philippine bishop expressed hope for the renewal of a community-centered Church under his country’s new leader, Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who has not shaken off his family’s notorious legacy. “I am sure that most of us, if not all, are already aware of the well-funded, well-orchestrated, and systematic whitewashing of the Marcos history,” Bishop Gerardo Alminaza of San Carlos told a virtual forum of more than 100 Philippine- and U.S.-based peace workers. “And regrettably, we might have to humbly admit that we, particularly as a Church, may have acted too late in response,” said Bishop Alminaza. The bishop said, however, “we just have to start creating the circles of forces ... that are very much aware of what is happening.” He told the Aug. 23 forum that the synod on synodality preparation in the Philippines is a “very powerful moment,” as the bishops look more closely at their decision-making and leadership response and how they should be responding to the country’s difficulties by listening to those in the peripheries. He said he is looking to a return to “basic ecclesial communities,” in which church communities of families come together on issues of spirituality and social justice, whether for better formation or to tackle various challenges.

Called by Christ and a Pope to 40-year Priesthood

BY ERIKA BARRON

Father Eloy Jiménez's call to the priesthood did not begin in a dramatic and life-altering way like his spiritual hero St. Paul. It began at his home in Mexico, surrounded by family who had a deep love of serving their parish and fostering the desire in him to do the same. With a routine of daily prayers in school, the rosary, and altar serving, he began to hear the call to priesthood, and is celebrating 40 years in that vocation this year.

By age 11, Father Jiménez began studying theology and philosophy at the minor seminary in the Diocese of Tacámbaro. After his second year in the major seminary, he decided it was time for a year of discernment, as he was not completely sure if the journey toward priesthood was the route he wanted to take. He worked for the diocesan newspaper in Tacámbaro, where in 1979 he was sent to report on Pope John Paul II's first visit to Mexico in Guadalajara. Here his direction would be revealed to him. In a meeting with His Holiness, Pope John Paul II said to Father Jiménez, "You are being called by Christ to

become a priest."

This became one of the most important moments of his life. Father Jiménez knew he had to return to the seminary to finish his studies. This would not be the last time Pope John Paul II and Father Jiménez would cross paths. In May of 1982, Father Jiménez was ordained as a priest in Rome by the same pope who called him to his vocation. "When he laid his hands on my head, I felt the weight; they felt so heavy, and in that moment, I said, 'God I give my life completely to You,'" he recalled with great emotion.

For a time, God called him to serve at several parishes in his diocese, but he would soon be sent to work with the indigenous tribes of the Chihuahua region. During this time, he baptized and initiated around 800 adults into the Catholic faith. While living among the native people, he shared in their customs and traditions. Finding food was one important task, for the people of this region were very poor and food was hard to come by, sometimes resulting in a six-hour drive to the nearest city where food could be purchased for the people.

"I saw God in them; I was



FATHER ELOY JIMÉNEZ

very happy there," he recalled. Soon after, he was sent to study at Columbia University in New York for two years. He returned to his diocese where he was named Business Manager for both the major and minor seminaries. Father Jiménez reflected on his time there. "At the time, there were 120 seminarians. It was a very interesting experience."

Later, he would return to parish life, sparking the joy that can only come from the love of the community. In Mexico, priests are an integral part of the community's daily

lives, not merely someone seen only on Sunday. On top of their normal priestly duties, they help to provide for the daily needs of their flock. Father Jiménez began working amongst his parishioners, building houses and repairing roads. In small communities without a larger church, he built eight chapels. Father Jiménez greatly enjoyed working with his hands and helping to provide for his community.

Moved by the growing number of Mexican people immigrating to America to seek a new life, Father Jiménez reached out to Bishop John M. D'Arcy to ask if he could come serve those within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and was welcomed with open arms. "I came here thinking about the experience of the people who move to America, leaving everything to seek a better life," he said, and even after some discouraging words from his friends, he knew this is where God was leading him.

"They warned me I would be treated like a number, not as a person, but at least three times going through immigration, the officers have told me, 'Thank you Father, thank you for coming to America and for being a priest,'" he recollects.

His first assignment was at St. Patrick Parish in Fort Wayne, followed by seven years at St. Michael Parish in Plymouth, three years in Goshen at St. John the Evangelist, and currently serves at St. Vincent de Paul in Elkhart. His heart is always moved by his parishioners and their gratitude for his and his fellow priests' work. Father Jiménez especially enjoys hearing confessions at the parish – "seeing the human being in all of their faults and appealing to the mercy of God, knowing He will make them whole again."

Known also for his inspiring homilies, Father Jiménez is often approached by parishioners thanking him for his words, which have helped them amend their lives. Father Jiménez reflects, "It doesn't matter which parish I go to; they welcome me, appreciate, and pray for me."

After 40 years of a vocation centered around love of Christ, Father Jiménez has a multitude of advice for young men discerning the priesthood. "Be generous with God, with the Church, and with yourself. Participate in the sacraments and listen closely for the call of the Holy Spirit."

Congratulations!

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Padre Eloy Jiménez

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Warsaw Pilgrimage Site Receives Hundreds Under Our Lady's Mantle

BY JODI MARLIN

Marian pilgrimage sites around the world draw large crowds of the faithful, and on Aug. 13, the one in Warsaw swelled with a similar presence. For the 12th year, hundreds of people of all ages worshipped, adored, fulfilled promises, and grew in fellowship under the mantle of Mary at the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, offering a eucharistic liturgy and a grand celebration in thankfulness for prayers heard.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church was built for just such a purpose, to draw from across the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend those with a devotion to her 1531 apparition on Tepeyac Hill outside of Mexico City, Mexico. Even today, the Patroness of the Americas is an inextricable part of the faith of many families who come from Latin America, where the sacrifice of making a pilgrimage is common and sometimes even made on foot or on one's knees.

The idea to celebrate the shrine's patroness in the summertime instead of on her feast day of Dec. 12 grew out of a Hispanic lay leadership training program offered several years ago at the University of Notre Dame, the Instituto Cultural Liderazgo en el Medio Oeste (Midwest Cultural Leadership Institute). The founders of the Feria Guadalupana, Leonardo and Elvia Patiño, Manuel Gutierrez, Irma Cantero, and Sister Joan Hastreiter, felt that by scheduling it in the summer, the faith community would be able to enjoy what is prohibitive in the winter: showing their love for her in traditional Mexican fashion, including those pilgrimages as well as a joyous communal meal, music, folkloric dancing, and hours of fellowship that embrace the entire family. The event has also come to serve as the parish's largest annual fundraising event and draws large crowds and representation from the surrounding community.

Prior to construction of the shrine in 2005, Catholics in Elkhart County who wanted to worship in Spanish had to travel to Milford, where the first planting of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish was located at that time. The three faith



Photos by Jodi Marlin

Holding flowers that will be placed under her image, a family worships during an outdoor Mass culminating a 30-mile bike ride from Elkhart. It was one of three eucharistic liturgies held on Aug. 13 at the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Warsaw. Each one was celebrated upon the arrival of pilgrims who had walked or biked for miles to fulfill promises they had made to her.

communities retain a close relationship, which is why parishioners from those and other Hispanic parishes were heavily represented at the Feria Guadalupana and why it began the night before for many, including the group that set out Friday night on foot from St. John the Evangelist Church in Goshen. Those pilgrims walked through the night and arrived at the shrine just after dawn.

Another two groups made the trip on bicycle, one leaving from St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Elkhart and another from St. John the Evangelist.

Carlos Ortega led the Goshen bicyclists, and his fellow riders were eager to show their love for Our Lady by

biking for four hours to the celebration. He noted that even children as young as six and eight participated in the ride, which took place on less-heavily traveled country roads until it reached the intersection of State Road 15 and County Road 250.

"We do it for personal reasons, to give thanks with all of our heart for all that she and Our Lord have given us – for all the blessings we have; for work, for life, health, family, faith. We're grateful, and we want to show that," Ortega said.

