

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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September is Suicide Prevention Month

St. Dymphna's Refuge Fills Need in Church for Mental Health Support



Provided by Eric Peat

Father Keeton Lockwood (center) led a group of St. Therese, Fort Wayne parishioners on a pilgrimage to the National Shrine of St. Dymphna in Massillon, OH.

BY ERIC PEAT

In the fall of 2021, St. Therese Parish in Fort Wayne hosted a presentation by NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. As attendees mingled together afterwards, the conversation took an unexpected yet divinely-inspired turn.

"We had a gentleman who was actually talking about his situation, and for me, it was a very emotional testimony from him," said Linda Thomas, a parishioner at St. Therese. "I said, 'So what as a church could we do for you?'"

From that question emerged St. Dymphna's Refuge, a mental health peer support group beginning on Sept. 19 at St. Therese. The group's mission is to provide a space in which people can share their mental

health experiences, be assured of their value as members of the Church community, and be rooted in Christ. Six women of the parish – Thomas, Elaine Cooper, Kris Lill, Lisa Palmer, Amy Carsten, and Kayla Peat – formed the nucleus of the ministry and have since been trained as facilitators. St. Therese is one of a handful of parishes in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend to offer such a ministry, helping address mental health with a spiritual approach that's aligned with the teachings of the Church.

"Hospitals have programs, but there aren't very many churches that would take this on," said Cooper. "This isn't an easy thing to be able to promote and be a part of and understand and facilitate. I think being church-based is very helpful."

"This is what NAMI wants

to happen," added Lill. "They're trying to get more churches involved with supporting people with mental health problems, and churches are natural places people turn to for support. They want someone to pray with them."

That prayerful support is exactly what these women envisioned when they conceived the initial idea. Once the concept began to develop and take shape, it was presented to the St. Therese Parish Council for approval. That is when the Lord took over.

"After we got permission and started working on it, we were praying and researching, and we just felt led by the Holy Spirit," said Peat. "Every time we got together and had an idea, it seemed like the resources were just laid at our feet. We just had to pick them up and

run with them."

These resources included training materials from NAMI, Formed, and Mental Health America, which enabled the group to participate in formal instruction as facilitators. They have also received assistance and direction from Catholic Charities and other diocesan figures. Most importantly, the group has benefitted from the encouragement and prayer of the clergy at St. Therese. Father Matthew Coonan and Father Keeton Lockwood (who has since been reassigned to St. Michael in Plymouth) were instrumental in starting the ministry and supporting its formation. Thomas said all of these resources were effective in preparing the group for the road ahead.

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Like most twins, Johnathan, left, and Michael Hickey, right, share so many similarities that most people could barely tell them apart. Even their vocational paths merged closely to the point that the brothers are now both studying for potential vocations to the priesthood at Mount St. Mary in Maryland, with only a year of study separating them.



Photos by Jennifer Barton

TWIN VOCATIONS 'We're Each Individuals for a Reason'

BY JENNIFER BARTON

Johnathan and Michael Hickey share a great many things – hobbies and interests, musicality, their love of Corgis – even the same face. Not surprising, as they are identical twins. Twins supposedly share just about everything, but in the Hickeys' case, that goes so far as to include potential vocations to the priesthood.

Many people within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend may not realize that there is a set of twins studying at Mount St. Mary's in Maryland, as the brothers are currently in separate years of formation. Johnathan discerned a year earlier than his brother, and is in 1st Year Theology, while Michael is in 2nd Year Pre-Theology.

With lives so closely intertwined, it is difficult to talk about one brother without mentioning the other. Johnathan shared that during the summer when he attended the Institute for Priestly Formation, he learned about the "I and we examen," which teaches a person to contemplate their everyday language in that "it's always supposed to be Jesus and you doing everything, and then paying attention to where it's just me." He stated that in his mind, he already uses that language, usually in conjunction with his brother. "We just did everything together."

The brothers attended St. John the Baptist School and Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne together. During their time in high school, both considered a call to the priestly life, becoming involved in the Melchizedek Project and attending "Come and See"

retreats. However, both chose to study criminal justice at Indiana-Purdue University Fort Wayne (now Purdue University Fort Wayne).

Looking back, both brothers remember wanting to be police officers from childhood. The "cool equipment" that police officers carry, the cars, the uniforms, the television show "Cops" – and most importantly, the inclination toward helping others – stirred in them a desire to pursue a career in law enforcement. "I even still live this now as being able to help people, and it's fitting going into priestly ministry, which is what you're doing," Michael commented.

In college, they had an inclination for studies that complemented the priesthood. The main differences in their paths were their college minors. Johnathan minored in philosophy and psychology; Michael in psychology and sociology. Both have stories of times they brought their Catholic faith into the classroom.

Their paths diverged again with their college internships, "and that's where I kind of leapt into seminary as well," Johnathan stated. His internships took him into the probation side of law enforcement. One year he helped with drug testing for male parolees, occasionally talking to those who tested positive for drug usage about their life situations and the choices they were making. "I think where I brought Christ into the probation was just the silent witness of praying for people and being like St. Joseph; just a silent, distant prayerful source right there."

Both men had been fence-sitting in their priestly discernment, but it was in the midst of this internship experience that he realized he would never

know if he had a calling to the priesthood if he didn't at least give it a try, and approached Father Andrew Budzinski, the Vocation Director for the diocese as well as his parish pastor. After the twins graduated in 2020, Johnathan immediately entered seminary. Michael, however, after his internships in parole and with the campus police department, began working as a Public Safety Officer for Parkview Hospital. The hospital campus is located directly across from St. Jude Parish, which boasts a 24-hour adoration chapel.

"I ended up working night shift for about a year and a half and it was a blast. You see some crazy stuff. It was amazing, though."

One particular encounter stands out in his memory. A woman was brought into the hospital in the midst of a psychotic breakdown, tightly squeezing her service dog. Everyone present tried to calm her, but she continued screaming and asking everyone if they were Catholic. When Michael answered in the affirmative, she asked if he would pray with her. He related, "She wanted to pray the Our Father, so we started praying that out loud, she calmed down. ... That was the only thing that would calm her down, so I'm walking through the ER holding her hand, praying the Our Father out loud, and in the hustle and bustle of the ER, that's something you don't see. Kind of a calming presence."

He then prayed the Memorare over her and she became peaceful.

Michael applied for a city police officer job, and though he passed the test, he didn't get an interview. That was when he knew it was time to give the seminary a chance. "I felt like I

was in the car, hitting the gas, hitting the brake, and pulling the emergency brake. It's like I wasn't going anywhere with discernment and that was the next logical step."

With feet no longer on the brakes, the Hickey twins are cruising along the road to their vocations, enjoying seminary life and anticipating the milestone of ordination in a few years. They hope to put their criminal justice backgrounds to work in their future priest-hoods.

Johnathan explained the link between criminal justice and priestly ministry. "There's a huge need for Christ in this world and I can't help but I definitely think Christ is ... giving me this experience here of probation to just, God willing, if I'm ordained a priest, to look at prison ministry."

His time working at the hospital with people with mental illness, drug addiction, and other heavy issues has prepared Michael to "respond to calls to help people literally at the worst day of their life. ... And so being able to be that way that they can find Christ, I think that's very helpful." He spoke of how he often doused his hands with holy water and kept his rosary handy on those sometimes-dangerous night shifts.

While they are so similar they can nearly speak for each other, their service to God and the Church is vastly different. Johnathan said, "We tell this all the time: We don't need two Michaels or we don't need two Johns; God has – we're each individuals for a reason."

Priesthood is a fraternity, but the Hickey twins may take that brotherhood to a new and incredible level, to one day be able to call their birth brother a priestly brother as well.

Diocese of Phoenix creates Office of Mental Health Ministry

PHOENIX (CNS) – According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than twice as many people died in 2020 by their own hand than by someone else, and while the annual suicide rate actually dropped in 2019 and 2020 – the last year that figures are available – the rate has risen sharply since 2000.

Once considered a mortal sin that could cost someone salvation, suicide is viewed by the Church today in a much more moderate way.

And going along with that development are calls by clergy, clinicians, and advocates to bring suicide into the light in the hopes to reduce it and to do more to help those left behind.

On Sunday, Sept. 4, the Diocese of Phoenix took a significant step toward both of these steps, becoming the latest in a growing number of dioceses across the United States to create an office dedicated to the ministry of mental health.

The announcement — during the diocese's first Mass of Remembrance for Suicide Victims — came from someone well-acquainted with the issue.

Phoenix Bishop John P. Dolan, who lost both a brother and sister to suicide in separate incidents more than a decade ago — unveiled plans for the new office of Catholic Mental Health Ministry toward the end of his homily to a standing-room-only congregation at SS. Simon & Jude Cathedral in Phoenix.

In an interview after the Mass, Bishop Dolan said a diocesan office dedicated to mental health had been a goal of his since his Aug. 2 installment, but its implementation was hastened by a gift from a local foundation, the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, that supports local religious and secular projects.

Immediately after the bishop's remarks, members of the congregation who had

lost someone to suicide were called to place a single carnation in a basket in front of the cathedral's Shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe — the diocese's patroness.

"Ask Our Lady to accompany you with her prayers and to accompany our brothers and sisters who have gone before us, asking the Lord to hold our brothers and sisters in the palm of His hand," he said.

Bishop Dolan said he and other diocesan leaders were expecting online and in-person requests to place flowers from around 100-120 individuals. The final number was around 1,200.

"There are a lot of people hurting," he said.

The bishop said the new office will serve three purposes: education, accompaniment of those suffering, and advocacy for better policy and funding from government and other sources.

"Educating our fellow Catholic brothers and sisters who may not fully understand the depth of mental health; we accompany those who struggle ... in our parishes so they are not lost but that they know they have a place at the table. And we accompany those who struggle with suicide loss. Those of you who are survivors of loss; hopefully, you know the Church is here, reaching out to you, letting you know you are loved and that your loved ones are not forgotten."

Each of the diocese's 15 deaneries will host regular gatherings where people can share their stories and help one another.

"Finally, the office will promote a spirit of advocacy, offer a voice for those who struggle with mental health and ask those in leadership, our government especially, to make sure mental health is always in the fore of all our discussions," Bishop Dolan said.

