

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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Wedding Mass Celebrates Significant Milestones in Marriage



Bob Krizmanich

An anniversary couple participates in the liturgy at a Mass celebrating milestone wedding anniversaries ranging from 25-70 years held on Sunday, Sept. 18, at St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend.

BY CLAIRE KENNEY

On Sunday, Sept. 18, more than 30 couples gathered at St. Matthew's Cathedral in South Bend to celebrate special wedding anniversaries. About a quarter of these couples celebrated a particularly momentous milestone: 60+ years of marriage.

Theresa and Chester Dlugosz celebrated 65 years of marriage as part of the Mass. The couple, who met at a friend's birthday party, have five children. Several children and/or their spouses were able to attend the Mass. "It (the Mass) was wonderful," Theresa said. For Theresa, celebrating this 65-year anniversary was important. "I think

that's such a special thing to do," she said. "We celebrate so many things and celebrating marriage should be one of those things."

In particular, celebrating this anniversary with a Mass was significant for the Dlugoszs given the impact faith has had on their marriage. "There's always tough times, death and things of that nature," Theresa explained. "But if you have your faith, it keeps your mindset in the right direction."

Being married for more than half a lifetime, the Dlugoszs have weathered many of life's challenges together. Faith is what allowed the couple to meet such challenges. "It gets you through a lot of tough times," Theresa said. "And in 65 years,

you experience tough times." Faith allows a couple to concentrate on what's important even during challenges. "It keeps you both focused on the right things to get you through these tough times," Theresa continued.

Another couple, Herb and Carol Younger, celebrated 60 years of marriage at the Mass. The Mass homily delivered by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades really impacted the couple's experience. "The joy with which he talked, that really touched both Herb and me," Carol explained. The couple, who met on a blind date in 1962 and were married shortly thereafter, recognize God's impact on their marriage. "His hand is really real in our lives," Carol said.

Nancy and Merwyn

Kusnierek, married 60 years, found the Mass to be a great way to celebrate their anniversary, particularly because the Mass gave them the chance to celebrate amongst like-minded couples. "Nancy and I both appreciated the opportunity to share our togetherness with 35 other like-minded celebrants," said Merwyn. "And it did reawaken our intense desire to not only remain married for life, but to continually offer ourselves to our partner as manifestation of our love just as Christ offered His body for His spouse, the Church."

The Mass celebration itself inspired the couple in several

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ways. "We were reminded that no matter how we defined love before, we need to think of and remind ourselves that God is love and he who abides in love abides in God," Merwyn went on to say. "Bishop then offered this concluding advice that I know will surely make a difference for us ... 'Remember that there are never too many May Is, Thank yous, and I am sorrys.'"

Also present were those celebrating more than 65 years of marriage. "We met a couple that had us beat by a few years," Theresa Dlugosz said. "I believe they were married for 70 years."

One couple, Beth and Jerry Horban, who celebrated 40 years of marriage at the Mass drew inspiration from the many around them celebrating 60+ years of marriage. "A gentleman who had shared with me his secret to 60 happy years of marriage said he always got the last word, (which was) 'yes dear'," Beth said. "To him, happy wife, happy life."

Jane and Marty Murphy who also celebrated 40 years of marriage, like Beth and Jerry, realized the significance of those celebrating 60+ years of marriage at the Mass. "We recognize that celebrating 60 or more years would be a great blessing," Jane said. "My parents did achieve that milestone, yet we know that it should not be taken for granted. We can simply trust in God's providence!"

For Tony Procaccino, who celebrated his 60th wedding anniversary with wife Norma and planned to attend the Mass, it's about leaning on virtues like patience and trust in his marriage. "Give and take, patience and trust!" he said when asked what the key is to a successful 60-year marriage.

These are also attributes for which he admires Norma. "Her complete thoughtfulness for not



Photos by Bob Krizmanich

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades holds a special Mass in South Bend on Sunday, Sept. 18, for couples celebrating milestone wedding anniversaries this year.

only our family unit, but for friends and complete strangers," he said. "Her appreciation by giving to others for small gestures for what they have done to make our lives easier and no matter the circumstance."

After 60 years or more of

marriage, God continues to be a source of strength for these and other couples celebrating such a milestone. As Merwyn put it, "He (God) has answered our prayers for 60 years so far and we count on His help for the rest of our married life"

A second diocesan Mass for

couples celebrating 25, 40, 50, 60, 65, and 70 years of marriage will take place on Sunday, Oct. 9, at 11:30 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne. To register, visit www.diocesefwsb.org/Anniversary-Masses.

Cardinal Prays at Queen's Funeral, Signaling Charles' Openness to Dialogue

LONDON (CNS) — An English cardinal took part in the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II in an indication of openness of the British Royal family to ecumenical and interfaith dialogue.

Some observers believe the involvement of Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster represents the first time for possibly hundreds of years that a cardinal or Catholic bishop has taken a role in a royal funeral.

Cardinal Nichols, President of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, was one of a number of non-Anglican Christian leaders asked to lead the congregation in prayers for

the queen during the Sept. 19 state funeral in Westminster Abbey.

The cardinal expressed thanks for the monarch's "commitment to the Commonwealth throughout her reign" and prayed for a "spirit of mutual honor and respect" and that figures in authority "may promote justice and the common good."