A Mass was celebrated for each group of pilgrims as they arrived at 8 a.m., 10 a.m., and noon. Referring to their



Above, pilgrims from Goshen approach the shrine via S.R. 15 at 12:30 p.m. Saturday. They, too, attended a Mass celebrated at the church immediately upon their arrival. The rest of the day included food, music, dance performances, and fellowship. Below: Worshippers attend the earlier Mass for pilgrim bicyclists from Elkhart.

fervent devotion during the 10 a.m. Mass, Pastor Father Constantino Rocha acknowledged the profoundness of their intentions – the prayers, petitions, and promises they had carried with them along the route, "confident in that which Our Lady of Guadalupe said to Juan Diego when she appeared to him: 'Am I not here, I who am your mother? What are you afraid of?' Now, each one of us opens our heart and shares with her our fears, our prayers, the acts of thankfulness we have brought her this morning."

The parish also marked its 50th anniversary on July 10. In observance of that milestone and in support of the Feria Guadalupana, community members and organizations like the Bowen Center, several area colleges, Heartline Pregnancy Center, local realtors, and the Warsaw Police Department added to the festive atmosphere with booths and banners of support and giveaways. To feed the weary pilgrims, more than a dozen tables of tacos, flavored waters, corn, tamales, and desserts were donated by parishioners or provided by local stores and prepared by parish families.

As the afternoon wore on, the liturgies gave way to music, folk dancing, and the general comradery of a family gathered out of a holy love.

Leo Patiño, the son of Leonardo and Elvia Patiño, has played a pivotal role in helping his parents pull the festival together for years. It's an incredible gathering of friends for the area's Hispanic faith communities and something everyone looks forward to, he said, even though its continual growth presents challenges. "Sometimes we just can't keep up; we need more help."

Cayo Gonzalez and Laureano Herrera weren't complaining. "We're just grateful to be here, to honor her in this way," Gonzalez said, leaning against his bike at the end of the 10 a.m. outdoor Mass. He and Herrera, parishioners of St. Adalbert Parish in South Bend, were part of the group that rode 30 miles from Elkhart to the shrine to fulfill a promise each had made to the Virgin.

Leticia Robles and Benjamin Rubio of LaGrange biked in with the same group from Elkhart, and for a similar reason.

"I've had a devotion to Our Lady since I was little," Robles said. "We feel like this is a small sacrifice for all the prayers she answers, all the ways she is with us and protects us and draws us closer to the Lord."

"We do it for personal reasons, to give thanks with all of our heart for all that she and Our Lord have given us – for all the blessings we have."

CARLOS ORTEGA

75 Years of Loving Christ and Community at St. Dominic

BY ERIKA BARRON

On July, 8 1947, a new chapter began for the Catholics of St. Dominic in Bremen. Father Ralph G. Hoffman was installed as permanent pastor, formally establishing it as a parish. Before this, St. Dominic was a mission parish, served by priests whose main duties were serving much larger parishes throughout the area. At the time of Father Hoffman's arrival, St. Dominic was spiritual home to a modest 27 families.

The church had first been built in 1875, funded solely by the original 12 families and their collective donation of \$1,200. Heated by a cast iron wood stove and illuminated only by kerosene lamps, the small church featured a large steeple, which in later years would be destroyed twice by two separate storms.

With the sense of stability, the arrival of Father Hoffman brought the community together. The number of families quickly grew to 48. Father Hoffman's immediate task was to begin repairing and rebuilding the humble church that had seen little change since 1875. This included replacing the wood-burning stove with a furnace, covering the interior walls with acoustic board, the exterior with a brown imitation brick, and rewiring the entire church.

Father Hoffman's rebuilding extended much farther than just the physical church. Bremen at the time was dominated by nine Protestant churches. With the Catholics of the community being a very small minority, Father Hoffman took the time to get to know the Protestant leaders, disproving some of the long-held stereotypes and misconceptions of their Catholic neighbors.

In 1951, Father Hoffman received notice that he would be moved to a parish in Chesterton, Indiana, as the town of Bremen had been placed within the boundaries of the Diocese of Fort Wayne, which until this point had been within the Diocese of Gary. Thus began a succession of priests over the years, who, while their time at the parish was short, left legacies behind of what each had done for the church and the community. In 1959, Father Ralph Larson, the new pastor, took on the challenge of enhancing religious education for the youth of the parish. By this time, there were more than 90 families attending St. Dominic and the need for a larger church was becoming evident.

Father Larson began raising funds for the construction of a new church building, which would be designed leading



Photos provided by Father Daniel Niezer



On Aug. 6, St. Dominic Parish in Bremen celebrated its 75th anniversary in a special way – by welcoming Jacob Pierce into the Catholic Church.

up to Vatican II, for which the ground was broken in 1963. The changes in liturgy meant that there would be major differences in this new building, including a "reversible" altar, a lack of communion rails, and seating for nearly 400 people to accommodate the growing congregation. The exterior was covered in beautiful Indiana limestone. During construction, Mass was held in the downtown Bremen movie theater.

On April 19, 1964, Bishop Leo A. Pursley dedicated the new church. Father Richard Urbine was pastor at this time and was joined by five other former pastors for this joyful celebration.

Today, the parish of St. Dominic is still thriving. The parishioners continue the legacy of the founding fami-

lies by painstakingly caring for the church; providing their time and talents to make their church a beautiful place of worship.

"We have one of the most beautiful parishes in the diocese. It was laid brick by brick because the parishioners love their church so much," Father Daniel Niezer, the current Pastor of St. Dominic shared.

Another tradition that has been kept alive is the fundraising events, which the whole town attends. The annual fish fry serves thousands of people. This year's was so crowded that it resulted in running out of food for the first time ever. Another popular event is the "Men's Stag Party," the event of the year for the 500-plus men who attend the night of food and fellowship, some even

arriving in limos with their friends.

The religious education program started by Father Larson continues to grow every year with upwards of 150 students, and St. Dominic is one of the few parishes in the diocese to have a weekly religious education class on Sunday for high school students. This year, there are more weddings being held at the parish than ever on record.

To celebrate their 75th anniversary, the parish held a picnic after Mass on Saturday, Aug. 6, coinciding with the feast of St. Dominic, bringing together the parishioners and the community to celebrate the historic anniversary. One major highlight of the evening was the baptism and full initiation of catechumen, Jacob Pierce – an appropriate way for a parish known for their welcoming community to celebrate their milestone anniversary.

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Bishop Rhoades Begins Pastoral Visits at St. Charles Borromeo

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

The school itself has been educating children in the Catholic faith for more than 60 years.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades fielded a number of questions from students and taught a few Spanish lessons to young students when he made his first pastoral visit of the 2022-23 school year to St. Charles Borromeo School in Fort Wayne on Friday, Aug. 26.

In the morning, Bishop Rhoades celebrated Mass for the entire student body, which ranged from preschool to eighth grade. During the homily, he spoke about the cross, asking students for examples of where they make the sign of the cross in their lives.

The Power of the Cross

"I'd like to talk about the cross because, in our first reading today from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he wrote about the cross of Jesus. And he said, 'We proclaim Christ crucified: a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles. But the cross is the power and wisdom of God.'"

"Think about how many times during the day you make the sign of the cross. I was trying to count it up – I make the sign of the cross quite often – maybe you can give me some examples of when you make the sign of the cross."

Various students responded to his question and told of how they make the sign of the cross several times throughout Mass, as well as before meals and when they receive the sacrament of Reconciliation.



Students at St. Charles Borromeo School welcomed Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades into their classrooms, where they took the opportunity to ask him questions about the faith and the attire of a bishop.

All photos by Joshua Schipper

"We use the sign of the cross when we pray," the bishop continued, "at the beginning and the end of our prayers. That's very important. We also make the sign of the cross not only when we pray, but also before we engage in an important activity."