The diocese will provide priests and deacons a mental-health "first-aid kit" to guide them in responding to public requests for help.

"A lot of times our priests don't have (answers). They don't have the resources at their fingertips they need," he explained.

Another key feature will be to inform laity how the Church's positions on suicide and mental health have developed over the years.

"It isn't a lack of will. It is a mental disorder. That's something we have to consider as we look ahead and continue Catholic mental health ministry," he said.

For decades, the Church's practice was not to celebrate a funeral Mass for someone who had taken his or her own life, owing to the belief that killing is a sin. That is no longer true.

"The Church has grown wiser ... and now understands that grave psychological anxiety can sometimes mitigate — or even remove — a person's capacity to make decisions and his moral responsibility for those choices," wrote Father Kenneth Doyle, a now-retired columnist for Catholic News Service, in a 2021 article.

The response outside the Church has changed as well.

For example, while mental-health professionals may be considered the first line of symptom recognition, studies more recently show the signs can be identified by a family doctor or primary care physician.

A clinical official with Catholic Charities in Arizona said the agency has seen requests for help spike in recent years.

"With the onset of COVID, the need and recognition for mental-health services has risen, especially in the areas of grief, anxiety, and depression, which has impacted counseling agencies. Trends (include)



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Monday, Sept. 19: 10 a.m. – Cabinet Meeting, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne
 Tuesday, Sept. 20: 5:45 p.m. – Diocesan Review Board Meeting, Oakwood Resort, Syracuse
 Wednesday, Sept. 21: Noon — Redeemer Radio Sharathon, Bishop on the air
 Wednesday, Sept. 21: 4 p.m. – Meeting with Recently Ordained Clergy, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne
 Thursday, Sept. 22: 2 p.m. – Diocesan Finance Council Meeting, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame
 Friday, Sept. 23: 11 a.m. – Mass at St. Clare Novitiate Chapel, Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration Motherhouse, Mishawaka
 Saturday, Sept. 24: 4 p.m. — Confirmation Mass, St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend
 Sunday, Sept. 25: 2 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Sacred Heart Church, Warsaw

counselors having increased caseloads and individuals struggling with finding services," wrote Anna Smith, Senior Program Manager for Catholic Charities, in an email.

The Diocese of Phoenix is not alone in breaking new mental-health ground.

"There are about 190 dioceses in this country. Some have totally embraced it. I'd say 35-40 have some level of ministry," said Ed Shoener, a deacon in the Diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and president of the Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers, a nationwide lay association that supports Catholic parishes and dioceses in setting up ministries.

Shoener's own daughter committed suicide at age 29.

Many in the congregation at the Mass of Remembrance were overjoyed with the plan to open an Office of Mental Health Ministry.

"I am so excited," said Laura Redlinger, 30, who moved to Phoenix a few months ago from San Diego, where she attended Masses for suicide victims that Bishop Dolan regularly celebrated as auxiliary bishop in the Diocese of San Diego.

Redlinger lost her brother to suicide a decade ago when he was 20.

"I need a support group.

There is not a lot in the Catholic Church. You can attend a grief-support group but not specifically for someone who has lost someone to suicide," she explained.

"I feel like there is almost a stigma within the Catholic Church. There needs to be an awareness of how important mental health and our emotional well-being is in light of the Gospel, which we can apply to our personal troubles," she added.

Nancy Hannah, 81, who attends St. Elizabeth Seton Church in Sun City, lost her husband, Gerald, 80, after he took his life following years of lung cancer. She had been his caregiver and is still seeking someone to talk to "openly about it."

"That's what I need; some healing. I need some closure and can't seem to find it," she said.

"There are a lot of people out there hurting," said Anne Vargas-Leveriza, who is helping set up the new office, which will be operational on Jan. 1.

"It's about time we put this in the forefront," she said. "We need to recognize it and talk about it."

Grant writes for The Catholic Sun, news outlet of the Diocese of Phoenix.



CNS photo/Brett Meister/The Catholic Sun

People line up to place carnations in memory of suicide victims during the Diocese of Phoenix's Mass of Remembrance at SS. Simon & Jude Cathedral in Phoenix on Sept. 4.

A Legacy of Courage and Faith Written into Family's History

BY ERIKA BARRON

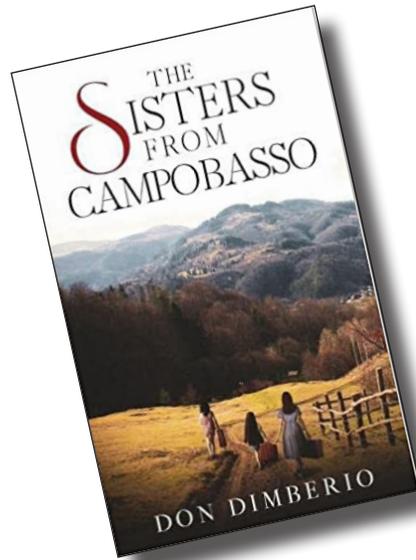
Don Dimberio has lived a full life, one marked with achievement. This includes graduating from the University of Notre Dame in 1960, having a successful career in the plastics industry, owning his own company, and raising four children, all college graduates themselves. His two sons attended his alma mater, the University of Notre Dame, and his two daughters both attended Saint Mary's College in South Bend. He is a board member of the Women's Care Center and has been a parishioner of St. Vincent de Paul, Fort Wayne, for the last 45 years.

This is a life that most would call the American dream. Dimberio says that all of this would not have been possible without the tremendous influence of his mother Carolina and her two sisters



DON DIMBERIO

Loretto and Lena, who immigrated from Italy in 1916. These three young girls paved the way for their children and grandchildren to reach their highest potential, with bravery most could not imagine and an immense faith in God. At 83 years old, Dimberio is



now sharing their story in his book, "The Sisters from Campobasso."

This journey began in the Italian province of Campobasso, located about two and a half hours southeast of Rome. Campobasso lies in the vast hill region, not far from the Adriatic Sea. While to most, the image of such a place conjures visions of a peaceful Italian vacation, one with rest and relaxation, life was far less romantic for the people of the area. Tensions between the Northern Italians and the Southern Italians were high, so much so that between 1880 and 1914, 14 million Italians immigrated to the United States. "The rumor was the streets in America were paved in gold, but the truth is these people were the ones who did the paving," reflected Dimberio.

The men of the family would immigrate to America first, finding work and sending money back home so that the women and children could follow. The work was hard and the pay was small, but being in the "Land of Opportunity" was enough to keep them going. Where the immigrants settled would depend on where their relatives had taken up residence, and in the case of Dimberio's family, they would wind up like many other Southern Italians in the city of Cleveland, Ohio.

The journey to Cleveland was marked by immense hardships for the three young sisters, which Dimberio details in the book. "What takes place in the story is a tremendous act one of the sisters does. I have told the story so many times in my life and people encouraged me to write it," he recalled.

Even after everything the harrowing journey from Campobasso to America brought to the three sisters, their faith never faltered. They trusted in God's plan all the way and passed that faith on to their children and grandchildren. "My mother never missed Mass; she was incredibly faithful," Dimberio remembers.

Once in Cleveland, the new



Provided by Don Dimberio

Three immigrant sisters from Italy left a legacy for St. Vincent de Paul parishioner Don Dimberio: Lena, Loretto, and Carolina, "The Sisters from Campobasso."

American citizens would form clubs with their neighbors from the old country, keeping their customs and traditions alive. One such custom was the huge celebration of St. Joseph's Day on March 19th. "Everyone else would celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Where I come from, the party is a few days later for St. Joseph," he recalled.

The whole town would gather in celebration of the great saint, sharing memories of life back in Italy, and of course, food, the local church being the center of the celebration. "Panne Frito" or fried bread, was a favorite on this occasion. Here the old and the new ways blended, the true meaning of

being an Italian-American.

The book, which has now sold more than 500 copies, is Dimberio's way of leaving this incredible family legacy for the future generations. A special inscription in the first 10 copies of the book reminds his family how important it is to know where they come from and the reason they are where they are now: the courage, selflessness, and faith in God's plan for their lives is the legacy these three young sisters left behind.

The book can be found on Amazon at www.amazon.com/Sisters-Campobasso-Don-Dimberio.

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Michigan Ukrainian Catholic school welcomes war refugees

BY DANIEL MELOY

WARREN, Mich. (CNS) – Imagine you are 8 years old, and overnight, you have to leave your home – never to see it again, in all likelihood.

You leave behind all your toys, your cousins, your dog, your neighborhood. Even your father stays behind to fight in the impending war.

You and your siblings, along with your mother, who doesn't seem to have a lot of answers, travel to a foreign country where you don't speak the language, the food is different, and you are thousands of miles away from home.

But then your mother takes you to a school in a quaint neighborhood. In front of the school is a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and behind her is a sign, "Our Lady, Protector of Ukraine," with flags and decorations in your native national colors.

For refugee students at Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic School in Warren, such a sight might be the first welcoming sign they have seen in a long time.

This fall, approximately 100 students from war-torn Ukraine will join the school, which in a normal year has an enrollment of about 200 students.

Since the Russian invasion of Crimea in 2014 and invasion of the rest of Ukraine this past February, the school has opened its arms to refugee students and their families, who can feel at home in a school that has classes in the Ukrainian language and culture, teachers who speak Ukrainian, and where Mass is celebrated in the Byzantine-Ukrainian rite.

"We are asking parishioners and people of goodwill to donate to the schools to help us offset the school deficit for tuition," said Father Daniel Schaicoski, a priest of the Order of St. Basil the Great.

The priest, who is the superior of Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic School, noted the school's #StandWithUkraine Sponsor a Child Program. "We will have over 100 students, and more than that, coming as refugees this year."

As the war in Ukraine drags into its seventh month, Father Schaicoski said families are still trickling into the area and applying.

"We want to help those families who come here. We want to give the children a school and environment that is friendly to them, where they know the language. Our school is the best place for them to learn English and integrate into America," Father Schaicoski told Detroit Catholic, news outlet of the Detroit Archdiocese.

Immaculate Conception



CNS photo/Daniel Meloy, Detroit Catholic

Families at St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Church in Warren, Mich., rally in support of Ukrainian refugees on Aug. 23. This fall, Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Schools in Warren will welcome nearly 100 refugee students fleeing the war-torn country.