Among prominent Catholics in attendance were Archbishop Leo Cushley of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, representing the Catholics of Scotland; Archbishop Mark O'Toole of Cardiff, the most senior Catholic leader in Wales; and

Archbishop Paul Gallagher, the Vatican's Liverpool-born Foreign Minister, representing Pope Francis.

Gavin Ashenden, a former Anglican royal chaplain to Queen Elizabeth who became a Catholic in 2019, said no Catholic leaders were involved in the funeral of King George VI, the queen's father, in 1952.

He said that, for him, "seeing Cardinal Nichols standing by the high altar dressed as a cardinal during the queen's funeral service gave birth to a complex mixture of emotions, amongst which joy and nostalgia were combined."

The last British Catholic

monarch was King James II, who died in France in 1701 after he was deposed in a coup in 1688.

His elder brother, King Charles II, converted to the Catholic faith on his deathbed in 1685, and in the previous century, Queen Mary I, the eldest daughter of King Henry VIII, used her five-year reign in the 1550s to force England to return to the Catholic faith.

Since the 18th century, all British monarchs have been obliged, under oath, to be Anglicans and to discharge the office of the supreme governor



Photo from St. Pius X, Granger

From left, Msgr. William Schooler, Father John Jenkins, CSC, Marcus Freeman, Father Nate Wills, CSC, and Father Brian Ching, CSC.

Notre Dame Head Football Coach Marcus Freeman Joins the Catholic Church

BY ZELDA CALDWELL,
JONATHAN LIEDLE

CNA — Marcus Freeman, the new head football coach at the University of Notre Dame, has reportedly converted to the Catholic faith, a process he began with his arrival in South Bend.

“Welcome to our newest Catholic, Marcus Freeman,” read an announcement in the Sept. 11 bulletin published by St. Pius X Catholic Church in Granger.

According to the announcement, Freeman was “received into the Catholic Church after preparing with Father Nate Wills, CSC, chaplain of the Notre Dame football team.” It was accompanied by a photo of the 36-year-old football coach and four priests, including Father John Jenkins, CSC, the university’s president.

“Marcus made a profession of faith, was confirmed, and received his First Holy Communion. Please pray for Marcus and his family as they celebrate and continue this journey in faith!” the announcement said. According

to sources, Freeman entered the Church at the end of August, before the start of the football season.

Freeman’s wife, Joanna, is Catholic, as are their six children, Vinny, Siena, Gino, Nico, Capri, and Rocco.

In an interview with the National Catholic Register published on Aug. 31, Freeman, who was a Christian before his entrance into the Catholic Church, said that he was grateful to be at Notre Dame because of the school’s emphasis on faith.

“That’s important for me. I want our guys to wonder about what it means to embrace Jesus Christ,” Freeman told the Register.

The successor to longtime coach Brian Kelly, Freeman began the football season by resurrecting a very Catholic tradition at Notre Dame: the team’s game-day Mass.

Once again, for home games, the team will go to Mass together at the Basilica, leave through the “God, Country, Notre Dame” door, and walk across campus to Notre Dame Stadium. One of Kelly’s reforms had been to

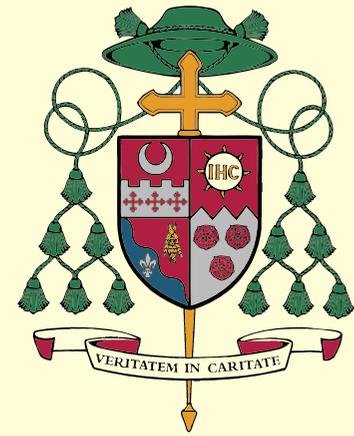
reschedule the team Mass for the night before games.

Freeman had fond memories of attending a pre-game Mass as a high school recruit from Huber Heights, Ohio. At a news conference marking the beginning of practice last spring, he said he was “caught by surprise” to learn that the team no longer followed the tradition.

“It’s what I remember from my recruiting trip — watching the players walk out of the Basilica on the way to the stadium. I was a little caught by surprise when we didn’t do it last year,” he said, adding that he was restoring the tradition. Freeman did not end up attending Notre Dame, electing to go to Ohio State instead.

Freeman discussed with the Register why he thought it was important for the team to attend Mass together before games.

“To me, what better time is there to go have Mass?” he said. “What better time to be able to really be on the edge of your seat to get every word that comes out of the priest’s mouth and to be as close to God as you can?”



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Tuesday, Sept. 27: 8:15 a.m. — Mass and Pastoral visit, St. Vincent de Paul, School, Fort Wayne

Wednesday, Sept. 28: 6 p.m. — Mass, Assisi Program for Discipleship and Leadership, University of Saint Francis

Thursday, Sept. 29: 7 p.m. — A Mother’s Hope, Fifth Annual Diamond Gala, Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne

Sunday, Oct. 2: 9 a.m.— Mass and blessing of the Grotto, St. Francis Xavier, Pierceton

Sunday, Oct. 2: 1:30 p.m. — Friends of the Poor Walk, St. Vincent de Paul Society of Fort Wayne, Parkview Field



Scam Warning

There have been reports of members of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend receiving emails from addresses that appear to be from their parish priests or even Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades asking for favors of money or gift cards, sometimes in the guise of helping a loved one in need. Please be aware that these emails are not from your priest or the bishop. They are phishing scams using email addresses very similar to a priest’s (usually one letter different) or a hacked account. Do not respond to these emails. Delete and block any emails from these addresses. Please know that no priest or bishop would ever request money or gift cards from their parishioners, particularly through an email. If you suspect your priest’s email might have been hacked, please inform him of the suspicious activity.