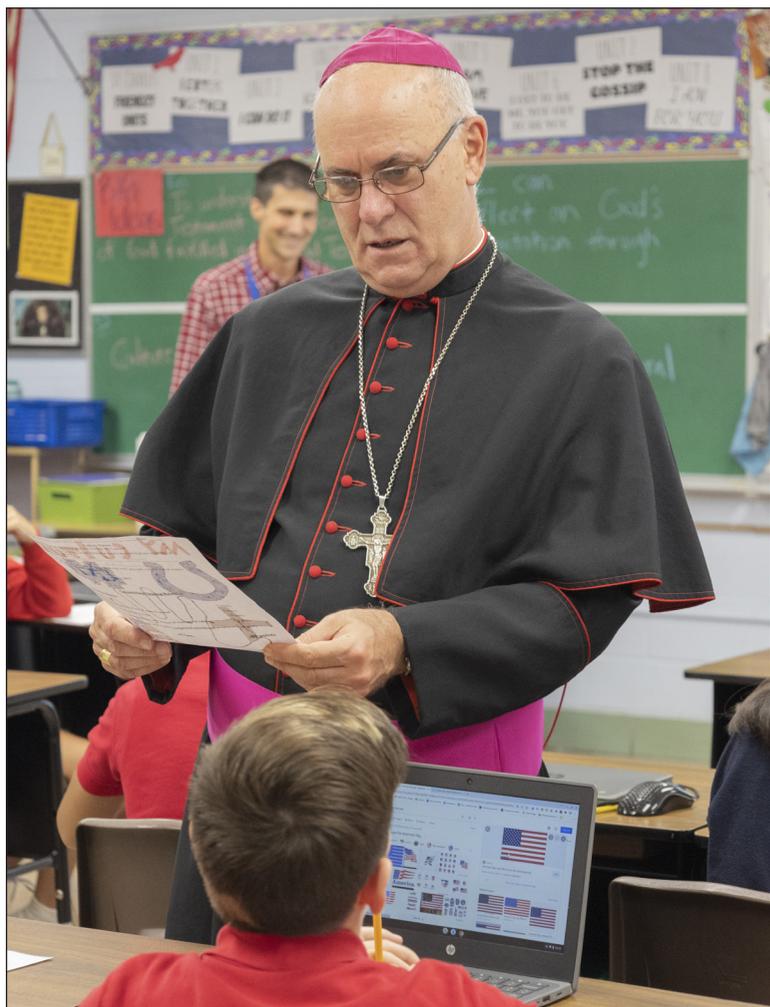
Visiting the Classrooms

After Mass, Bishop Rhoades visited the students in their classrooms. Administrators at the school, as well as Fathers Tom Shoemaker and Daniel Koehl, Pastor and Parochial Vicar, respectively, escorted Bishop Rhoades around the building, pointing out the original church structure and several additions made to the school through the years.

Rob Sordelet, Principal at St. Charles Borromeo School, said that the students were especially excited to welcome Bishop Rhoades to their school. "I saw a lot of them trying to turn around to get a glimpse of him coming in," Sordelet said, "and they're ready. They want him to come into the class."

Assistant Principal Sister Genevieve Raupp, OSF, noted that this is the first time that many of the students had ever seen a bishop and that, outside of the sacrament of Confirmation and occasional Masses at the cathedral, the pastoral visit may be the only experience that students of their age have to interact with and see a bishop.

As they toured the old church building, Sordelet pointed out several newer classrooms that have been built



Bishop Rhoades explains to the sixth graders that he had been a Colts football fan when the team was stationed in Baltimore, but later became a Philadelphia Eagles fan.

to educate students with special needs, part of the growing special education program at St. Charles Borromeo.

In some classrooms, Bishop Rhoades opened the floor to questions from the students. Many asked him about the clothing that bishops wear, including the round cap, which Bishop Rhoades explained is called a zucchetto. He also explained that his clothing has 33 buttons: one for each year that Jesus lived, and that bishops will always wear a pectoral cross around their necks. He visited a few Spanish classes and taught the students some Catholic terminology in that language, practicing simple conversations with them. After the bishop watched the fourth-grade students complete a relay race in gym class, many of them rushed to him to give him a high-five.

Spiritual Life

Discussions about the Catholic faith, however, took greater precedence than talk of sports or languages. In an eighth-grade classroom, Bishop Rhoades asked students who were preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation which saints they had chosen for their Confirmation names. Bishop Rhoades then related stories about several of the saints that the students had chosen, and mentioned that he was at the canonization of St.



Bishop Rhoades poses with Sister Genevieve Raupp, OSF, one of the assistant principals at St. Charles Borromeo, and Principal Rob Sordelet.

Maximillian Kolbe in St. Peter's Square in Rome in 1982.

He asked a sixth-grade classroom about the annunciation, and what Mary responded when the angel told her that she would bear the Son of God. "You know what we call that? We call that Mary's 'fiat.'"

Bishop Rhoades explained that the term "fiat" comes from Latin and means, "Let it be done," noting that while the phrase in English takes four words to convey, it can be summarized by just a single word in Latin.

In every classroom, the students stood to greet Bishop Rhoades as he entered. He asked the second-grade students about the two sacraments that they would receive during the school year. Some

of the students explained to the bishop that the sacrament of Reconciliation will clean their souls, and that later in the year they would receive their first Holy Communion.

The school itself has been educating children in the Catholic faith for more than 60 years. In addition to faith-building activities, St. Charles Borromeo School offers sports and fine arts programs for continued development in all areas of a child's life. For much of its history, the school was staffed by Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, of which Sister Genevieve is the last of her order remaining at the school.

At a population of roughly 750 students in preschool to eighth grade, St. Charles is one of the larger schools in the dio-



Curious students question the bishop about the many topics related to the faith as well as answer his questions about what they are learning.

cese, with multiple classrooms for nearly every grade level. The preschool program is a recent addition to the school, having been established within the past few years. On that

exciting day, even the youngest students attended Mass in the newly renovated, full church to welcome Bishop Rhoades with their enthusiasm and joy.

Knights Impact Girls' Lives Half a World Away

BY JENNIFER BARTON

How often does a person say that he or she cannot make a difference in the world – that they are too small, too poor, too far away from the problems of extreme poverty to be of any help? Sometimes the problems of this world feel too big and overwhelming, causing people to give up before they even begin to try. Dan Blacketor, Founding Director of The Rhema Project, refused to let the size and location of a major crisis stop him from taking steps to aid orphaned and unwanted girls in India, a call that God placed on his heart through visits to that country. Through the efforts of his friend, Dan LaFree, members of the Knights of Columbus Council 4263 at St. Pius X in Granger no longer feel as helpless, either.

Who is Rhema?

Nearly 20 years ago, Blacketor began traveling to India for mission work. He was originally asked to help rebuild a village destroyed in the 2004 tsunami. "I truly had no desire to go," he admitted, but eventually said yes. On that trip, he witnessed a family walking back from the nearby river; the mother and infant she carried drenched with water. His persistent questioning of his guide finally yielded an answer that he was not prepared for – the family had just drowned their newborn daughter.

He stated that he "couldn't fathom" the trauma Indian mothers faced as they were forced to bury their children simply "because they're girls. But that happens all the time." Female infanticide is a common occurrence in India due to the large dowries that families must pay their in-laws when their daughters marry. Having a male child means prosperity; a female means exorbitant costs. Gendercide has been decreasing through the years in India, but that is only due to easier access to abortion, which has surpassed the infanticide death rate in that country.

Being a white man in the tiny villages where the people had likely never seen one made Blacketor something of a celebrity. On another trip to a different village, a place that he described as "the end of the earth," he engaged in conversation with the elders and broached the subject of infanticide. While the elders denied that such things happened in



Photos provided by Gene Ort

Cacillia, a young Indian girl whose education was sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Council 4263 at St. Pius X in Granger, shares a laugh with Dan LaFree, who is a member of that council and proud supporter of The Rhema Project.

their village, the children whom he had befriended contradicted them. Often the boys were the ones tasked with burying their baby sisters in their own front yards.

As it happened, a young Indian woman rocked her own infant on a nearby porch, and Blacketor called to her, asking her child's gender. "The fear on her face" told him that the child was a girl even before the mother admitted it. Knowing he could have an impact on at least one child's life, Blacketor decided to use his celebrity status to ask if he could give the yet-unnamed child a name. When he asked the village children what he should name her, the name "Rhema" was one of the few he could pronounce.

Saying a prayer of blessing over her, he gave the child back to her mother along with a handful of Indian currency. "That was it. But that was the trigger in that village that this person had value, and some celebrity came in and gave her a name."