Ukrainian Catholic School, which features a K-8 curriculum, was established in 1936 to care for the first- and second-generation Ukrainian immigrants who came to Michigan.

Along with St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Church in Warren, Immaculate Conception is asking local Catholics to consider sponsoring a refugee student through its Sponsor a Child Program, which helps cover the cost of tuition for a family.

"This will require a huge effort from us," Father Schaicoski said. "They are coming without the language; many of them have all kinds of stress. So many of these students have seen war, violence, just unspeakable tragedies. Our homeroom teachers will need help, especially from those who can translate."

Before the war, about 70 percent of the student population was Americans of Ukrainian heritage. Another 20 percent was Chaldean, and about 10 percent included other families looking for a Catholic education. This year, 28 percent is estimated to be refugees fleeing Ukraine, Father Schaicoski said.

"Last year we had 20 or so (refugee) students, and it was amazing to see how our students were helping those who just came from Ukraine," the priest said. "Those kids from Ukraine didn't understand English, but Ukrainian students from here would translate everything, help with their homework and all of that."

Immaculate Conception has contacted social workers and psychologists to work with refugee students, but it has been a difficult task finding social workers who speak Ukrainian, he said.

"We had one child, a third grader, who was crying for two weeks," he noted. "I approached her mother, who told me, 'Father, what she saw on her travels from the east to Poland, you will not see in

your lifetime, not in movies."

On Aug. 23, the Ukrainian-American community gathered at St. Josaphat for a prayer vigil to celebrate Ukraine's independence and mark the six-month anniversary of Russia's

invasion of Ukraine. The following day was Ukrainian Independence Day, when the country declared independence from the collapsing Soviet Union in 1991.

Participants waved Ukrainian flags and held signs of support. Local officials spoke about the evils being done to Ukrainian civilians, particularly children being deported to Russia and forced to assimilate into Russian culture.

"Hundreds of children in Ukraine have been killed, even more have been injured, and perhaps thousands, maybe millions, have been displaced," Warren Mayor Jim Fouts said.

"Humanly speaking, as a Christian, what is most important is to provide these children with help," Father Schaicoski said. "That is where this school is important. It will be easier to approach all the difficulties, the trauma they faced, in a school that feels more like home."

He recalled how, by the end

of last school year, the third grader who couldn't stop crying was making friends and beginning to smile.

"You really can't put into words what these kids have gone through, but I remember when it was three months in and her teacher pointed and said, 'She's smiling,'" Father Schaicoski said.

"That was the most rewarding thing. She wasn't speaking English or anything, but when we saw she was smiling, we knew we were doing something right. That was the most rewarding thing."

"It's easy to say, 'I stand with Ukraine,' but this is what you need to do to help," Father Schaicoski said of sponsoring students. "If you talk about helping Ukraine, this is a chance to help Ukraine that is at your doorstep."

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

KEELEY VATICAN LECTURE

My Contacts with Saint John Paul II at the Fall of the Soviet Union



His Excellency, The Most Reverend Claudio Gugerotti

Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain and the Titular Archbishop of Rebellum

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British Catholics, Pope Francis Pay Tribute to Queen Elizabeth II

MANCHESTER, England (CNS) – Catholics in the U.K. paid tribute to Queen Elizabeth II following her death on Sept. 8 and the end of a reign that lasted more than 70 years. Pope Francis sent a telegram addressed “To His Majesty the King, Charles III,” her son who immediately ascended to the throne. “I willingly join all who mourn her loss in praying for the late queen’s eternal rest and in paying tribute to her life of unstinting service to the good of the nation and the Commonwealth, her example of devotion to duty, her steadfast witness of faith in Jesus Christ, and her firm hope in His promises,” Pope Francis said. The British sovereign died “peacefully” at Balmoral, the royal residence in Scotland, surrounded by members of her family. She was 96. Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster, President of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, paid tribute using many of the queen’s own words. “On 21 April 1947, on her 21st birthday, Princess Elizabeth said, ‘I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service,’” Cardinal Nichols said. “Now, 75 years later, we are heartbroken in our loss at her death and so full of admiration for the unflinching way in which she fulfilled that declaration.” “Even in my sorrow, shared with so many around the world, I am filled with an immense sense of gratitude for the gift to the world that has been the life of Queen Elizabeth II. At this time, we pray for the repose of the soul of Her Majesty. We do so with confidence, because the Christian faith marked every day of her life and activity.”

Before Her Murder by Insurgents, Italian Nun Called Niece for Prayers

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Perhaps just hours or less before her murder in northern Mozambique as militants swept into the area, Comboni Sister Maria De Coppi left a voice message with her niece, urging her to pray for the people on the run. “Hello, Gabriella, good evening. I just wanted to tell you the situation here is agonizing, it’s not good. It is very tense,” was the voice message Comboni Sister Gabriella Bottani received from her aunt at 8 p.m. on Sept. 6. The audio was posted online on Sept. 7 by the Italian bishops’ television news program, TG2000. “Everyone here is fleeing, the people are running away. It is a very, very sad situation,” Sister Maria said, after describing some recent attacks that occurred not far from her location at a mission in the

Millions Face Acute Hunger in Somalia as Famine Looms



CNS photo/Feisal Omar, Reuters

A displaced Somali drinks water from a tap at a camp in Dollow on May 24, 2022. Catholic Relief Services is among international agencies warning of famine looming in Somalia.

village of Chipene in the province of Nampula. “Pray for us, that the Lord protects us and also these people. Goodbye, good night,” she said, ending her message. According to the Vatican newspaper on Sept. 8, Sister Gabriella, who is International Coordinator of the Talitha Kum anti-trafficking network based in Rome, called her aunt back as soon as she heard the message. “I asked her, ‘Auntie, you’re not leaving?’ and, after a moment of silence, she answered ‘I don’t know, I want to wait,’” Sister Gabriella said, according to the Vatican newspaper article. According to Fides, the information service of the Pontifical Mission Societies, Italian Sister Maria, 84, was killed by a bullet to the head during the night between Sept. 6 and 7 during an attack on their mission.

Saskatchewan Bishops, Community Pray for Victims of Mass Stabbing

PRINCEALBERT, Saskatchewan (CNS) – The Catholic bishops of Saskatchewan offered prayers

for everyone affected by the deadly stabbing rampage that left 12 dead – including the two suspected killers – and at least 18 injured. And Catholics in the Prince Albert Diocese joined the local Anglican bishop at a special service for the victims and survivors of the Sept. 4 stabbing spree on the James Smith First Nation and in nearby Weldon, Saskatchewan. The five bishops of Saskatchewan said they mourn “those whose lives have been lost, those who have been injured, and those whose peace and security has been shattered by these horrific events,” and invited “all to join in prayer, turning to God for comfort and healing.” The bishops also prayed for everyone across Saskatchewan who has been providing assistance, including “first responders, health care workers, and everyone offering help and support to those affected by this tragedy.” Late on Sept. 7, media reported Myles Sanderson, 32, died after police forced the stolen car he was driving off a highway in Saskatchewan. One official told journalists he died of self-inflicted injuries. The Associated Press reported members of Saskatchewan’s Serious

Incident Response Team went to the arrest site and would review Sanderson’s death and police conduct. Sanderson and his brother, Damien, were alleged to have carried out the early morning spree on Sept. 4 in the James Smith First Nation, where they lived, and the surrounding areas. Damien Sanderson was found dead on Sept. 5 near one of the scenes of the attacks.

Author of New ‘Mother Teresa’ Book Shares his Encounters with the Saint

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (CNS) – Generations of people have come to know St. Teresa of Kolkata, better known as Mother Teresa, as a humanitarian, a role model, an example of holiness in action, and an intercessor with God. Jim Towe is one of the fortunate few who also got to know her as a friend. Towe, an attorney by trade who has also worked in government and academia over the years, first met Mother Teresa 37 years ago after he started volunteering at a soup kitchen run by the Missionaries of Charity, the order of religious

sisters she founded in 1950 to work among the poor in the eastern Indian city of Kolkata, formerly known as Calcutta. The order has since opened hundreds of missions, medical clinics, and hospices around the world, including 41 active facilities in the U.S. Struggling with what he considered the shallowness of his life in Washington at the time, Towe traveled to India in 1985 seeking an encounter with the future saint. That meeting, which started their decades of friendship and changed the course of Towe’s life, led him to dedicate much of his time to serving the poor and vulnerable. Towe then spent 12 years not only as a close friend but also a trusted adviser for Mother Teresa. He shares the story of his friendship with the saint in his new book: “To Love and Be Loved – A Personal Portrait of Mother Teresa.” The book, published by Simon & Schuster, was released on Sept. 6, just one day after the 25th anniversary of Mother Teresa’s death in 1997. Talking about Mother Teresa recently with Catholic News Service, Towe said: “I miss her company, her laugh, and her motherly love. It was heaven to be around her.”

Eritrean Government Rounds Up Teens From Church Service

NAIROBI, Kenya (CNS) – Places of worship have become the latest target for the forced roundup of Eritrean teens to serve as soldiers, in what clerics describe as a deteriorating situation. For two years, 15- and 16-year-olds have been taken from towns and villages. Some are ending up on the front lines in the war in Ethiopia’s northern state of Tigray, according to the sources. “A few weeks ago (Eritrea) resumed the confiscation of schools run and owned by the Catholic Church. (As if) this was not enough, now there are roundups of young boys and girls aged 16 ... for compulsory military service without end,” Father Mussie Zerai, a Catholic priest of Eritrean origin who works with migrants, told Catholic News Service on Sept. 7. “They do it in places of worship as happened last Sunday (Sept. 4) in the Eparchy of Segheneity, in the village in Akrur at the Catholic parish of Medhanie Alem,” he said. The priest said the soldiers arrived during Mass and surrounded the church to prevent anyone from escaping. They proceeded to take the teens by force, including all the boys of the choir in their uniforms, said the priest, pointing at photographs widely circulated on social media. “These young people end up in military training camps and then (would) be sent as slaughter fodder in the wars underway in the region, particularly in neighboring Ethiopia,” said Father Zerai.