Mezzo-Soprano on World Stage is 'Grounded in Catholic Faith'

BY BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI

RICHMOND, Va. (CNS) – Shopping at various grocery stores in the Richmond area in the early 2000s, customers might have heard a toddler singing in the cart as her mother shopped for her family.

Little did they know that the young vocalist in the cereal aisle would one day be performing opera on the international stage and would release her first single recording, "Cinema Paradiso," based on the closing scene of the award-winning 1988 movie.

"I've always had a love for music and an ear for it," said Hannah Magnelli. "I was taking voice lessons at a young age, and, of course, it was very basic singing that was appropriate for someone of that age group."

The second oldest of James and Raquel Magnelli's four children – she has an older brother, Phillip, and a younger sister and brother, Olivia and Benjamin – she played the violin for more than a decade before singing became her greater interest.

"I started taking classical voice when I was about 13 and slowly doing Italian art forms, Latin music used in church," said Magnelli, whose family belongs to St. Joseph Parish in Richmond, where Mass is celebrated in Latin. "Then I did a little more in the classical, musical theater side of things."

As a student at Blessed

Sacramento Huguenot High School, Magnelli was involved in the performing arts. She sang "Time to Say Goodbye" at the senior talent show, and at graduation, she and Olivia sang "The Prayer."

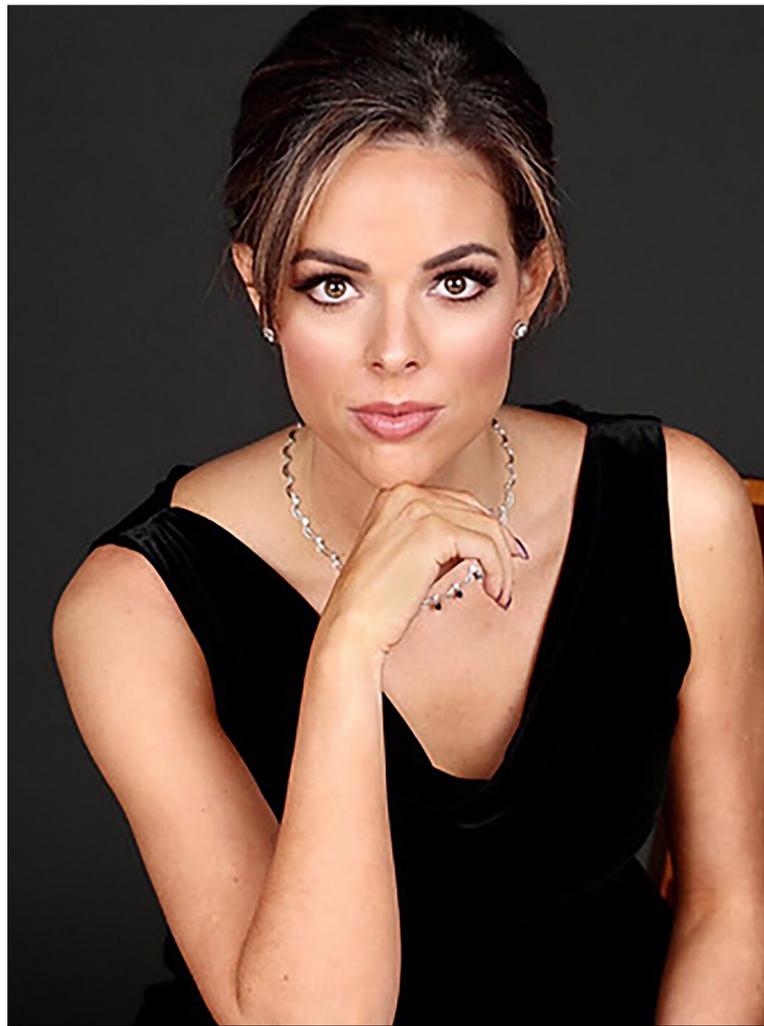
Following a semester at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia, and a private internship at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, Spain, under the tutelage of German conductor Sebastian Weigle, Magnelli entered Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond in 2008, where she earned a Bachelor's Degree in Voice Performance.

"When you go to the university, whether or not you want to sing pop music or Broadway, classical singing for that is the basic technique, so you're required to sing and learn more operatic classic technique," she said. "It's kind of the baseline to go into other genres you desire."

Magnelli, who speaks fluent Spanish and is a Spanish-English Interpreter Contractor, minored in German.

"Everybody said when I was going into opera, 'You need to learn and know German.' The reason is that it's a very popular language in the classical music world, not just the singers and musicians, but it's a language that's very universal in the European countries," she said, adding that she speaks some Italian and would like to learn Arabic.