"Truly, at the time, I didn't know Rhema meant 'the word of God spoken by man,'" he continued, awestruck. He also found out that the only reason Rhema had survived to receive the gifts he bestowed upon her was because her father's parents were out of town the day she was born, as it is typically the father's parents who decide

whether a baby girl will live or die. Today, a large number of girls in that same village bear the name "Rhema" because he took action on that day.

Protection: A Knight's Service

The collaboration between The Rhema Project and Council 4263 came about because of council member Dan LaFree. He and Blacketor had attended school together through high school, then lost touch. LaFree had a business that in 2001 had been failing until he began tithing, after which, "My business was improving dramatically," LaFree stated, "and we were looking for more places to tithe to. A certain amount goes to the Church, but I was looking for something more direct at the time."

He happened upon a local newspaper where he recognized his old friend looking back up at him from its pages. The newspaper article covered an organization LaFree had never heard of, so he contacted Blacketor, who invited him to journey to India to meet the girls that The Rhema Project helped. That experience, LaFree said, will "change your heart and your head in a heartbeat," and he eagerly began supporting the organization. When he eventually sold his business, a



Cacillia shows off a letter and photo from the Knights of Columbus Council 4263, who helped pay for her education in the medical field. She is now studying at a university in Salem, India, a rare privilege for a girl found hanging on an orphanage gate in a plastic bag as a baby.



Dan Blacketor, Founding Director of The Rhema Project, poses with nursing students at the Bethel community college.



Young Indian girls study nursing at a community college attached to the Bethel orphanage, where many of these unwanted daughters have found a home and a purpose to their lives.

portion of the sale also went to The Rhema Project.

"The Knights of Columbus were formed to aid widows and orphans," LaFree commented. "What better fit than this?" Although many of the girls aided through The Rhema Project are not technical orphans, their plights are nearly as desperate as those of Indian girls without families. "These are village girls. They don't have pleasant bios."

LaFree became an advocate for these girls. The cost of sponsorship is minimal, at around \$400 a year for education or \$600 for education plus room and board. He pitched the idea of financially supporting an Indian girl to Council 4263, and they agreed to sponsor her. Msgr. William Schooler, Pastor of St. Pius X, backs The Rhema Project as well, tithing to it yearly. The council now sponsors an additional four girls, and Columbia Magazine, the national publication of the Knights of Columbus, recently released a YouTube video about the council's work. Featured in the video was the first girl they helped, Cacillia.

Cacillia's Story

There are few life expectations for a baby found hanging in a grocery bag on an orphanage gate. Yet that is exactly how Cacillia's life began. It is believed that her grandmother, aware that Cacillia was going to be killed, spirited her away in the night and placed her at the mercy of those who ran the orphanage. To this day, Cacillia does not know her birthday or the family that wants nothing more to do with her.

But her persistence in school led her to an opportunity most young girls in India never receive. Schooling in India works very differently than in the U.S. At around the fifth- or sixth-grade equivalent, most girls stop attending school, if they even get that far. Because of the sponsorship of the Knights of Columbus, Cacillia was able to continue her studies through what would have been a high-school level.

At the end of that education level, students in India take a national test and are numbered based on their test scores. Colleges then allow a certain percentage of the top

scorers to attend various universities in the country. Cacillia "scored so high, especially being an orphan from a little village, that one of the universities in Salem, which is a major city, said she could come study there," Blacketor proudly reported.

A photograph hangs by Cacillia's bunk in the orphanage, one that was sent to her from a faraway place in Indiana – a photo of the Knights of Columbus councilmembers whose sponsorship made her education possible. "It's a big deal to her," LaFree added.

The girl whose odds had been "less than half a percent," according to Blacketor, is now studying nursing, as do most of the girls sponsored through The Rhema Project. "She's a tough little kid. Tough-minded, knew what she had to do to succeed and she's excelled, she really has," said LaFree.

Since most Indian girls do not make it so far in their education, the organization helped found a community college on the Bethel campus that specializes in nursing programs. Within two years, the girls graduate and can go to work at hospitals in larger cities or government-sponsored hospitals, which offer even higher pay for those whose lives were once considered worthless. Even if they choose to remain in their villages, these young women can become something akin to local doctors, respected and valued in their own communities as they had not been before.

"A Different Level of Love"

The love that the girls showered upon LaFree on his trip to India remains unforgettably ingrained in his memory.

"These kids ... they have a different level of love, and they demonstrate it. I could not sit without six hands on me. ... You couldn't walk anywhere without six or eight girls vying to hold your hand."

Though they can't save every girl in India, Blacketor and LaFree hope that someday the people of the country, particularly the Catholic population, will take ownership of the problem and come to the aid of their own young women. Until then, they will continue to help those they can, embodying the Knights of Columbus' mission to aid those in greatest need.

Blacketor said that he knows his organization is no longer needed in a village "when a dad's holding his daughter, the baby has the makeup, earrings, the bangles, a dress on; then you know she has a protector — the dad's going to be the protector for her and they

don't need an organization from America to help with that anymore."

Sponsorship costs might seem intimidating for some, but anyone interested in helping in even the smallest of ways can donate to the general fund, which helps cover the most pressing needs at the time, and know that 100% of funds go directly to India to support the girls.

No matter where a person lives or what he or she does for a living, Blacketor hopes that his story – Rhema's story – encourages others "to do something, wherever God wants to plant them."

Because when God is given control, one person can make a difference, no matter what.

For more information, visit www.therhemaproject.org or www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoVBetra-P4.



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Duo from Marian High School Finds Success in Music

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

Musical duo The Bergamot, composed of husband and wife Nathaniel Hoff and Jillian Speece, took root at Marian High School in the early 2000s.

The two met at the Mishawaka high school when Speece was 15 and Hoff was 17. Their art teacher had encouraged them to write a song that represented Marian as part of a statewide arts competition.

"And I was kind of into Jillian," Hoff recalled, "but didn't really think the feelings were reciprocated. So we wrote the song together, and the music kind of brought us together in a way that we were able to start working with each other, and through that blossomed a relationship."

"I was actually very lucky that songwriting was one of my gifts because it actually brought us together," he said.

Speece noted that Hoff "was really quiet in high school," and that she was "not sure what to do with him."

"But then, when we started writing the song together, I would go to his house, and then we'd be talking for hours. I'm like, 'Oh, he's actually really funny. And he was just shy.' Then the music brought us together. We were writing and performing together, and we had a lot of chemistry on stage, which helped a lot."

Hoff's musical journey began at St. Jude School in South Bend. One of his art teachers lent him a guitar, and he used a penny as a guitar pick to learn how to play the instrument.

Speece developed her talent when she would come home from school at Corpus Christi in South Bend and play cassettes of Norah Jones and the Beatles and learn how to sing the songs while she did her homework.

"I loved singing – I loved performing. I would practice every single day and I was enthralled by music. I started writing songs shortly after," she said.

After graduation from Marian, Hoff left Mishawaka for Indiana-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW) on a golf scholarship.

"And I was very lucky because, the way I looked at it, I felt like I was being called to be able to play golf all day long and then play music in the evening. And that kept me out of trouble and focused. I was very thankful for that."

Speece followed Hoff to IPFW shortly thereafter, also on a golf scholarship.

"I ended up getting a full ride to IPFW where I played golf and it was really impres-



Jillian Speece and Nathaniel Hoff started making music during their time at Marian High School before launching their career as The Bergamot. The duo has many connections to the Church in South Bend.

sive, highly competitive, which I loved. I learned a lot about character-building from golf. I learned a lot about work ethic and also just about myself and having a really good temperament and staying cool and zen under pressure."

The two athletic musicians followed the same daily routine in college. They completed workouts in the early morning, attended classes, then practiced with the golf team. After practice, they wrote songs together.

At that point, they realized that they needed a name.

They recalled that Hoff went to lunch one day at a co-op and found a bergamot essential oil. After thinking its aroma was "uplifting," he showed Speece and they realized that they could name their duo after the oil.

"The whole vibe of bergamot is uplifting one's spirit," she said, "and that's what we want to do with our music."

From there, they began touring.