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made: Understanding God's Plan for Human Sexuality When Your Child Has Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities

ONLINE — A virtual presentation will be held on Monday, Sept. 26, via zoom, for those parenting a child with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Issues related to sexuality can raise important questions. Some include: How to handle puberty? What about inappropriate sexual behaviors? Are dating and romantic relationships possible? What are the ways to avoid exploitation or abuse?

This live, virtual presentation, developed exclusively for the parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities of all ages, explores how the Catholic Church's teaching on human sexuality can help families navigate these challenges and others, while also giving them deeper insight into God's plan for their children. The special role that parents play in educating their children in this area will be discussed.

Time during the presentation will also be dedicated to discussion among parents about personal experiences and concerns as well as for asking questions of the presenters. Presenters are Mary O'Callaghan, Ph.D. and Clare Kilbane, Ph.D.

To register, contact Allison Sturm at asturm@diocesefwsb.org or 260-399-1452.

Sponsored by Marriage & Family Ministry, Ministry with Persons with Disabilities, and the McGrath Institute for Church Life.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

'Main Streets' Films at Diocesan Museum



Kevin Kilbane

Host John McGivern, in blue shirt, and a film crew from his television travel program "John McGivern's Main Streets" toured the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend's Diocesan Museum in Fort Wayne and interviewed museum Director Kathryn Imler on Sept. 6 while filming for a show about visiting Fort Wayne. The 30-minute shows, which are produced by Plum Media of Milwaukee, explore the history, charm, and attractions of communities in Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. The upcoming second season of shows will be broadcast on PBS stations beginning in January. The show on Fort Wayne is expected to air in mid-March. A cradle Catholic, McGivern enjoyed seeing the museum's many artifacts and exhibits, especially an exhibit honoring the many orders of women religious who have served in the diocese. The current season's "Main Streets" programs are available on YouTube; via the show website, mainstreets.tv; and in South Bend at 9:30 a.m. Saturdays on TV station Fox WSBTDT2.

St. Joseph Missions Receives Grant

FORT WAYNE — In response to the urgent need for emergency shelter for single women, St. Joseph Missions received a \$20,000 grant from St. Joseph Community Health Foundation. St. Joseph Missions Women's Shelter is the first and only 24-hour, 7-days-a-week emergency shelter in Allen County expressly for single women who are experiencing homelessness. The emergency shelter, funded in part by the grant, provides a welcoming, homelike refuge for guests who have nowhere to call home. The ultimate goal for each guest is self-sufficiency.

Saint Francis Welcomes Presidential Catholic Scholarship Recipients

FORT WAYNE — The University of Saint Francis welcomed its second class of Presidential Catholic Scholarship recipients as fall classes began. The Presidential Catholic Scholarship is a full-tuition and fees scholarship. Selected students must practice the Catholic faith and embrace Franciscan values, demonstrate commitment and perseverance under pressure, graduate with a 3.0 or higher grade point average, and receive a strong recommendation from their high schools and parishes.

Correction:

In last week's issue, the story "Transforming Lives, Transforming the Campus at Saint Francis' Opening Mass", the last paragraph of the story should read: "I have a desire to always have a crane in the air, figuratively. So we say we're doing these things and it's for these reasons. ... We want to offer a transformational experience for our students."

Bishop Luers Band Puts on a Show



Provided by Jeanne Hohenstein

Members of Bishop Luers High School band came to St. John the Baptist School in Fort Wayne to perform a concert and spark an interest in students at the feeder school to join the high school band.

Examining the Fruits of Contemplative Labor



Bethany Beebe

Viewers enjoyed the creative labors of hobby-carpenter Father Thomas Shoemaker during rectory tours on Saturday, Sept. 10 as part of Cardinal Fest. The open house showcased Shoemaker's carpentry and painting skills, including the pictured door frame and reredos. The art is part of a chapel at the St. Charles Borromeo, Fort Wayne rectory.

DYMPHNA'S REFUGE, from page 1

"I thought the episodes on Formed that we were asked to watch were really helpful for me," said Thomas. "In one episode, it did stress that when we have someone we are speaking to, what really works is if you bring faith, hope, and love into the situation, which are theological virtues of our faith."

Next came the task of naming the group. The women turned to St. Dymphna, an Irish virgin and martyr from the seventh century who is recognized by the Catholic Church as the patron saint of those suffering with mental illnesses. "She's a holy card on my refrigerator and has been there for many years," remarked Cooper, who decided to "introduce" her to the group. However, they all got to know her on a deeper level in July by taking a pilgrimage to the National Shrine of St. Dymphna, located inside St. Mary's Catholic Church in Massillon, Ohio. Father Lockwood arranged a one-day bus trip to the shrine and extended the invitation to parishioners of St. Therese and beyond.

"I had never heard of St. Dymphna, so it definitely brought it all real for me," said Palmer. "It was very awesome to see, and spiritually it really struck me."

"To make a pilgrimage there with so many others and to share that experience with other people was huge," explained Lill. "But also, to learn about how the shrine started, how it originated in a mental health facility – that was fascinating."

St. Dymphna's Refuge now hopes to bring the saint's love and mercy to anyone in need, regardless of religious background or affiliation. Meetings are free to attend and are designed to allow those struggling with mental illness or those caring for such individuals to share their own mental health experiences. Team members will offer a prayerful listening ear and can direct attendees to educational resources and mental health service agencies as needed. They do not function as mental health professionals and cannot give therapeutic advice, prescribe medication, or make medical diagnoses. The ultimate vision, according to the group's facilitators, is to provide a spiritual base for those suffering from mental illness – one that brings peace to the broken, reminds the suffering that they are valuable and loved, and removes the stigma of talking about mental health.

"I think the biggest thing that you find is that if you talk about it, it doesn't necessarily solve it and it doesn't go away, but it helps," said Palmer. "Someone else might have a similar situation, and you realize you're not alone. It could



Eric Peat

Five of the women who began St. Dymphna's Refuge pose together below a stained-glass image of St. Dymphna at the saint's National Shrine in Massillon, OH.



Kayla Peat

A first-class relic of St. Dymphna, patron saint of those struggling with mental illness, is on display at the National Shrine.

be a huge load off them just to be able to freely talk about it. They can express it in a safe, spiritual atmosphere where they won't be made fun of or judged."

And regardless of what God has in store for St. Dymphna's Refuge, the experience has already had a positive impact on the six women who formed the ministry.

"Forming our group of facilitators has already been bearing fruit in our lives," said Peat. "It's helped us see the purpose in our sufferings. It's a beautiful moment in time when we get to see some of the ways that God uses our sufferings for good."

St. Dymphna's Refuge will meet at St. Therese on the third Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. No sign-up is required, but those with additional questions may contact the parish office at (260) 747-9139.



Kayla Peat

A statue of St. Dymphna, patron saint of those struggling with mental illness, is on display at the National Shrine of St. Dymphna in Massillon, OH.

Warning signs of mental illness

- Recent social withdrawal
- Loss of interest in activities
- Drop in functioning at school, work, extracurriculars, etc.
- Problems concentrating/speaking
- Loss of appetite/sleep
- Apathy
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Intense concern with appearance/lack of interest in appearance
- Overuse of alcohol/drugs
- Ailments with no obvious causes
- Thinking/speaking about suicide
- Hyperactive behavior/disobedience/aggression (in children)
- Temper tantrums (in children)
- Frequent nightmares (in children)

— NAMI website

“If anxiety is going on for six months, you should be referring to a professional. If depression has been going on for more than a couple weeks, you should be referring.”

— Dr. Susan Feathergill



Unashamed: Mental Health Professionals Bring Awareness to Mental Illness Crisis

BY JENIFER BARTON

Mental illness. Few want to talk about it. To do so is uncomfortable, distressing. But these are conversations that need to take place. With mental illness on the rise throughout the U.S. and globally, mental health is a topic that needs to be discussed, and often.

One in five Americans face mental health issues every year. One in six youths between the ages of 6 and 17 are affected by mental health disorders. Fifty percent of life-long mental illness begins by age 14; 75 percent by age 24. Shocking? The worst, however, is this: Suicide has become the second-leading cause of death among people ages 10 to 34.

These statistics, taken from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) website, the leading organization in the field of mental health, were quoted by Dr. Susan Feathergill, a licensed psychologist at Feathergill and Associates in South Bend. Clearly, the mental health crisis is very real, but talking about it, learning how to help, and how to cope does not need to be a frightening discussion.

In Clinics

Feathergill has been practicing psychology for more than 20 years, and with her husband, Jeff, founded an independent practice. The couple provides seminarian psychological evaluations for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and teaches young priests basic counseling skills. Feathergill sees patients of all ages and backgrounds. Throughout the last couple of years, she has seen firsthand an intensification of the mental health crisis. "I've noticed that since COVID, there's been a definite increase in anxiety and depression," she

confirmed. "I would say particularly after the pandemic it was a big spike."

She attributes some of this to the natural fears people had of becoming ill or spreading the virus to vulnerable relatives, which sometimes led to extreme cases of isolation. "I have so many adults and teens who felt isolated from others, and they've been in their heads too much. When you're in your head too much and you have all these automatic thoughts that are probably negative or even catastrophic, that's going to lead you down the path of spiraling downward with depression or anxiety."

Reintegrating into a communal society after a long period of separation brings numerous struggles and fears, fears sometimes escalated by ideals of perfection portrayed on social media and the Hollywood culture. This can be especially true for introverted people or those who already struggled with anxiety, Feathergill said. People are also beginning to seek help for traumatic occurrences in greater numbers – no matter what those experiences were or when they occurred.

As a Catholic psychologist, Feathergill spoke of the sad fact that in a nation where 70 percent of the population attends a faith community, "For so long there's been a divide between faith life and mental health."

A strong faith life is important, as "faith can help us with our sense of suffering and help us persevere through the hard times; the faith can help connect us with that community that cares."

At her parish of St. Pius X in Granger, Msgr. William Schooler utilizes a voucher program to help parishioners receive the help they need in affordable ways, recommending them to organizations like Feathergill and Associates for more in-depth help than he as

a priest can provide.

Mental issues like anxiety and depression can happen to anyone, and are not at all an indication of a weak faith life, she pointed out. Naturally, some Catholics prefer to speak to a professional who shares their faith, which Feathergill understands, though she admits that there is a difficulty in finding Catholic psychologists within the diocese.