While Magnelli finds



CNS photo/courtesy Hannah Magnelli via The Catholic Virginian

Hannah Magnelli, a member of St. Joseph Parish in Richmond, Va., is seen in this undated photo. Magnelli performs opera on the international stage and in January 2022 released her first single, "Cinema Paradiso," which is based on the closing scene of the award-winning 1988 movie.

inspiration in the works she has performed, such as "La Clemenza di Tito," "Carmen," and "Così fan tutte," she is

inspired daily by the practice of her faith and takes to heart St. John Paul II's 1999 "Letter to Artists," in which he wrote: "In song, faith is experienced as vibrant joy, love, and confident expectation of the saving intervention of God."

"Knowing that it is a gift that I have been given by God, and it's something that I know brings people joy, it is something I am very passionate about, something I love doing," she told The Catholic Virginian, Richmond's diocesan newspaper. "So when I'm singing, I know I'm sharing God's gift. I get the feeling I can make someone's day or communicate a message somebody could easily relate to."

Magnelli knows that when she sings, she might inspire someone or elicit a "wonderful memory" for them.

"Sometimes when you're listening to music, and it's very beautiful music, you feel as if God is speaking to you, and it just shares the beauty that God has created," she said. "You really feel like your spirit is dancing inside from what it's hearing, depending on what exactly you're singing."

Noting that in her profession and other performing arts, there is a lot of pressure "to be perfect," which, Magnelli said, some artists handle with drugs and alcohol.

"I, for one, have never had

to do that. I want to have this confidence on my own without having to do that, and being decently grounded with my Catholic faith has helped me to be able to deal with these things," she said, adding that praying the rosary daily is one of the "little things" that keeps her grounded.

Magnelli said that it is easy to "get influenced by a very secular world" when one is in the entertainment field, but she has been able to deal with it.

"When I am traveling on my own, I still go to Mass on Sundays, and if I need to, I'll try to find a place where I can go to confession, even in foreign countries," she said. "I've been able to stay on track with my Catholic faith."

Magnelli said she doesn't "put my faith on anyone," taking a lead-by-example approach.

"Be the light in the darkness. If you want to influence somebody and hope they convert or come back to God, the best thing to do is absolutely nothing," she said. "Do what you do, be yourself, be that light, and if they see that influence, then you can talk to them about it and give them resources if they ask."

She recalled how she formed a bond with another Catholic.

"I met one other Catholic girl, a new roommate, when I was singing for 'The Sopranos,' who was a devout Catholic," she said. "I had no idea she was Catholic."

"I was studying music and she saw the brown scapular hanging out of my shirt and she literally said, 'Oh, my God! Are you wearing this?' And she pulled hers out. I did a double take like, 'What! You're wearing one?'"

One of the most popular devotional scapulars, the brown scapular is associated with Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

"I was kind of shocked," Magnelli said. "That's just not something you see. It's a very liberal and secular field. A lot of them are cradle Catholics who don't practice and don't go to Mass."

"It was really nice to connect with her, she said, "and we still keep in touch to this day -- to meet someone that believes the same as you do because that's really hard in this field if you're devout with your faith."

Editor's Note: Learn more about Magnelli at www.hannahmagnelli.com, or find her on Facebook (Hannah Magnelli, Mezzo Soprano) or Instagram (@hannah_magnelli).

Olszewski is Editor of The Catholic Virginian, biweekly publication of the Diocese of Richmond, Virginia.

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Actor, Filmmaker on Catholic College's Faculty Showcases State

BY MARK PATTISON

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNS) – Daniel Bielinski is one of many actors who holds down a second job. His is as Program Chair of Dramatic Arts at the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Bielinski also is adept at wearing multiple hats in show business. For his latest film, "Sanctified," he's both the star and the producer.

"Sanctified," shot in the North Dakota Badlands, is getting its premiere at cinemas across the state beginning Sept. 30 and throughout much of October. Bielinski told Catholic News Service in a Sept. 9 phone interview that he hopes to have streaming deals in place by the end of the year so that it can reach an even wider audience.

The movie, set in the late 1800s, tells the story of an outlaw rescued from death by a nun traveling through the Badlands. She nurses him back to health in exchange for him guiding her to a church in Williston. A deep friendship develops between them as they learn to work together to survive their dangerous journey.

It may be the first Western with a nun as a central character since "Two Mules for Sister Sara," from 1970 starring Clint Eastwood and Shirley MacLaine – except it's not revealed to anyone before the end that Sister Sara isn't really a nun after all.

"I hope I'm not spoiling it, but she's an actual nun," Bielinski said about the charac-

ter in his film.

Bielinski hasn't always been a North Dakotan. He spent some time in New York City trying to make his way as an actor. He had guest parts in a couple of forgettable series, "Redheads Anonymous" and "The Leftovers." But away from the klieg lights, it was a tough go.

Asked if he had soured on the Big Apple, the Wisconsin-born Bielinski chuckled and replied, "I would say that I worked there for a few years as an actor and then the University of Mary reached out to me. I didn't pursue the position, but they reached out to me and asked me if I was interested in applying for a new position. I had two kids at that point. I've got five kids now. It's hard in any big city, but especially in New York City it's hard – up and down subways."

Once he arrived at the University of Mary, a Benedictine-run school, Bielinski started making shorts and then set his focus to feature-length films. He established Canticle Productions in 2018 – the name intentionally chosen by him because it means "song of praise to God" – as the vehicle for his cinematic forays.