At one point, The Bergamot was invited to open a show for One Republic, but the performance was canceled when the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

"It was a moment where we found ourselves at probably our closest breakdown point because we lost all of our income for two years," Speece said, "and that's never happened to us before. And COVID shut down the music industry so hard. We had to come and grieve this."

She says that they had to "lean into" their faith and pray to God because they didn't know where to go.

"And then within 12 hours, a patron of the art who loves our music called us and said, 'Hey, get in your van and drive to Sedona [Arizona]. We've got a second house that you guys can



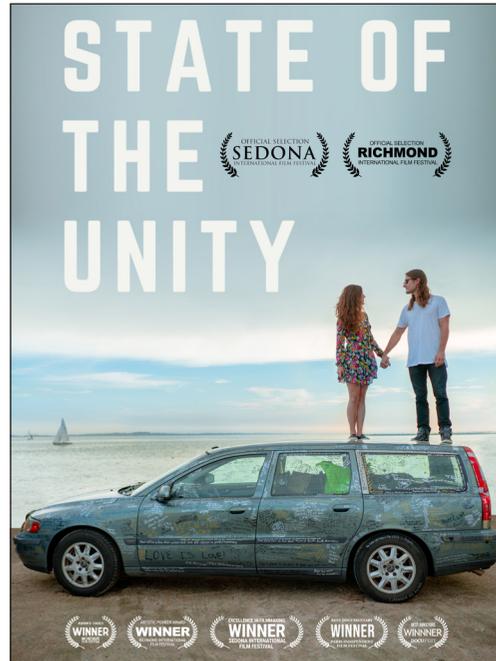
National tours, local philanthropy and getting married, have defined the first decade of The Bergamot.

live in for free. Nobody knows what's happening. We want to make sure you're safe."

Speece said that miracles would arise from similar "tragic experiences" over the past two years, calling them "huge faith builders" and noting that these experiences also gave them the opportunity to produce a documentary.

"The idea was to go to all 50 states," Hoff explained, "to have people take our touring vehicle, which at the time had 264,000 miles on it, and to take that to all 50 states and have people sign it with their message of unity during the 2016 election cycle."

While they had set out to make a film about going to all 50 states, what they ended up with, according to Hoff, was a documentary that furthered an "understanding of unity, what it looks like, what it actually is, and what it actually isn't, and ways that we can grow forward."



The Bergamot released a documentary, "State of the Unity," in early 2022. After visiting all 50 states, Hoff says that the resulting documentary furthered an "understanding of unity, what it looks like, what it actually is, and what it actually isn't, and ways that we can grow forward."

versed person."

Hoff and Speece went through marriage preparation courses with Father Chrobot, who ultimately married the couple in South Bend.

"It was just so amazing getting to do our course with a family member who was a priest," Speece said, "because we could talk in depth and ask questions ... and he would just smile and he'd say, 'Well, let's talk about it.'"

She remembered that Father Chrobot would come to Hoff's family members' homes to celebrate Mass on Christmas and other special holidays.

"It was just so special because, like, who gets to do that?"

It's really cool, and it made me feel really connected with Jesus' actual journey. Because, if you think about it, they were traveling in and out of people's houses, all throughout Jerusalem and Galilee and Nazareth, and it was very intimate and very raw."

Hoff said that, overall, his experience with The Bergamot changed his life and helped him understand more about his life and religion.

"I think about Jesus' journey. And I think about His connection with people from all parts of society, and how He was kind of an outcasted individual. I think about the journey that we've been on as musicians, like I said jokingly – taking that vow of poverty that we've had over the last 10 years."

He added that a lot of what he learned in his time in Catholic schools gave him the tools to deal with the problems that he encountered throughout his time with The Bergamot and in his life.

"I just feel really lucky that I grew up in the Midwest, and I have these roots," Speece concluded, "because I feel like my faith has guided me to this point and keeps the art alive; keeps what we're doing alive. There's a lot of really cool miracles that have happened in our life constantly. And I would say, especially over the last two years, I just feel really grateful to God for all of those."

Those interested in hearing The Bergamot perform live can catch them at their "Ogden Dunes Beach Party" on Sept. 3, and at the Morris Performing Arts Center in South Bend on Oct. 1. More details can be found at www.thebergamot.com.

EASTER SEALS, from page 3

through face-to-face contact whenever possible, and ensure that people in need are shown love and compassion and treated with dignity.

Till said the partnerships with Easterseals, Benchmark, and FWCS date back to shortly after he started his job in 2017.

He began working then with a few students with disabilities from the FWCS Career Academy. He wasn't sure how it would go, but the students quickly welcomed him into their group. That opened up a lot of friendly conversations and bantering among them.

The camaraderie made the work fun and encouraged Till to embrace later opportunities to partner with Easterseals and Benchmark.

"That's how it really started pretty much, and God did the rest," he said. "I think they are turning me back into a kid — in a good way."

Till, a military veteran, said working with partner groups' clients is the most-fulfilling work he's ever done.

"It's like the best part of my job is here," he said of the warehouse. "I can come in in a bad mood or down mood, and they come in and my attitude changes."

Discussions with Easterseals Arc about the volunteering partnership began before the coronavirus pandemic hit in March 2020, he said. Concerns related to COVID put the plans on hold until about eight months ago.

A total of about 20 Easterseals clients ages 18 and older now volunteer at the St. Vincent de Paul Society warehouse on weekdays, Till said. They typically work a shift of 90 minutes to two hours.



Photos by Kevin Kilbane

Bryan, left, and Elisha are among the Easterseals Arc of Northeast Indiana clients who are developing job skills by volunteering to work in the warehouse of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in Fort Wayne. Easterseals clients sort, size, and tag donated clothing so it will be ready for sale in the society's Thrift Store.

FWCS Career Academy also has students volunteering each weekday, he said. That includes one group that brings over different crews of students in the morning and afternoon four days a week.

Volunteer workers from the partner organizations receive brief training on what to do before they begin working, Till said.

Assisting at the warehouse teaches clients to arrive on time for work and to stay on task while on the job, said Mackenzie Flaugh, an Easterseals Direct Support Professional and Job Coach. The clients sometimes get to go into the thrift store to stock shelves, where they can interact with shoppers.

In addition, Easterseals clients assist people dropping off donations and help unload mattresses and furniture, Till said.

The experience pays off, Flaugh noted. One client was hired by the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo and also has applied to work at a local grocery store.

Also, "we are currently working on plans to hire one of the Easterseals participants to work at the St. Vincent de Paul Society Thrift Store after witnessing his hard work through the volunteer program," Schreck said.

Those types of success stories mean a lot to the St. Vincent de Paul staff, she noted.

"When they are able to use the skills they have learned at the St. Vincent de Paul Society to find employment and become more independent," she explained, "that brings joy to our volunteers and staff because we care about these individuals and want to see them succeed and reach their goals."

Offering hope and help

St. Vincent de Paul Society of Fort Wayne offers a variety of programs to serve people in need who live in northeast Indiana. Sales at its Thrift Store in Fort Wayne help fund the work.

The Thrift Store and warehouse are located at 1600 S. Calhoun St., Fort Wayne. Store hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday.

Warehouse donation hours are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday and 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday. The society will pick up donations of furniture and large appliances. Call 260-456-3561 for information. Donated items must be new or gently used, clean, and in working order.

For a list of accepted donation items, go to svdpsfw.org.

For information about the society's programs or volunteering, go to the website or call 260-456-3561.



A partnership between the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Fort Wayne and Easterseals Arc of Northeast Indiana brings Easterseals clients to volunteer at the St. Vincent de Paul warehouse. The volunteer experience develops work skills that clients who have disabilities can use to seek paying jobs in the community. Clockwise, from lower left are Aaron, Patricia, St. Vincent de Paul Society Warehouse Manager and Volunteer Coordinator David Till, and Bryan.



Volunteers have allowed the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Fort Wayne to process donated clothing more quickly and get it into its Thrift Store for sale. The ministry has used the resulting increase in clothing sales revenue to provide more aid to people in need. From left are Easterseals clients Andrew and Gabe and Cindy, who was checking out the program to see if it would be a good fit for her child who has disabilities.