So, how should Catholics respond to those with mental illness? "Treat them with care and compassion like you would as a good Christian, treating them the way you would want your neighbor to treat you," Feathergill said simply. Listening is "one of the most important things." Listen with an open heart, not by attempting to relate to the situation through one's own experiences or trying to "fix it."

Being aware of the signs of mental health is important, but Feathergill would concur that a person should not attempt to self-diagnose and never ignore a person who expresses suicidal thoughts. Instead, offer to help the person find the assistance they need, as some parishes and priests in the local area have begun to do.

In Schools

"Children are resilient," or so people say. Yet even the most resilient children would not be completely immune to the turmoil of the times. Parents may attempt to shelter their youngsters from the darkest aspects of the world, but these things will surely creep into their conscious minds in some way, affecting their daily lives in the same way as adults. School counselors are in a good position to observe this. In her 20th year as counselor at St. Vincent de Paul School in Fort Wayne, Jodi Helmer testified to the changes in her students in the last couple of years.

"You can't have a pandemic and people going through what they went through ... and expect that everything was going to be ok," she stressed.

St. Vincent de Paul School, she continued, has been blessed to have a school counselor on staff full-time for years even prior to her time there. She also spoke about the many other blessings of her school and other Catholic schools, particularly the diocesan support, the priests who serve the spiritual needs of the people, and of course the faith life built on Jesus Christ. Resources such as the rosary, adoration, and spending time in prayer at church are all aspects of mental health that public schools cannot provide.

At St. Vincent de Paul School, administrators put a solid re-entry plan into place to return to school after the months of quarantine, Helmer said, and with the increasingly relaxed policies this year, she senses a "lighter" atmosphere in the hallways and playgrounds. Unfortunately, though, the bigger issues are not going away anytime soon. Helmer stated, "I would say the biggest problem we are seeing still now is fallout." Mental health professionals are overwhelmed with clients seeking their services, to the point that clinical aid cannot be obtained for anywhere from three months to a year in some cases, Helmer said. And that waiting can be costly for a person's mental health. She can offer help, but not diagnoses or medications.

Helmer is fortunate to have the assistance of Katie Giant, now in her second year at the school. Together, they are able to assist the children and also educate the teachers in methods of helping their young pupils within the classroom setting. Giant said that: "Everything that Jodi has incorporated and taught the teachers is very intentional." Their goal

as a team is to help children advocate for themselves, to learn how to calm themselves so they can remain in the classroom and have a positive learning experience, which is their purpose at the school.

There are silver linings to be found among the shadows, however. "I think the positive with COVID though, is that it brought awareness to mental health," Giant added. Both Giant and Helmer agree that students are less reluctant to visit either of them now. And seeking help should never be seen in a negative light. Helmer remarked, "We all have stress, anxiety, mental health needs, no matter if you're a child or an adult. And that isn't something to be embarrassed of or afraid to seek."

"Luckily we have Jesus as our role model that we can use here, that we can all go to Him anyways. That's always been a piece here."

Within the Northeast Indiana region, there are resources available to help those in need. Sometimes a priest may be able to refer a parishioner to a counselor, as Msgr. Schooler does at St. Pius X, and some parishes have seen the need to walk with those suffering from mental health crises through support groups such as St. Dymphna's Refuge at St. Therese Parish in Fort Wayne.

Secular groups like NAMI also provide support, often encouraging people to develop their personal faith lives. Elkhart County has a NAMI affiliate and the Fort Wayne and St. Joseph County chapters serve much of the surrounding areas. For more information, visit www.NAMI.org. For those in more immediate need of care, mental health facilities serve both the Fort Wayne and South Bend areas. Counselors can also be reached by calling or texting the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 at any time of day or night.

Learning from St. Monica:

Father Freiburger, Leaders Share about Parish Life

BY ELIZABETH SELF

St. Monica's Parish in Mishawaka celebrated their patroness's feast day through the end of August with an evening novena, concluding in a festival on the last Saturday of the month. The week also featured a speaker's visit, rescheduled from March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The events helped newly appointed pastor Father Jason Freiburger and parishioners deepen their devotion to St. Monica, "the mother of all mothers."

Every evening of the novena, parishioners gathered in the main sanctuary for a series of prayers, including a Litany of Tears to St. Monica. Father Freiburger told Today's Catholic that in light of these prayers, "it was good to focus each night on a different intention, such as those who might have somehow been pushed away from the Church by her leaders, family members, or misunderstanding."

National speaker and youth minister Mary Bielski ushered in the official parish mission event. Bielski presented her signature series – "Be His, Be Brave, Be You" – on the three final nights of the novena, and social gatherings followed. She tied her message into the events commemorative of St. Monica by stating that parishioners share St. Monica's mission to invite Christ's healing presence into their families.

Bielski hoped to inspire parishioners to grow in their spiritual lives so that they might flow out in evangelization. Bielski said the first evening, Aug. 25, "As a Church, we have to go deeper than what the world has been say-



Jennifer Barton



Molly Gettinger

Initiatives at St. Monica Parish in Mishawaka encourage growth and involvement for the coming years.

ing [about our identity in relationship with the Lord]."

The mission event, Father Freiburger said, was not for the St. Monica parish community exclusively, but for a mix of young adult groups

and nearby parishes. "It was focused on what we need to do to strengthen our confidence, knowing we don't need to be professors of theology to go out and evangelize; it's our example, our love for others. Bielski gave us some courage for doing that."

Ministry Developer Megan Burdell said that the mission event "provided a great opportunity to focus on our sense of identity, originally described by our former pastor, Father Jacob Meyer, as a parish that 'parties, prays, and proclaims.'" While the parish mission did not set new official parish goals and is not a yearly tradition, Burdell expressed that they hope to host more in the future.

The festival dawned on Saturday with Mass, confession, and Father Freiburger in the dunk tank. A parish historian guided guests on a detailed tour of the church; bake-offs were judged, and the Amish-designed sacristy was open for public viewing. Father Freiburger hopes that the week's events inspired the parish's large young adult population to become more involved.

Though the parish's many ministries require strong, faithful leadership, Father Freiburger said, "It doesn't have to be the priest." He asked how young adults might be engaged, knowing that they might find themselves in a state of transition, and how long-time parishioners can extend the invitation to younger generations.

Commitment to the faith, he shared, of course trumps commitment to the parish. He proposed service and giving as the paths into parish life that young people are most likely to take. Ultimately, the causes behind collections require work that belongs to the whole Church. So, Father Freiburger asked, "How do we get someone new to coordinate that, so it's not one more task for the secretary or another ministry leader?"

In a final reflection on St. Monica, Father Freiburger recounted, "Monica was not perfect; Augustine later said that if it weren't for the education she had pushed so much, he might have come back to the faith more quickly." A

bishop had tempered the great saint's urgent pleas on behalf of her wayward son: "The bishop told her 'Get away, it's not going to happen now ... God cannot ignore so many tears; your tears will save him, just not this moment.'"

Father Freiburger mentioned that Bielski had highlighted St. Monica as a patroness of conversion and evangelization, and especially patience, trust, and faith. Both he and the parish are comforted by the thought of another mother looking out for them, as they look out for each other. He shared in a homily weeks before the novena, "I can't be everywhere. Faith has to be heard, and you need to be the feet and hands of Christ."

St. Monica's parish enters a busy wedding season, and RCIA and religious education recommence in the coming month. Construction for a new adoration chapel that will hopefully serve the school as well as the public continues. "More time in prayer, realizing God's love, will help people grow in conviction and commitment," Father Freiburger concluded.



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Catholic

Christ Renews His Parish is Transforming Lives

BY ANDREW JACOBS

For several decades, the Holy Spirit has been quietly renewing hearts and parishes across the nation and within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend through the CRHP process.

Renewal is a word that brings to mind a rebirth, a reawakening of something laid dormant for too long. Sometimes, that still, small voice within encourages and calls one to go deeper, to move closer to becoming the best version of oneself. Renewal can mean many things: progression, transformation, rejuvenation, and conversion. It can mean becoming more involved in the parish life, meeting people who encourage each other toward greater spiritual heights.

Renewal is the very heart of Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP).

For several decades, the Holy Spirit has been quietly renewing hearts and parishes across the nation and within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend through the CRHP process.

The process begins by attending a renewal weekend. Many who have attended describe the weekend as a uniquely and powerfully transformative experience for their faith and their life.

"My Christ Renews His Parish experience helped me to not sweat the small stuff as much and reset the priorities in my life, which are God and family," explained Brad Barondeau, a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Fort Wayne. "I learned how to get to know people on a deeper level, become a better listener, be a little more empathetic to the struggles that others face, and how to best support them. This led me to form a strong brotherhood with the men of my team, which in turn strengthened my Catholic faith and my involvement in the parish and the wider com-

munity."

While the renewal weekend can be thought of as a miniature retreat, it is different from many other retreats. It's an opportunity to step away from the pressures, concerns, and distractions of the world and spend some time getting back into what matters most: allowing the Holy Spirit to strengthen one's Catholic faith and form strong bonds with brothers or sisters in Christ. It can be thought of as a weekend of becoming a bit less Martha, who worriedly rushed and toiled at her tasks, and a bit more Mary, who quietly sat and listened at the feet of Jesus.

In parishes where CRHP is present, renewal weekends are typically held twice a year. To avoid potential distractions that can arise, renewal weekends are held separately for both men and women, often a few weeks apart.

Attendees of the weekend spend time with a team of men or women who themselves have been transformed by CRHP and have a desire to share that transformative experience with their brothers and sisters in faith.

The weekends begin on Saturday morning and end Sunday afternoon. They are structured to encourage attendees and team members to get to know each other in ways that help form relationships that last long after the weekend ends. Scripture, prayer, and

reception of the sacraments are interwoven throughout the weekend.

After the weekend concludes, attendees are asked to join the team that will be formed in preparation to present the next renewal weekend for a new group of men or women. Many who have joined a team and participated in this formation process have described it as the truly transformative part of CRHP. During the time of formation, the team meets regularly to dive deeper into Scripture study, prayer, sharing, and strengthening of the bonds that were formed on their renewal weekend, bonds that often last for the rest of their lives.