"A Heart Like Water" made its premier early last winter. "Sanctified" is not only making the rounds of North Dakota's biggest towns in October, it's slated for theatrical runs in South Dakota, Minnesota, and Montana as well before a streaming deal. A third feature, "End of the Road," is due out next spring.



CNS photo/courtesy University of Mary

This is a scene from the movie "Sanctified," which was shot in the Badlands of North Dakota in May of 2021 and premieres on Sept. 30, in Bismarck, N.D., theaters. The film's producer, Dan Bielinski, also is Program Chair of Dramatic Arts at the University of Mary in Bismarck.

Setting up shop in North Dakota is the cinematic equivalent of "What good can come from Nazareth?" – which everyone knows was a great deal.

In the film industry, "you don't have a seat at the table unless you're a Tom Cruise," Bielinski told CNS. "You don't have a say in the kind of story being told. When you're not operating, when you haven't reached that very high level of industry recognition, you're taking the stories that come to you, and you're a worker for hire.

"Being able to come in and do my own stories and curate stories that are meaningful for

me and oriented toward giving glory to God through the work, that's been really meaningful for me. I'm grateful for that opportunity."

Sometimes opportunity comes at a cost, but Bielinski tries to keep those costs down. "I've got to keep a tight lid on that (film budgets) because of my investors, but I can say that there's been a huge outpouring of support," he said.

"North Dakota doesn't have much (film) industry here. And so when folks find out that there are these homegrown professional productions happening here, there are just so many ways in which a film production can be supported:

background players, letting us film on their land, letting us borrow some horses – many, many ways in which a film production can be supported," he explained. "We shot for a very tight budget, but the production value we've been able to achieve is very, very high."

Bielinski said it is his hope to continue to make films that "honor the true, the good and beautiful, no matter what genre of story."

Editor's Note: More information about the film "Sanctified" can be found online at <https://www.sanctifiedfilm.com>.

QUEEN, from page 2

of the Church of England.

Queen Elizabeth and her husband, Prince Philip, were interested in ecumenism and welcomed St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI to the U.K.

On Sept. 16, during a reception for religious leaders at Buckingham Palace, King Charles III signaled he would continue to pursue dialogue.

He said he recognized his "duty to protect the diversity of our country, including by protecting the space for faith itself and its practice through the religions, cultures, traditions, and beliefs to which our hearts and minds direct us as individuals."

The king said: "The beliefs that flourish in, and contribute to, our richly diverse society differ. They, and our society, can only thrive through a clear collective commitment to those vital principles of freedom of conscience, generosity of spirit, and care for others which are, to me, the essence of our nationhood."



CNS photo/Dominic Lipinski, pool via Reuters

King Charles III sits in front of the coffin of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II, during her state funeral at Westminster Abbey in London on Sept. 19.

"I am determined, as king, to preserve and promote those principles across all communities, and for all beliefs, with all my heart," he said.

Commentators are predicting that the coronation of Charles in 2023 is likely to include members of non-Anglican churches and possibly other faiths for the first time.

The funeral of Queen Elizabeth, 96, who died Sept. 8 after a 70-year reign, brings to a close 11 days of official mourning in the U.K.

Her coffin, draped in the royal standard and bearing her crown, was drawn on a gun carriage by Royal Navy sailors the short distance from Westminster Hall to Westminster Abbey for a service in the presence of 2,000 guests, including U.S. President Joe Biden, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and other political leaders.

After the service, the coffin was driven to Windsor Castle, where the queen was interred in St. George's Chapel.

Pope Meets Prelates Attending Weeklong Course for New Bishops

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Close to 200 bishops at the beginning of their ministries in dioceses and eparchies around the world met Pope Francis on Sept. 19 at the end of a week of conferences. Because the COVID-19 pandemic had forced the suspension of the annual formation course for new bishops, the 2022 courses were held in multiple sessions with the first groups of bishops, more than 150 of them, meeting Pope Francis in early September, and bishops from mission territories meeting him on Sept. 17. The Dicastery for Bishops, the Dicastery for Evangelization, and the Dicastery for Eastern Churches organized the courses. The themes for the 2022 sessions included: the meaning of “a synodal church”; crisis management with special attention to handling situations and allegations of abuse; the church after the pandemic; a review of what canon law says about administering a diocese; communication and use of the media, ministry to families with special attention to the pope’s exhortation “Amoris Laetitia”; and promoting care for all people and for the environment with special attention to “Laudato Si” and “Fratelli Tutti.”

West Virginia Bishop, Pro-Life Leaders Applaud Lawmakers for Abortion Ban

WHEELING, W.Va. (CNS) – Bishop Mark E. Brennan of Wheeling-Charleston and pro-life leaders of West Virginia lauded the state Legislature for passing an abortion ban on Sept. 13. The bill banning most abortions in the state, with some exceptions, now waits for Gov. Jim Justice’s signature. H.B. 302 was passed by the Senate 22-7 and by the House of Delegates 78-17. “The action taken by our elected officials to provide greater legal protection for the unborn is an important step in fostering a sincere culture of life in the Mountain State,” Bishop Brennan said in a statement. “It is clear that work remains to be done to soften hearts and create a society that values and protects every human life,” the bishop continued. “It is clear that it will take time to heal the personal and societal scars from abortion permitted for so long under the Roe regime.” He prayed that as a state, “we continue to move toward these moral and just ends.” Bishop Brennan encouraged state lawmakers “to continue to lead us in that direction by providing ample resources to support women and children, by expanding access to quality and affordable child care, by promoting paid maternity and fam-

People of Kazakhstan Welcome Pope Francis



CNS photo/Paul Haring

Musicians in traditional attire wait to greet Pope Francis before a meeting with bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated persons, seminarians, and pastoral workers at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, on Sept. 15.

ily leave, by better protecting victims of domestic violence, by promoting and facilitating adoption, and by addressing food insecurity.”