Our Catholic President and the Moral Issue of Our Time

On numerous occasions throughout his public career, President Biden asserted his personal belief as a Catholic that human life begins at conception and that abortion, therefore, is morally wrong. He has always been quick to add, however, that he is unwilling to use the law to “impose” this personal conviction on anyone else. He presumably feels that since this understanding of human life is a function of uniquely Catholic doctrine or dogma, it would be as objectionable to require everyone to accept it as it would to require all Americans to assent to the dogma of the Immaculate Conception or to the articles of the Nicene Creed.

But this is so much nonsense. Opposition to abortion is not a matter of doctrine in the strict sense of the term, but rather a conclusion drawn from moral reasoning and from the findings of objective science. It is an indisputable fact that human life — which is to say, a living human being with a distinctive genetic structure and identity — comes into existence at the moment of conception. It is furthermore a fundamental axiom of ethics that innocent human life ought never to be attacked. These insights and principles are the foundation of an argument against abortion that can and should be made in the public forum; they are decidedly not a mat-

ter of “dogma” particular to Catholicism. I fully understand that people might disagree with the line of reasoning that I’ve proposed. Fine, let’s argue the matter in the public forum and see which of us can garner majority support. But please don’t tell me that I’m imposing a dogma on you.

And while I’m at it, may I say, I am mightily tired of the way the president and his allies use the term “impose.” Time and again, they say some version of, “I’m unwilling to impose my beliefs on others.” Now that we’ve established that opposition to abortion is not a matter of sectarian doctrine, can we also admit that any law, by its very nature, imposes on others? If a majority of federal representatives formulated a piece of legislation to set the speed limit at 65, and if the executive agreed with this determination, a law would go into effect imposing this viewpoint on the entire society. The same goes for tax codes, anti-trust regulations, minimum wage requirements, civil rights statutes, etc. Laws don’t suggest; they impose. And behind every truly just law, there is some moral principle: preserving life, establishing greater justice, protecting the poor, fostering the common good, etc. So if you were to ask me whether I was working to impose on the entire society a law that would protect the



WORD ON FIRE

BISHOP ROBERT BARRON

rights of the unborn, I would say, “Yes.” And then I would add: “And what’s your point?”

And finally, can we please put an end to the silly position first articulated by Governor Mario Cuomo 35 years ago and then tiresomely repeated by far too many Catholic politicians ever since that “I am personally opposed to abortion, but publicly I support it.” Again, one might make such a distinction in regard to a strictly doctrinal matter, arguing, for instance, “I personally believe it is indispensable to attend Mass every Sunday, but I would never dream of sponsoring legislation to that effect.” However, since opposition to abortion, as we have just shown, is not a conviction born of “dogma” but rather of moral reasoning, it is utterly incoherent to claim that one can hold to the position privately but not defend it publicly. It would be precisely analogous to someone in the 19th century saying that though he personally finds slavery abhorrent, he will do nothing to eliminate it or even to stop its spread. It would also be

precisely analogous to someone in the mid-20th century saying that though his personal conviction is that Jim Crow laws are morally repugnant, he will fight publicly to keep them in place.

In light of this, can you see why so many Catholics, including your humble scribe, find the president’s statements and actions in regard to abortion policy so repellent? The man claims that he objects to abortion, that he considers it morally wrong, and yet, time and time again, in the most straightforward, even strenuous manner, he strives, by word and deed, to make it more available, more acceptable, more legally defended. In the 19th century, the viscerally anti-slavery Abraham Lincoln did not pursue the extreme anti-slavery policy advocated by the abolitionists; rather, he took a more moderate position, endeavoring to hem slavery in, to limit its spread, in the hopes that he was setting it on course for extinction. This was, for the 16th president, a matter of prudential political judgment. If our current president, convinced as he claims to be that abortion is wrong, were to take steps in the direction of curtailing the practice, or if he could have found positive words to say about the Dobbs decision that at least gives individual states the right to restrict abortion, I might see him in the

mold of Lincoln. But instead, he presses forward, advocating the most radical pro-abortion policy imaginable, seeking to codify into law the Roe v. Wade and Casey decisions that essentially made abortion up to the moment of birth a matter of legal impunity in our country.

President Biden speaks often of his Catholic faith, attends Mass regularly, and prays the rosary. I have absolutely no reason to doubt the sincerity of his Catholicism. But I am sorry to say that, in regard to the most pressing moral issue of our time, he stands athwart both right reason and the explicit teaching of his Church.

Bishop Robert Barron is the Bishop of Rochester, Minnesota, and the Founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

Discipleship is Hard, but God Gives Strength for the Journey



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time Luke 14:25-33

The Book of Wisdom provides this weekend’s liturgy with its first scriptural reading.

This book was written, according to scholars, in Alexandria by a Jew who had emigrated from the Holy Land or whose forebears had come from the Holy Land. Originally, it was composed in Greek. Since it was written outside the Holy Land and not in Hebrew, Orthodox Jews have never accepted it as genuine Scripture. Following this reasoning, Anglican scholars in the early 17th century excluded it from the King James Version of the Bible.

In ancient Christian tradition, it was revered as inspired by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Catholic translations of the Scriptures include it.

This book, along with so much of the wisdom literature, builds on the basic notion that the unshaken Jewish belief in the one true God of Moses and the law of Moses itself reflects the deepest and best human logic, or wisdom.

Specifically, this reading simply says that much of life cannot be predicted beforehand, nor can it be understood. Humans are limited. God is all-wise. The wonder is that God has shared with us, speaking to us through representatives such as Moses and the prophets.

For its second reading, the Church chooses a passage from the Epistle to Philemon. Only rarely is this epistle the source of a reading in the liturgy, possibly because Philemon is the shortest volume in the New Testament, with only one chapter with just 25 verses.

The story is dramatic. Paul wrote to Philemon, whose slave, Onesimus, escaped from Philemon’s custody to be with

Paul.

(To run away from slavery was a very serious crime in Roman law at the time, as it once was in the United States.)

In this letter, Paul announced that he was sending Onesimus back to Philemon, but Paul counseled Philemon to receive this runaway slave as a brother in Christ.

Several lessons strongly appear. The first is that all humans are equal in dignity, having been created by God, and having been redeemed by Christ.

Secondly, disciples must love all others, including those difficult to love, even those who have done wrong.

St. Luke’s Gospel supplies the last reading.

The Gospel already has made clear that true discipleship builds upon a deeply personal wish to follow the Lord. It is a decision not always easily sustained.

Enabling a disciple to continue in this resolution and to abide by it in every circumstance of life requires not just determination, but God’s strength and insight.

The Gospel bluntly says that many obstacles may stand between a disciple’s intention to follow Christ and actually living as a disciple.

It is important to remember that Luke was written when Christianity, albeit an infant religion in the Roman Empire, very much was sailing into the hot, strong winds of cultural opposition to Gospel values and even into persecution under the law.

A fact, resulting from this situation, was that Christians had to face pressure from their loved ones to forsake the Gospel. Thus, the evangelist here recalls that Jesus said a true disciple should turn away even from father and mother, brother or sister, if these close relatives urged abandoning Christ, because first and foremost was the disciple’s choice to be one with Christ.

Reflection

The Gospel sets the stage. Living the Christian life is not easy. Christians must withstand much if they truly are committed.

Among many pressures is

the pressure not to see God in others, to deny others their due. Only in standing firm against such pressures can a disciple expect to stay the course. Disciples must on occasion even re-think presuppositions, change opinions, and even defy prevailing conventions.

It may be hard, but if undertaken for Christ, God will provide the needed strength.

READINGS

Sunday: Wis 9:13-18b Ps 90:3-6, 12-17 Ph 9-10, 12-17 Lk 14:25-33

Monday: 1 Cor 5:1-8 Ps 5:5-7, 12 Lk 6:6-11

Tuesday: 1 Cor 6:1-11 Ps 149:1b-6a, 9b Lk 6:12-19

Wednesday: 1 Cor 7:25-31 Ps 45:11-12, 14-17 Lk 6:20-26

Thursday: Mi 5:1-4a Ps 13:6abc Mt 1:1-16, 18-23

Friday: 1 Cor 9:16-19, 22b-27 Ps 84:3-6, 12 Lk 6:39-42

Saturday: 1 Cor 10:14-22 Ps 116:12-13, 17-18 Lk 6:43-49

Stages of Persecution

With the recent article in *The Atlantic* linking the rosary to extremist gun culture, we see a gross misunderstanding in the nature of spiritual warfare and its true target, Satan. The rosary is a weapon, but a spiritual one. While it is possible that the author simply misunderstands our allegorical references to warfare, I rather doubt he is that dumb. Rather, I suspect that this is an attempt to stereotype and vilify Catholics, especially traditional ones. These are tactics used to lay a groundwork for the marginalization and persecution of the faithful and the criminalization of their views.