During his time as Pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Father Jim Shafer credited the Holy Spirit acting through the CRHP process as a principal reason for the faithful stewardship and strong involvement at the parish. An ardent supporter, Father Shafer regularly participated in renewal weekends at the parish. Current Pastor Father Terry Coonan has continued this support and will be involved in the upcoming renewal weekends at the parish this fall.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioner John Haines spoke of the impact the weekend had on his faith life. "The most significant takeaway for me from my Christ Renews His Parish experience was that it allowed me to reflect deeply on how I

was living my life, and specifically on how I was doing on our first priority as Christians — achieving eternal salvation," he said. "It caused me to really think about the personal relationship I had with our Lord and to refocus on what I was doing in my daily prayer life to build that relationship, which is the best way to say, 'I love you' to Christ."

To Doug Anderson of the aforementioned parish, his renewal weekend was "the vehicle that started me on my path to recovery from my addiction. God used the Christ

Renews His Parish process to play a big part in putting my life back together and saving my marriage and family."

In some parishes, CRHP is now known as Welcome. This name change reflects updates and improvements in the format of both the initial retreat weekend and the formation process. It can be thought of as "CRHP 2.0," which includes all the best parts of the original CRHP process experience but is even more dynamic, engaging, and transformative. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is one of the parishes that will be rolling out the new Welcome program this fall. Many other parishes around the diocese host fall weekends; check local bulletins for renewal dates.

"...be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth." — Eph. 4:23

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Parishioners of St. Vincent de Paul

A Depopulated Future

Remember when people thought overpopulation would destroy us and the planet. Paul Ehrlich's 1968 book "The Population Bomb" popularized this idea, leading to urgent calls for "zero population growth." Dr. Warren Hern even warned in 1993 that the human species was a global "cancer": "We have become a malignant ecopathologic process," he wrote. (Hern happened to be a practitioner of late-term abortions.)

Now I've lived long enough to read serious articles warning: "We need to consider ways to reverse or at least slow rapid depopulation."

That is the subtitle of "The Unexpected Future," published on Aug. 20 in the online magazine *Quillette*. Citing United Nations data and other sources, researchers Joel Kotkin and Wendell Cox say we "need to worry about the potential ill-effects of depopulation, including a declining workforce, torpid economic growth, and brewing generational conflict between a generally prosperous older generation and their more hard-pressed successors."

All developed nations, including the United States, are well below replacement level. Even populous countries like India and China show declining fertility, with East Asian countries like Japan facing especially rapid declines.

As to causes, the authors say young adults see a future of "greater economic insecurity,

poorer living conditions, and fewer opportunities" than their parents. Ironically, if their attitude leads to fewer young people working to support a rapidly aging population, it will help bring about that very outcome for any children they do have.

Concern about climate change has also led some young adults to forgo parenthood or even marriage – expecting a child to place strain on the environment, or at least to face a toxic one.

The authors say the result is a "post-familial" society, where a growing percentage of households consist of only one person.

They cite the likely adverse effects of this on economics, politics, and social solidarity, but also hint at something deeper. "This is as much a civilizational or spiritual crisis as an economic one, and it requires a shift in values, including perhaps religious ones."

Devout Christians, Jews, and Muslims have more children than their secular neighbors, as discussed in the book, "Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth?" by Eric Kaufmann, professor at Birkbeck, University of London. This is not only about a particular religion's teaching on birth control.

In a May 31 article in the online journal *Public Discourse*, author and attorney Alexandra Davis emphasizes the spiritual side of the problem. She writes



RICHARD DOERFLINGER

A MORE HUMAN SOCIETY

that "the consequences of the dwindling birth rate are far greater than questions related to population figures."

Young adults often forgo family life to enhance their individual autonomy and their hopes of success and comfort. What they may miss out on, says Davis, are two things "central to human nature": connection and meaning.

Parenthood teaches us to give ourselves to helpless others who depend on us – and to realize how much we depend on others, especially near the beginning and end of our lives.

And in ordering our lives around our own individual pleasure, we give up opportunities for a more meaningful life – one that survives and thrives through the suffering and disappointments that life can bring. Life in a family brings pleasures of its own, but it also brings an enrichment of the person that will never come from thinking of and relying on ourselves alone.

People of faith know this. My life is not just about me. In loving God and others, I

DOERFLINGER, page 13

'Let Go': Shia LaBeouf on Conversion and the Meaning of the Gospel

"Pio ... saved my life, this is not just a movie or something, and I don't mean that lightly," said "Transformers" star Shia LaBeouf in a soulful interview with Bishop Robert Barron. In the course of their conversation, the actor laid bare his encounter with Catholicism, mediated by St. Padre Pio and the friars of the Capuchin Franciscan San Lorenzo Seminary in Santa Ynez, California.

"My life was on fire. I was walking out of hell," said LaBeouf. The actor, who has appeared in 40 movies, confessed that when he accepted the role of Padre Pio in an upcoming film, he didn't want to be an actor any longer. His world had crumbled. "I hurt a lot of people," he told Bishop Barron. "I felt deep shame and deep guilt."

A former Jewish atheist, the actor's moving comments about his experience of religious faith have touched many. One YouTube viewer commented, "I started watching this dismissively, knowing he's an actor and expecting him to put on a perfunctory show." The same viewer went on to say: "I'd like to apologize for my own presumptuousness and small-mindedness."



GUEST COMMENTARY

FATHER PATRICK BRISCOE, OP

God deflated my ego when I watched Shia engage so openly and straightforwardly, and so humbly admit to his own humanness and wrongdoing and the hurt he's caused."

Others have answered LaBeouf's newfound religious faith with unchanged suspicion. The interview with Bishop Barron was released concurrent with a development in the sexual battery and assault lawsuit from singer FKA Twigs, his former girlfriend, which will go to trial next April. To others, the interview seems like an amazing promotion strategy for the Padre Pio biopic.

Only time will offer more evidence of LaBeouf's conversion. But for now, I think we should take him at his word. I'd rather believe in the power of conversion and the healing grace of the Holy Spirit than live under the tyranny of constant

BRISCOE, page 13

Love of God More Important than Riches



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Reading: Luke 16:1-13

The first reading for this weekend is from the Book of Amos. This prophet, regarded as one of the minor prophets, was from Tekoa, a rural area of Judea about 10 miles from Jerusalem. Amos was a shepherd.

He knew well the religious traditions of his ancestors. He also had a sense of events occurring beyond his own environment, even events happening far away in other lands. This awareness of his own religious heritage and of life beyond his own situation gives his book of only nine chapters a special quality.

Money dominates this reading's message. The passage mentions ancient units of currency such as the shekel, in circulation at the time. Most importantly, it is highly critical of any quest to gather great sums of money, putting ethics and all other considerations aside. Amos insists that a higher standard always exists, bluntly and realistically stating that a reward greater than monetary gain is to be preferred and is available.

For its second reading, the Church presents the First Letter to Timothy. Early Christian history presents Timothy as a deeply committed pioneer convert to Christianity who was so close to the apostle Paul that Paul referred to him as "beloved son", although of course nothing suggests that Timothy literally was the apostle's biological child. In fact, Timothy was the son of a Greek father and a devout Jewish mother. Since his mother was Jewish, Timothy was Jewish under the laws of Judaism.

Tradition has it that Timothy was the first bishop

of the Christian community in Ephesus.

In this weekend's reading, Timothy is asked to pray particularly for rulers and persons in authority. These figures especially are vulnerable to the temptation of yielding to greed and self-interest.

St. Luke's Gospel supplies the last reading. It is a parable. In the story, an irresponsible manager fears the consequences if his employer discovers the manager's mishandling of responsibility. So, the manager calls his employer's debtors and orders them "to cook the books", so to speak. If a loan was for 100, the manager said to change the amount to 50.

This arrangement would have been unacceptable then as it would be now. The employer would have had every right to repudiate the manager's manipulation of the amounts owed and discipline the manager.

Had the manager, however, insisted on the original figures, he thought that he loses the regard of the community by appearing to be out of control

of his own business and heartless by extracting what was owed from people struck by bad luck.

The reading admonishes that fidelity to God, and God's law, is the only standard.

Reflection

It is easy to be confused trying to understand the world of ancient Jewish economics. They were not altogether like modern finances, although some similarities pertain. So, it is better not to elevate the employer in the parable recounted by Luke's Gospel to too high a level of prestige or to accuse or absolve the manager of fraud.

The bottom line is clear. Some things in life are more important than money. It is the theme of the reading from Amos. The theme reappears in the Gospel.

The central figure in the Gospel is the employer. The manager reduces the debts, even if prompted by the manager's mishandling of the situation. The employer is merciful, willingly reducing what is his due in view of a borrower's dif-

ficulty in paying.

Not without a lesson, however, is the story of the manager and of the debtors' willingness to join in the fraud. The line between genuine security and peace of mind and grasping for more and more on the other is thin, blurred, and easy to cross.

Remember what is important. Pursue what is important.

READINGS

Sunday: Am 8:4-7 Ps 113:1-2, 4-8 1 Tm 2:1-8 Lk 16:1-13

Monday: Prv 3:27-34 Ps 15:2-4b, 5 Lk 8:16-18

Tuesday: Prv 21:1-6, 10-13 Ps 119:1, 27, 30, 34-35, 44 Lk 8:19-21

Wednesday: Eph 4:1-7, 11-13 Ps 19:2-5 Mt 9:9-13

Thursday: Eccl 1:2-11 Ps 90:3-6, 12-14, 17b Lk 9:7-9

Friday: Eccl 3:1-11 Ps 114:1b, 2abc, 3-4 Lk 9:18-22

Saturday: Eccl 11:9—12:8 Ps 90:3-6, 12-14, 17 Lk 9:43b-45

You Never Really Pray Alone

There is no such thing as “private” prayer. There is – and certainly should be – deeply *personal* prayer, but really no such thing as “private” prayer. All Christian prayer, if it is true to its name, is initiated by the promptings of the Holy Spirit received in Baptism, who prays in and through the hearts of the baptized who together are constituted as the Body of Christ, the Church. Two things are worth noting here: first, all prayer begins with God’s initiative (it’s graced – in the Tradition, the Holy Spirit is often referred to as “uncreated Grace”); and, second, the Church is constituted by God’s action, not by mere human choice or conscious decision. Decision is obviously important, as the Gospel makes clear, in responding to Jesus, but it’s also important to remember that the invitation comes first. All prayer then, personal or public, is done in communion with the Body of Christ, the Church, as the Spirit draws us in Christ to an ever-deeper communion with the Father.