Kazakhstan Bishop Says his Criticisms of Pope are Sign of Collegiality

NUR-SULTAN, Kazakhstan (CNS) – Awaiting the arrival of Pope Francis, a bishop who frequently criticizes Pope Francis told reporters that speaking up when he disagrees with the pope is an expression of “collegiality.” For example, Auxiliary Bishop Athanasius Schneider of Astana, Kazakhstan, told reporters Pope Francis’ participation in the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions – the principal reason the pope traveled to Kazakhstan – was “dangerous” because it could “undermine the uniqueness and absoluteness of Jesus Christ as savior and of our mission to preach to all nations, to all religions, Jesus Christ.” The

bishop made his comments on Sept. 15 while awaiting Pope Francis’ arrival at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Cathedral in Nur-Sultan for a meeting with bishops, priests, religious, laity, and seminarians. Bishop Schneider said the congress could give the impression that the pope supports “a supermarket of religions” that people could choose freely from. “This is not correct because there is only one true religion, which is the Catholic Church, founded by God Himself, but commanded to all men, to all religions, to believe and accept His son Jesus Christ, the only savior,” the bishop said. Especially since the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church has professed its respect for other religions and for the sincere efforts of other believers to seek God, although it continues to profess its belief that the fullness of truth and the surest path to salvation is in Christianity. The Catholic Church supports and engages in interreligious dialogue to promote peace, mutual respect, and religious freedom.

In ‘Major Victory’ for Religious Rights, Court Blocks Transgender Mandate

NEW ORLEANS (CNS) – A unanimous ruling by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans blocking the Biden administration’s transgender mandate “is a major victory for conscience rights and compassionate medical care in America,” said the attorney who represented the plaintiffs in the case. “Doctors cannot do their jobs and comply with the Hippocratic oath if the government requires them to perform harmful, irreversible procedures against their conscience and medical expertise,” said Joseph Davis, counsel at Becket, a Washington, D.C.-based religious liberty law firm. Davis made the remarks about the court’s Aug. 26 ruling permanently blocking a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services mandate that would have forced doctors and hospitals to perform

gender-transition procedures on their patients even if this violated their conscience and medical judgment. On Aug. 4, the 5th Circuit heard oral arguments in the case, *Franciscan Alliance v. Becerra*, which was brought by a Catholic health care network and a group of nearly 19,000 health care professionals. “Franciscan Alliance and the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration seek to carry on Jesus Christ’s healing ministry by providing the best possible care to every person who comes through our doors,” said Sister Petra Nielsen, a Sister of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, who is a member of the Franciscan Alliance’s corporate board. “We are simply asking the courts to let us keep caring for all our patients with joy and compassion – as we’ve done for over 145 years,” she said in a statement released by Becket ahead of the oral arguments.

‘We Thank You,’ San Francisco Archbishop Tells First Responders at Mass

SAN FRANCISCO (CNS) – Uniformed police, firefighters, and sheriff’s deputies stood saluting in silent tribute of their comrades who have died, as the haunting notes of “Taps” filled the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption at the annual memorial Mass for San Francisco’s police, fire, and sheriff departments. The bugle’s melody came near the end of a Mass that drew on nearly eight decades of tradition. Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco was the main celebrant of the Sept. 11 Mass. Concelebrants included Jesuit Father Edward Reese, a San Francisco Fire Department chaplain, as well as police chaplains Father Michael Quinn and Father Michael Healy. “You my dear brothers and sisters are the force of order in our city. We thank you for the great risks you take with your lives every day, every day to ensure order and our protection,” Archbishop Cordileone told the assembled men and women in uniform in his homily before he walked throughout the cathedral, blessing the first responders’ stars and shields with holy water. The archbishop told the congregation in his homily that the more we try to live as God wants, the more we and our society come close to an ordered society, to heaven. In the same way, the role of first responders is to bring order to society, he said. “This is the reason we have law enforcement and other first responders: fire, police, sheriffs, park rangers – you are the forces of order in our city,” Archbishop Cordileone said. “Again, we thank you for the great risk you take with your lives every day to ensure good order and our protection.”

A Mothers Hope Gala Planned

FORT WAYNE — The 5th Annual Diamond Gala fundraiser to support A Mother's Hope will be held on Thursday, Sept. 29, at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will say the opening prayer; doors open at 5:30 p.m. The evening includes a cocktail hour, games, chances to win gift cards, wine, whiskey, and of course, diamonds. Dinner will then be served, followed by a live auction.