With this incident, we do well to review the stages of persecution. The term “stages” is particularly important in the U.S. because it is rare for a previously respected segment of the population to become reviled overnight. The typical process is that the descent progresses in stages that grow in intensity. In this way, the Catholic Church, once an esteemed institution in America (along with other Christian denominations), has become increasingly marginalized and now even hated by many. It may help us to consider the five stages of persecution because it seems that things are going to become more difficult for the Church in the years ahead.

I. Stereotyping the targeted group: To stereotype means to apply an overly simplistic belief about a group of people to each individual person in that class.

As the 1960s and 1970s progressed, Christians were often caricatured as Bible-thumpers, simpletons, haters of science, and hypocrites; they were frequently labeled self-righteous, old-fashioned, and backwards.

Catholics in particular were also accused of having neurotic feelings of guilt and a hatred of or aversion to sexuality. We were denounced as a sexist institution and called authoritarian, stuck in the past, and hung up on restrictive rules.

According to the stereotype, Catholics and Bible-believing Christians are a sad, angry, boring, backward, repressed lot. To many who accept the stereotype, we are a laughable — even tragic — group caught in a superstitious past, incapable of throwing off the “shackles” of faith.

As with any large group, individual Christians and Catholics may manifest some negative traits, but indiscriminately presuming the characteristics of a few to be common to all is unjust.

To be sure, not everyone engages in this stereotyping, and even among those who do, the degree varies, but the climate created by its presence sets the foundation for the next stage of persecution.

II. Vilifying the targeted

group for alleged crimes or misconduct: As the stereotyping grew in intensity, Catholics and Christians who did not go along with the cultural revolution were described as closed-minded, harmful to human dignity and freedom, intolerant, hateful, bigoted, unfair, homophobic, and/or reactionary — basically, bad people.

The history of the Church is also described myopically as little more than a litany of bad and repressive behavior: going on crusades, conducting inquisitions, and hating Galileo and all science. Never mind that there might be a little more to our history: founding universities and hospitals, patronizing the arts, and preaching a gospel that brought order and civilization to the divided and barbaric times that followed the fall of the Roman Empire. Our critics won't hear any of that, or if they do, will give the credit to anyone or anything except the Church and our faith.

All of this has the effect of creating a self-righteous indignation toward believers and of making anti-Catholic and anti-Christian attitudes a permissible bigotry.

III. Marginalizing the targeted group's role in society: Having established the (false) premise that the Church and the faith are bad — even harmful to human dignity and freedom — the next stage is to relegate the role of the Church in society to the periphery.

To many in our secularized culture, religion is seen as something that must go. Perhaps we will be allowed to sing our hymns and preach our sermons within the four walls of our churches, but the faith must be banished from the public square.

It has become increasingly unacceptable and intolerable that anyone should mention God, pray in public, or in any way bring the Christian faith to bear on matters of public policy. Nativity sets must go; out with Christmas trees. There have even been some public schools that forbade the use of the colors red and green during the “Holiday Season”!

Do not even *think* about mentioning Jesus or thanking Him in your graduation speech; you may be forbidden to do so under penalty of law. You may talk about Madonna the singer but not *the* Madonna.

In contrast, the gay-straight alliance club at the local high school is welcome to pass out rainbow-colored condoms to the students. Muslims strangely get a pass but not Christians. No Bibles or Christian-themed pamphlets had better see the light of day anywhere in the school building — separation of church and state, you know.

IV. Criminalizing the targeted group or its works: Recent attempts to compel us to violate



COMMUNITY IN MISSION

MSGR. CHARLES POPE

our teachings and consciences are noted above, but there have been many other times we have had to go to court to fight for our right to practice our faith openly. An increasing amount of litigation is being directed against the Church and other Christians for daring to live out our faith.

Some jurisdictions have sought to compel Catholic hospitals and pro-life clinics to provide information about and/or referrals to abortion clinics or to supply “emergency contraception” (i.e., the abortifacient known as the morning-after pill). In 2009, the State of Connecticut sought to regulate the structure, organization, and administration of Catholic parishes. A number of Christian students in various states have suffered legal injunctions when it was discovered that they planned to mention God and/or Jesus in their graduation addresses.

A good number of those involved in these clashes feel quite righteous and justified in their efforts to remove the practice of the faith from the public square.

Many of these attempts to criminalize the faith have been successfully rebuffed in the courts, but the number and frequency of the lawsuits and the time and cost involved in fighting them impose a huge burden. It is clear that attempts to criminalize Christian behavior pose a growing threat to religious liberty.

V. Persecuting the targeted group outright: If current trends continue, Christians, especially religious leaders, may face fines and/or incarceration.

In Canada and in parts of Europe, Catholic clergy have been arrested and charged with “hate crimes” for preaching Catholic doctrine on homosexual activity.

In our country, there are greater protections for free speech, but there has been a steady erosion of religious freedom; some have had to spend long periods in court defending basic religious liberty. The trajectory points to suffering, lawsuits, fines, and ultimately prison.

Unlikely, you say? Alarmist? Well, stages one through four seem to be firmly in place. One may wish to “whistle past the graveyard,” but it looks to me as if we're headed for stage five.

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

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for September 4, 2022

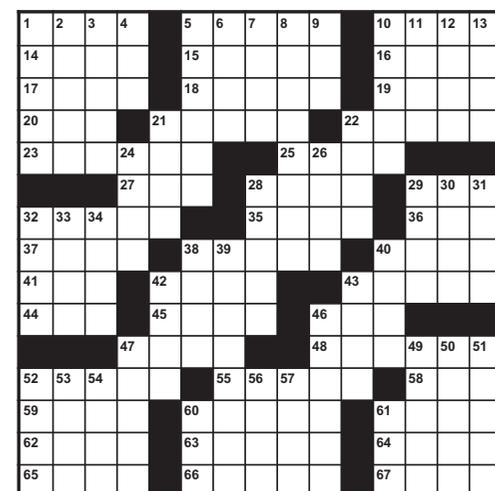
Luke 14: 25-33

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C: Carrying your cross. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

CROWD	TRAVELING	COMES TO ME
LEAVING	FATHER	MOTHER
CHILDREN	LIFE	CANNOT
CROSS	FIRST	SIT DOWN
FOUNDATION	BUILD	FINISH
WHAT KING	TEN	THOUSAND
TWENTY	PEACE	GIVE UP

WHAT KING?

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



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ACROSS

- 1 What we are forbidden to do by the fifth commandment
- 5 Families
- 10 Agricultural implement
- 14 Buck and switch ender
- 15 Hoax
- 16 18-wheeler
- 17 Immense
- 18 Disagreement
- 19 Arguing
- 20 A finish for Canaan
- 21 Vatican news service
- 22 One of the seven deadly sins
- 23 Sea god
- 25 “Up and ___!”
- 27 Deli order (abbr.)
- 28 From square one
- 29 Dada notable
- 32 ___ infallibility
- 35 Old TV movie players
- 36 London throne?
- 37 Flower for St Kateri
- 38 Color of Ordinary Time
- 40 Louse eggs
- 41 Mathematician Lovelace
- 42 Male swine
- 43 Percolate

DOWN

- 44 Slave Turner
- 45 Wrongful act
- 46 OT prophetic book
- 47 An epistle
- 48 Uncouth
- 52 A “greater” saint who is patron of Nicaragua
- 55 Deposit of ___
- 58 Bishopric
- 59 Plains people
- 60 Day on which God said, “Let there be light.”
- 61 Middle Eastern bread
- 62 LAX postings
- 63 W.C. Handy street of song
- 64 Over
- 65 Alley
- 66 Sat at a red light, say
- 67 Evil deeds
- 1 Catholic actor who played Doug in “The King of Queens”
- 2 Angry
- 3 Not a winner
- 4 Nephew of Abraham
- 5 From the Greek word meaning “the anointed one”