Public, liturgical prayer should shape, inform, and nurture our personal prayer. That is, rather than accommodating our experience of liturgical prayer to our experience of personal prayer – and thus asking, for example, whether the liturgy of the Church “meets my needs” or “touches me personally” – we should allow the public prayer of the Church continually to affect our experience of personal prayer, drawing us out of ourselves and uniting us more deeply to the self-offering of Christ to the Father. Our needs, like our tastes, should themselves be open to and subject to ongoing conversion.

The prayer of the Church *par excellence* is the Mass. The Eucharistic Liturgy, the Church tells us, is in fact the most effective thing the Church does. As Pope Benedict XVI made clear in his first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*, the entire social mission of the Church, its apostolates of active charity and social justice, for example, derive their purpose and meaning – and their eschato-

logical effectiveness – from the Sacrifice of the Altar, where the fullness of Love is revealed not as a human ideal but as a Divine Person. That’s one of the reasons Mass is offered daily, and why Catholics are encouraged to participate regularly – even daily, when possible – at Mass. Ask anyone who, over the course of time, has had the opportunity to become a “daily communicant,” and each will no doubt tell you that the opportunity to celebrate Mass daily has made a profound difference in his or her life.

At every celebration of the Eucharist, Christ reveals Himself and is present in four distinct ways: in His Word proclaimed (it’s God, not merely the lector, who speaks to us when the Scriptures are proclaimed), in the person of the priest or bishop (who acts *in persona Christi capitis*, in the “person of Christ, Head of the Body, the Church”), in the assembled people of God, and most especially (*maxime* is the word used in the documents of the Church, literally, “most of all”) in the consecrated elements, the bread and wine upon which the Holy Spirit is invoked and which are substantially changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. It is this last, substantial and efficacious presence of Christ which in fact constitutes the Church and which makes Christ present among His people. So, it’s not that, because we have gathered as the Church that somehow the Eucharist reveals Christ’s presence; rather, it’s because Christ reveals Himself in the breaking of the bread (as He did to Cleopas and His otherwise unknown sidekick on the road to Emmaus), that we recognize Him as present in the assembled people of God. It is the Holy Spirit who constitutes the Church by configuring us to Christ through our sharing in the Eucharist. St. Augustine in one of his homilies suggests to his congregation that it is “their Mystery” which is placed on the altar and that they are to “become what they receive” – their identity (and ours) is derived from the Mystery of the Lord’s dying and rising, which



THE HUMAN CONDITION

MSGR. MICHAEL HEINTZ

St. Paul teaches we somehow carry within us as we trundle about from day to day. Our participation in the Eucharist is what incorporates us, quite literally, into the Body of Christ, the Church. There are of course many other modes of prayer and devotional life which distinguish the lives of Catholics: The Liturgy of the Hours, the rosary, *Lectio divina*, novenas, chaplets, and litanies, and a host of other ways of praying which adorn the Church. But this panoply of styles and approaches must all be seen as somehow participating in the one prayer of the Church, and always as taking their orientation from and ultimately leading back to, the celebration of the Eucharist.

Even when alone, one is never praying alone. There are times when a priest may celebrate Mass without a congregation. Even in such cases, we believe that the entire Church, including the angels and saints, is somehow present in that celebration. A homebound person who devoutly prays each day, even if living alone, is an integral part of Christ’s Body, the Church, at prayer, offering itself to the Father in union with Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit. A lone high school sophomore, pausing to pray at the end of her long day of school and extracurriculars, prays in communion with the entire Church, whether she realizes it or not. All these individuals are not mere individuals when they pray: they pray as part of Christ’s Body, in communion with the whole Church on earth and, yes, even in heaven.

You never really pray alone.

Msgr. Michael Heintz is on the faculty at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland.

DOERFLINGER, from page 12

become more fully human. For both practical and more profound reasons, then, how unhealthy is it that, to many public officials and others in our society, the phrase “reproductive health” means efforts to sterilize us and eliminate our nascent children?

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

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for September 18, 2022

Luke 16: 1-13

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C: an enterprising thief. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

SQUANDERING	MASTER	TAKING
STRONG	DIG	TO BEG
WELCOME ME	HOMES	HUNDRED
OLIVE OIL	SIT DOWN	QUICKLY
FIFTY	WHEAT	DISHONEST
CHILDREN	GENERATION	LIGHT
FRIENDS	WEALTH	ETERNAL

DISHONEST

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L S I L I G H T O B E G
T Q Y A S I T D O W N N
S U U R E T S A M O L O
E A K I K T W R I G I R
N N S D C D E T A N O T
O D D E M K A R F I E S
H E Y R M R L T N K V D
S R G D E O T Y F A I N
I I T N M A H G T T L E
D N E U E W K J O F O I
F G C H I L D R E N I R
E D W E L C O M E M E F
    
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BRISCOE, from page 12

cynicism and suspicion.

I will also insist that my interpretation is not Pollyannaish. LaBeouf offers considerable engagement with the Faith. From his thoughts on the Latin Mass to his experiences reading St. Augustine and Thomas Merton, this is a man who seems to have undergone a genuine change of heart. His affection for the Franciscans, including Father James, Father Jude, and Brother Alex, was evident. LaBeouf marveled at how the friars invited him in to their life by laughter, joking, petting cats, and eating ice cream. And they did all of this without asking him for anything.

For me, the most powerful moment in LaBeouf’s story comes when he describes what it was like to read the Gospel of Matthew for the first time. LaBeouf undertook the task to prepare to be St. Pio. He said John the Baptist made a deep impression, that he “felt like an old Western character.” The actor found the Forerunner “rustic and strong and masculine.”

Then, unexpectedly, the Gospel’s story of redemption began to capture him. “I started reading about a route, a map, toward something that felt like ‘let go,’” LaBeouf says. The actor emphasized: “That’s really what I got out of the Gospel. If I could wrap it up in two words it was, ‘let go.’” With his life slipping away,

having no place else to go or turn, he found himself embracing the Gospel’s message of surrender. For LaBeouf, that message of surrender became more than preparation for a role. “It stops being this prep of a movie and it starts feeling like something beyond all that,” he told Bishop Barron.

We ought to listen to LaBeouf’s words. Too often, we doubt that the life of Jesus has the ability to touch a soul. We can so easily forget the liberating power of the basic tenets of the Gospel. We shouldn’t gloss over LaBeouf’s troubled past — marred by plagiarism, alcoholism, theft, and accusations of sexual assault. In the days since the interview with Bishop Barron, the actor admitted another deceit: the depiction of his father in the autobiographical film “Honey Boy” was “nonsense.”

Christ can overcome all these things and greater wrongs still. Let us pray for LaBeouf and that every suffering soul might discover the message of the Gospel to “let go.”

Father Patrick Briscoe, OP, is Editor of Our Sunday Visitor.

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Show Me The Honey: Maryland Sisters Find Divine Touch in Beekeeping

BY GEORGE P. MATYSEK JR.

CATONSVILLE, Md. (CNS) – With an apron protecting her long, black religious habit, Sister Deborah Rose Rosado marveled at the steady stream of thick, golden goo she poured into a small glass jar.

Careful to stop the current as the sticky substance reached the container's one-pint capacity, Sister Deborah Rose screwed on a metal cap before one of her fellow All Saints Sisters of the Poor attached a label.

"Produced by bees-in-residence at the All Saints Sisters of the Poor Convent," the label proudly proclaims. "Harvested & bottled in Catonsville, Maryland." Hundreds of thousands of honeybees living in 12 colonies scattered across the religious community's bucolic 100-acre campus helped produce the bottled honey held in Sister Deborah Rose's hands.

The substance's existence is a feat Sister Deborah Rose believes highlights intentionality behind God's creation.

The bees collect nectar from flowers and plants across the property and over a three-mile radius, Sister Deborah Rose said, bringing it back to the hives where they transform it into honey. Over the course of each worker bee's 6-week lifespan, each insect produces just 1/12th of a teaspoon of honey. Yet,



CNS photo/Kevin J. Parks, Catholic Review

Sister Deborah Rose Rosado of the All Saints Sisters of the Poor in Catonsville, Md., pours honey into a jar on Aug. 16.

taken together, that honey is enough to fill more than 200 jars.

"The process of working with nature and having this honey – this beautiful, golden honey – is very meditative," Sister Deborah Rose said. "God created these tiny little creatures that are doing so much and working so hard."

The All Saints Sisters of the Poor first became involved in

cultivating bee colonies three years ago when two of their neighbors, both amateur beekeepers, asked if they could establish hives on the nuns' property.

The beekeepers, Clement Purcell of Mount Calvary Catholic Church in Baltimore and Martin Kersse of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ellicott City, take care of tending the

hives and extracting the honey. The sisters' job is to bottle the sweet product, which is divvied up among Purcell, Kersse, and the sisters.

The raw honey sells for \$20 a jar in the All Saints Sisters of the Poor gift shop, with the proceeds reinvested into beekeeping.

The honey jar labels include an image of Our Lady of Walsingham, one of the earliest apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary especially beloved by English Catholics and many Anglicans. That's significant to the All Saints Sisters of the Poor who came to Maryland in 1872 as an American branch of an Anglican women's religious community in England.

The Baltimore sisters were received into the Catholic Church in 2009 by then-Baltimore Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien and are now recognized as a "diocesan institute" of women religious overseen by the Archbishop of Baltimore.

Mother Emily Ann Lindsey, Superior General of the religious community, said five sisters spend several hours each afternoon bottling the honey when it's harvested over the summer.

The sisters have long been concerned about nature – nurturing bluebirds, rehabilitating injured or sick animals and fostering the preservation

of troubled species. In recent years, they have raised monarch butterflies.

"We are a community that is part contemplative and part active," Mother Emily Ann explained. "When you are interacting with creation, you are actually partaking in that creation in a different way. It feeds us spiritually because it brings us closer to our Lord through what He's created. He gives us opportunities to participate almost as a co-creator as we bring forth new life and keep it going."