A Mother's Hope, located in Fort Wayne, is the only shelter that exclusively serves pregnant, homeless women from throughout the area. Since its opening in 2018, more than 50 women have been provided with housing and supportive services to strengthen their opportunities for stability, including intensive daily and weekly services that include structured therapeutic sessions, case management, educational opportunities, employment coaching, community connections, and individualized action plans.

To learn more, purchase tickets, or make a donation, visit www.AMothersHopeFW.org.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Diamond Gala supports mothers

5TH ANNUAL
Diamond Gala
Thursday, September 29, 2022
Allen County War Memorial Coliseum

Monte Cassino Pilgrimages Scheduled for October

ST. MEINRAD — Saint Meinrad Archabbey's pilgrimages to honor the Blessed Mother at the Monte Cassino Shrine have been scheduled for Sundays in October.

Oct. 2 — Father Jeremy King, OSB, on "Mary, Model of Perseverance"

Oct. 9 — Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB, on "Who are My Mother and Brothers and Sisters?"

Oct. 16 — Brother Maurus Zoeller, OSB, on "Marian Shrines and Pilgrimages"

Oct. 23 — Father Bede Cisco, OSB, on "Mary Among the Disciples"

Oct. 30 — Father Adrian Burke, OSB, on "Be it Done Unto Me: On the 'Virginal Emptiness' of Mary."

Ancilla Enrollment Up

PLYMOUTH — Marian University's Ancilla College is projecting a 25-percent increase for the two- and four-year academic programs this year. The Ancilla campus will also open a new nursing facility to provide state-of-the-art training to its undergraduate nursing students. The facility features two simulation rooms, a skills lab, and a life-like nursing mannequin simulator.

Notre Dame Campus Goes Cashless

BY DENISE FEDEROW

If you have plans to visit Notre Dame Campus, you can leave your cash at home as the campus transitioned to a "cashless retail environment" as of Aug. 1. According to a news release, they made the change "in an effort to maintain a healthy and more efficient campus."

Though it is not 100 percent cashless, the change does include transactions at Notre Dame food service locations, dining halls, concession stands, and St. Michael's laundry ... as well as dining services at Saint Mary's college and Holy Cross College where the university manages operations. Kiosks have been installed in Duncan and LaFortune student centers where cash can be transferred to a Visa gift card for those who do not have a debit or credit card. The Visa gift card can be used anywhere Visa is accepted on or off campus at no additional charge.

University officials claim the cashless environment will bring "various improvements" including faster transactions than a cash exchange, the elimination of potential health concerns with less cash repeatedly changing hands, and the safety of not having large amounts of cash in registers or transported across campus for deposit.



Denise Federow

The golden dome of Notre Dame rises above the campus, which transitioned to a mostly cashless campus on Aug. 1.

Rich Bellis, Associate Vice President for Finance and Treasury Services said in the news release, "I am excited for this move to a cashless campus as transactions will be faster, saving time for both staff and visitors alike. Going cashless will eliminate security risks associated with transporting cash and will reduce end-of-day reconciliation for our

employees."

Bellis added, "I am grateful to our team and campus partners for working together to implement this transition where possible."

There will be some places where cash will still be accepted, including The Morris Inn, Rohr's, the Hammes Notre Dame bookstore, the Notre Dame Wellness Center, the U.S.

Post Office, vending machines, and privately operated businesses in LaFortune such as FedEx, the hair salon, barber shop, floral shop, and 1st Source Bank.

Cash donations will still be accepted at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart and The Grotto, along with fundraising and donation events and residence halls food sales.

Visitor and Student Response

Toni Bonacorsi, a regular Notre Dame game attendee with her husband Lou, said she didn't know they had gone cashless, but said she could see where it'd be good for "major games and big events like at Notre Dame." She said there are definitely places for having cashless and it's "probably becoming more the norm than not—it's probably the way things are going."

She added that if that's the case, then younger people won't learn how to use cash and not using cash does lead to the temptation of spending more.

Claire Cataldo, a junior at Notre Dame, said, "The change hasn't affected me at all." She added that she and most other Notre Dame students either show their student ID to use their meal plan and 'flex

points' or use a debit card. "I don't spend money out of my account on campus—I use my student ID to get coffee or food."

Cataldo said she checked with some other students about it and they didn't feel the same as she did about it. Claire said she honestly didn't realize it had gone cashless. "I read it in an email but forgot about it, that's how unaffected I am," she said and added it started during COVID when they were using the Grubhub app to get food. She said flex points were part of the student meal plan, but could also be used elsewhere.

The Notre Dame news release stated that cash has been used less frequently on campus throughout the past few years because of measures already taken by several departments. University athletic contests have successfully operated as cashless environments since the fall of 2021, including parking for games and concerts, and food retail locations have operated electronically through Grubhub.

Faculty, staff, and students can continue to add funds to Irish1Cards for use in the dining halls. The change is also affecting the number of Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) on campus. ATMs will continue to be available in the two student centers.

Sacred Heart Marks 75 Years in South

BY JENNIFER BARTON

In the wake of World War II, cities and towns throughout the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend saw a tremendously rapid growth, which reflected in the demographics of Catholics and Catholic churches through the late 1940s and beyond. Sacred Heart Parish in Fort Wayne was one such parish created to meet the growing needs of the Catholic community in that area of the city at the time. This year, through many changes, Sacred Heart marks its 75th anniversary.