- 6 Noisy
- 7 Annoying spots
- 8 Annoying person
- 9 W-4 info
- 10 Sacred song
- 11 Mother of Apollo
- 12 Leave out
- 13 “I am ___ you always, until the end of the age.” (Mt 28:20)
- 21 Type of knowledge that is a condition for mortal sin
- 22 Uses a Singer
- 24 Cyberaction site
- 26 Web-footed aquatic bird
- 28 Turn away
- 29 Inter ___
- 30 Drilling grp.
- 31 Luxurious
- 32 Scheme
- 33 Verdi opera
- 34 Plot of ground
- 38 God's description of creation in Genesis
- 39 Exalted
- 40 Ball used for dorn hoops
- 42 A/C letters
- 43 She and her sister Rachel were both married to Jacob
- 46 Wrote quickly
- 47 Father of David
- 49 Last Supper question
- 50 Founder of the American Sisters of Charity
- 51 Piles
- 52 Second of the twelve Minor Prophets of the Old Testament
- 53 “___ boy!”
- 54 Grumble
- 56 Asian inland sea
- 57 Land in the water
- 60 Law enforcement agency
- 61 Dance step

Answer key can be found on page 19



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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.

St. Therese Fall Festival

FORT WAYNE— St. Therese Parish, 2304 Lower Huntington Rd., will have a fall festival on Saturday, Sept. 10 from 10:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. There will be an auction, games, food and beverage booths, beer tent, bingo, farmer's market, and evening music by Band 906.

Parish Festival-Kermes

FORT WAYNE — St. Joseph Parish, 2213 Brooklyn Ave., will have a festival and bazaar on Sept. 10-11, filled with fun for all ages. Included will be an area for kid's games, a beer tent, piñatas, a DJ, bingo on Saturday, Mexican loteria on Sunday, and a raffle. Food

sales will include tacos, nachos, huaraches, Mexican street corn, and hot dogs. Contact Lourdes Silva at 260-432-5113 or lsilva@saintjosephfw.org for information.

Christ in Community Gathering

FORT WAYNE — An evening of bourbon, barbecue, cigars, and fellowship for men 21 and older will be held on Saturday, Sept. 10, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at 3203 Pavilion Ct. Food and drinks will be provided. Please bring your own pipe or cigar. A \$10 donation is welcomed but not required. Understanding Christ in Community is important to help fortify Catholic men. For information, contact

Kris Church at 260-484-6609 or kchurch@stjudefw.org.

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		J	U	D	E	O	A	F	I	S	H	
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O	T	O	S	F	I	R	S	T	P	I	T	A
E	T	A	S	B	E	A	L	E	A	T	O	P
L	A	N	E	I	D	L	E	D	S	I	N	S

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Jo Anne Waumans, 85, St. Vincent de Paul

Mishawaka

Eugene Plonski, Sr., 94, St. Bavo

Monroeville

Saralyn S. Porter, 78, St. Rose of Lima

New Carlisle

Harry Michalski, 86, St. Stanislaus Kostka

New Haven

Carol Sue Fox, 65, St. John the Baptist

South Bend

Mary Burnett, 72, Holy Family

Harriette Feece, 97, Holy Family

John Johnson, 74, St. John the Baptist

Warsaw

Jovencio Veneracion, 70, Sacred Heart

Alberta Wamsley, 86, Sacred Heart

Yoder

Mary Marcella Sorg, 100, St. Aloysius

Submit your events at www.TodaysCatholic.org/event



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WABASH, from page 3

The parish received terrible news in 1969, when the Sisters of St. Joseph of Tipton stated that they could no longer help staff the school, which at the time “was comprised of half lay teachers and half religious,” Thompson wrote. “The parish was unable to support a full lay teacher system,” and faced closure.

The people of St. Bernard Parish were tenacious, though, about holding onto their school. They petitioned the motherhouse, Bishop Gallagher of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana where the motherhouse was located, and Bishop Leo Pursley of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend to keep their teachers and their school in operation. Of the 11 schools that the sisters had announced their departure from and the subsequent closure of, St. Bernard alone survived through its determined letter-writing campaign. A couple of sisters remained for additional years. The parish board, however, did vote to reduce the school to six grades in order to afford the hiring of additional lay teachers to fill the sisters' former roles.

Changes and renovations were made to the school building through the years, but the same walls still house schoolchildren in kindergarten through sixth grade to this day.

In his homily for the celebratory Mass, Bishop Rhoades spoke to a packed church, recognizing and thanking all those who taught in the school for the past 100 years, educating more than 10,000 students throughout its long history. He then spoke about the importance of education, particularly in a Catholic school. “Ultimately, the purpose of a Catholic school is to educate our children in the Gospel of Jesus, the Catholic faith, and to help them to get to heaven.”

The Gospel reading for the day centered on the story of the narrow gateway into heaven, and Bishop Rhoades expounded on the message of salvation that goes along with it. “Today’s Gospel is quite strong. It goes against the attitude of many Christians today who just presume their salvation, for example, thinking that all we need to do is accept Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior, and that’s it – we’re saved. This, what we can call ‘easy salvationism,’ is dangerous. The idea that the path to salvation is an easy matter of believing without growth in holiness or without carrying the cross is really a denial of Jesus’ teaching.”

He continued: “Jesus told the people that in order to be His disciples, they had to deny themselves, take up the cross, and follow Him. That’s the Christian life; that’s the way to salvation: embracing the



Photos by Jennifer Barton

Father Jay Horning, newly installed Pastor of St. Bernard Parish in Wabash, thanks Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades for celebrating Mass for the 100th anniversary of the school. The church and the celebration afterward were filled with parishioners, including a four-generation family who took up the gifts during Mass.



Parishioners mingle at the celebratory party after Mass. Sixth-grade students offered tours of the school building the day prior.

cross of Jesus, following in His footsteps, striving to love one another as He has loved us. He gives us the grace to do so. When we cooperate with His grace, then we will be strong enough to enter through the narrow gate.”

In addition to celebrating the 100th anniversary of the school, Bishop Rhoades installed Father Jay Horning as the parish’s new pastor, joking that he might be the youngest pastor in its history, to which Father Horning replied that he is actually the second-youngest.

At the end of the Mass, Father Horning expressed his gratitude to the bishop for his presence at the event and spoke of how he looked forward to the direction the parish would go in the future, particularly the school, calling it the “lifeblood” of a parish.

His goals for his tenure as pastor are simple: “To grow the school, grow the city of Wabash.”

He has great hopes for the school, saying that while he may not have a large population, he looks forward to



St. Bernard School Principal Abigail Stanley and Father Horning pose in front of the school, which has educated more than 10,000 students in its 100-year history.

future growth. “What we have to offer, especially the city of Wabash, is unlike what anyone else has to offer. We can give them Jesus in the sacraments and in everything else.”

Being new to the parish, he relies heavily on knowledge of principal Abigail Stanley, who is in her second year in the position. “I’m very excited! To be able to be the principal when the school turns 100 is a very special blessing,” she commented.

She views last year as a period of learning and is ready to spring forward with plans for potential new curricula and technology, working closely with Father Horning to advance the school’s potential. Though the school only has around 50 students, Stanley says that the families appreciate the small class size and personal attention.

“We’re small class sizes, we’re Christ-centered, we work to develop the entire child,

mind, body, and soul. We’re working on, obviously, creating strong students. Academics are important, but we also want to make sure we’re developing their spirituality and their relationship with God.”

That is what Jessie Whiteman loves about the school. She currently has one child attending, with her older son having just aged out of St. Bernard and her two younger children not yet school age. “We really love it. It’s been really great to see the kids grow at school through their faith,” she remarked. “The one-on-one with the teachers ... is worth everything. It’s great; I just like the interaction. The teachers are all wonderful. I’ve not had one bad experience here.”

In this new school year, Stanley intends to focus on service projects in the parish and city community, “so we can show them what we do at St. Bernard.”