Purcell, a biologist by training, said there are many examples of the hand of God in beekeeping. He noted, for example, that when the temperature reaches exactly 57 degrees or below, the bees' wings stop functioning.

"So they form a cluster," said Purcell, who wears protective clothing and uses calming smoke when handling the bee colonies. "They disengage their wings and they vibrate and that generates heat. They protect the queen bee. This is the miracle of God."

Beekeeping and the tedious process of collecting and bottling honey takes time and effort, Mother Emily Ann said. But it's rewarding.

Matysek is managing editor of the Catholic Review, news outlet of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

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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.

Knights Host Breakfast at Most Precious Blood Parish

FORT WAYNE — St. Gaspar del Bufalo Council No. 11043 will be serving breakfast on Sunday, Sept. 18, from 9 a.m. to noon in the gymnasium at Most Precious Blood, 1515 Barthold St. Carryout packs will be available. Freewill offerings will be accepted. Proceeds this month will help support the parish school. Visit www.kofc11043.org for information.

Central Catholic High School Alumni Association All Alumni Reunion and Annual Meeting

FORT WAYNE — Central Catholic High School Alumni Association is having a luncheon on Wednesday, Sept. 21, at Classic Catering and Event Center, 4832 Hillegas Rd. The doors open at 11 a.m. and lunch is at 11:30 a.m. Cost is

\$20 per person. For information and to register, contact Laura Fleckenstein Stuckey at 260-486-1000.

Eucharistic Revival Virtual Conference

MISHAWAKA — Discover how you and your family can get the most out of the Eucharistic Revival; how to be eucharistic in your school, parish, home, and family; ways that you can become a catalyst for revival for those closest to you; and how the Revival intends to transform the way we evangelize. Register for this national conference for free today at go.virtualcatholicconference.com/ERC22?r_done=1 Contact info.revival@diocesefwsb.org.

Bernie Westhues Memorial Golf Outing

WALKERTON — The Knights of Columbus Council #5709, St. Patrick Church, will have a

golf outing on Saturday, Sept. 24, at Whispering Pines Golf Course, 32280 SR 4, to benefit the endowment fund for aids to qualified students of St. Patrick Parish and the council. Registration is at 8 a.m. with 9 a.m. Shotgun Start. Lunch will be served after golf. There will be a 50/50 raffle, longest drive and closest to pin contest. Cost is \$75 per player with teams of four. Contact Tom Walter at 574-586-3707 or debbieandtom73@gmail.com for information.

'Healing the Land' Ecumenical Prayer Gathering

NOTRE DAME — "Healing the Land," an ecumenical Christian prayer gathering will be held at the University of Notre Dame's Joyce Center on Saturday, Sept.

REST IN PEACE

Arcola
Arthur Bunt, 85, St. Patrick

Gloria Girardot, 97, St. Vincent de Paul

South Bend
Sue Kostry, 80, Holy Cross

Fort Wayne
Roger Minick, 75, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Dr. Robert Robb, 90, St. Vincent de Paul

John Napieralski, 88, St. Jude

Huntington
Melba Hall, 89, SS. Peter & Paul

Wabash
Mary Ellen Mitchell, 75, St. Bernard

Ellen Devlin, 66, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Michael E. Vargo, Sr., 74, SS. Peter & Paul

24, from 4-6 p.m. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will participate via a recorded video message for those in attendance. Tickets are free of charge and are available at www.healingthelandND.com, but a ticket is NOT required. This is event is hosted by Pure Assembly, an ecumenical Christian organization. Contact info@pureassembly.com for information.

Jubilee Anniversary Mass and Reception

SOUTH BEND — All couples celebrating their 25th, 40th, 50th, 60th, 65th or 70th wedding anniversary this year,

along with their families, are invited to attend the Jubilee Anniversary Mass with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades on Sunday, Sept. 18, at 11 a.m. at St. Matthew Cathedral. A ticketed reception will follow in the school gym. Anniversary couples will receive a commemorative certificate and two free tickets to the reception. Additional reception tickets for family and friends may be purchased for \$10 each. Children ages 10 and younger may attend the reception at no charge. To register, please go to www.diocesefwsb.org/anniversary-masses.

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Catholic High School Principal Shows What's Possible

BY GINA CHRISTIAN

PHILADELPHIA, PA (CNS) – When she was in fifth grade, Jayda Pugliese realized that “something wasn’t right.”

As a student at St. Mary Interparochial School in Philadelphia, she struggled to keep up in class. Her world was falling silent, due to a progressive disease that attacked her auditory nerves.

Adept at lip-reading, Pugliese managed to pass regular hearing exams until her condition reached a crisis point, and her grades began to plummet.

Now, 25 years later, Pugliese is the principal of St. Mary Interparochial, and an internationally recognized educational leader whose work blends sustainability and spirituality.

“I’ve come full circle,” she said. “I let go and let God.”

Pugliese said she “felt extremely supported” at St. Mary Interparochial after her condition was fully diagnosed.

“They were so inclusive, and so mindful,” she said. “I had speech therapy the entire time,

and they set up ASL (American Sign Language) lessons.”

She also participated in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s Deaf Apostolate, directed by Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Kathleen Schipani, whom Pugliese described as a “guiding light.”

And she found a heavenly mentor in Philadelphia-born St. Katharine Drexel, whose canonization cause was confirmed by two healings of those with hearing loss.

Pugliese credits the saint’s intercession with helping to slow her own degenerative condition, enabling her to complete her education.

“She became my patroness,” said Pugliese. “For a long while, my nerve damage stopped, and I always say it’s due to St. Katharine Drexel. I needed it to stop for me to get through school.”

At the same time, Pugliese – who relies on hearing aids – describes herself as “a deaf person in a speaking world,” and “an active advocate for deaf individuals.”

While at the former St. Maria Goretti (now Neumann-Goretti)

High School in Philadelphia, she launched an ASL program, threw herself into youth organizations, and “hit the ground running” with her academics, building on momentum she’d acquired in seventh and eighth grade.

At Holy Family University in Philadelphia, Pugliese earned her Bachelor’s Degree in Special Education and Elementary Education and her Master’s in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and Literacy.

Her teaching skills – honed in Philadelphia public and charter schools – quickly earned her professional recognition. In 2016, she received the Milken Educator Award (often likened to the Oscars of teaching) in Pennsylvania.

The timing was providential, since Pugliese had been temporarily forced to halt her doctoral studies at Holy Family University for financial reasons.

“I remember sitting in church crying,” said Pugliese, a member of St. Paul Parish in South Philadelphia. “I said to God, ‘I don’t know what your plan is for me, but I’m going to put it in

your hands.’”

With the award funding a sizable portion of her degree, Pugliese – who was subsequently named the 2018 National Science Teachers Association Sylvia Shugrue Awardee and a 2019 finalist for Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year – now expects to receive her doctorate next year.

Earlier this summer, she completed a one-week collaboration at the Kansas-based Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes as one of the organization’s 2022 fellows.

Pugliese has traveled across the world to give presentations and training on educational best practices, accessible instruction and STEAM-based technology integration for classrooms.

And in the process, she also spreads the Gospel message.

“One of the biggest things I’m known for is merging the sustainable development goals created by the United Nations with the corporal works of mercy,” said Pugliese.

St. Mary’s classrooms are the laboratory for this synthesis, she said.

Thanks to two grants from the Pennsylvania-based Ambassador’s Fund for Catholic Education, the school is creating a fleet of STREAM (science, technology, religion, engineering, arts, and mathematics) carts for classroom use, while piloting a business education course that instills “servant learning, service leadership, and empathy,” Pugliese said.

Those qualities govern her own life, she said, noting that her level of hearing “is absolutely at its worst right now.”

“I could possibly go completely deaf in five to seven years,” said Pugliese. “I will trust in God and let Him decide what will happen.”

Regardless of the prognosis, she plans to remain in the field of education.

“Maybe I can pave the way for more individuals who are disabled, and who want to go into leadership,” said Pugliese. “I want to show it’s possible.”

Christian is a Senior Content Producer for CatholicPhilly.com, the news website of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.



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HOUR BEGINS	TUESDAY, SEPT. 20	WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 21	THURSDAY, SEPT. 22	FRIDAY, SEPT. 22
8:00 am	Women's Care Center FORT WAYNE	Christ the King SOUTH BEND	Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration SOUTH BEND	Underwriter Hour FORT WAYNE
9:00 am	Bishop Luers High School FORT WAYNE	St. Paul of the Cross COLUMBIA CITY	Franciscan Center FORT WAYNE	Armor of God FORT WAYNE
10:00 am	St. Vincent De Paul ELKHART	St. Joseph SOUTH BEND	Double Your Donation TIPPMANN HOUR	St. Elizabeth Ann Seton FORT WAYNE
11:00 am	St. John Bosco / Imm. Conception Ege CHURUBUSCO/EGE	St. Jude FORT WAYNE	St. Joseph Hessen Cassel FORT WAYNE	Our Lady of Good Hope FORT WAYNE
12:00 pm	St. Monica SOUTH BEND	Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades	St. Vincent FORT WAYNE	St. John the Evangelist GOSHEN
1:00 pm	St. Charles Borromeo FORT WAYNE	Most Precious Blood FORT WAYNE	St. John the Baptist/Holy Family SOUTH BEND	St. Thomas the Apostle ELKHART
2:00 pm	St. Pius X SOUTH BEND	Bishop Dwenger High School FORT WAYNE	St. Michael PLYMOUTH	St. Therese Little Flower SOUTH BEND
3:00 pm	St. Matthew Cathedral & School SOUTH BEND	Huntington Catholic with SS. Peter & Paul and St. Mary FORT WAYNE	St. Mary of the Assumption DECATUR	Theology on Tap
4:00 pm	St. Peter FORT WAYNE	St. Anthony de Padua SOUTH BEND	St. Dominic SOUTH BEND	St. Andrew the Apostle Byzantine Rite SOUTH BEND
5:00 pm	St. Joseph MISHAWAKA	St. Therese & St. Henry FORT WAYNE	St. John the Baptist FORT WAYNE	Rekindle the Fire FORT WAYNE