Father Mark Wojdelski, FSSP, serves as its current pastor. He has been at the parish for roughly six years, transferred from Dayton, Ohio, after former pastor Father George Gabet, FSSP, served at the parish for eight years when it became a personal parish, dedicated to the Traditional Latin Mass (TLM). Prior to that, the parish had been served by diocesan priests, including Father Thomas Durkin, Father Glen Kohrman, and Father Thomas Shoemaker.

Rise and Decline

The church began its life as a former military barracks building transferred to the location from Baer Field, a military base created just south of Fort Wayne during the war. The rectory was purchased in 1948 before a new church and rectory were built in 1963. From its early days, Sacred Heart School, established in



Photos by Jennifer Barton

Sacred Heart, a building that started as a military barracks, is celebrating its 75th anniversary as a parish located on the southeast side of Fort Wayne.

1949, was staffed by Sisters of the Holy Cross, then Sisters of St. Joseph and Sisters of Providence.

As years passed and the neighborhood surrounding Sacred Heart changed, membership declined and the number of students at the school dropped to unsustainable rates. The sisters had already left in 1975 and the convent was sold to The Church in Fort Wayne, Inc. The 1990s saw the nearby parishes of St. Henry and St. Patrick combine schools with Sacred Heart to form the short-

lived Benoit Academy, located at the St. Henry campus. The school at Sacred Heart closed its doors at that time. Benoit Academy closed only a few years later in 2006 due to a declining student population.

Sacred Heart Parish found a new purpose beginning in 1990, when Bishop John M. D'Arcy allowed the celebration of the TLM there for those who are drawn to that form of worship. In 2011, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades changed Sacred Heart Parish from a territorial parish to what is known as a personal

parish, which means that a parish no longer has territorial boundaries, but serves a single purpose. In this case, that means it is exclusively dedicated to the TLM. It has retained the services of two pastors from the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter, Fort Wayne native Father Gabet and current Pastor, Father Wojdelski.

The church building itself has undergone changes over the years, Father Wojdelski remarked, and is the parish's second church. During his time as pastor, Father Gabet added

a baldacchino or altar canopy and Father Wojdelski made additional renovations.

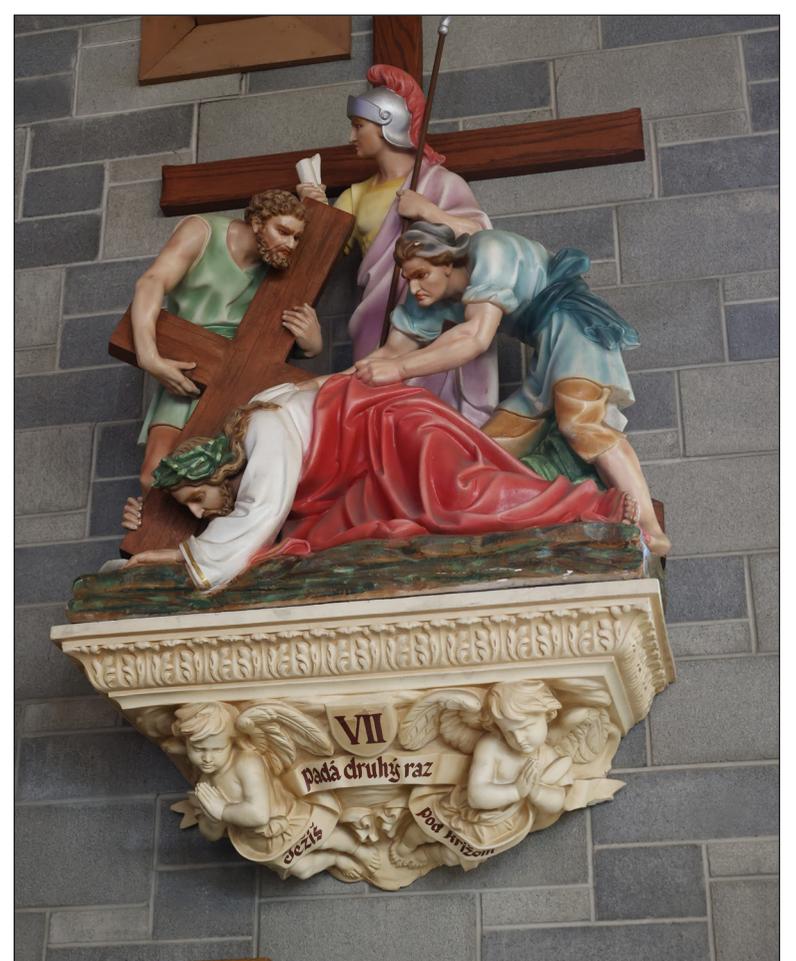
The Stations of the Cross are one of his recent additions to the church, acquired from a closed parish elsewhere in the country, with the station names written in the Slovak language of the previous parish's ethnic population. Similar enough to Polish, a language Father Wojdelski understands, he was able to read the Slovak writing and post translations below each station.

Relics

Another aspect of the church that has grown over time is its collection of sacred relics. Encased in small but often elaborate reliquaries, Sacred Heart possesses what Father Wojdelski estimates to be around 250 individual relics in their display cases. Normally, he explained, a church will have only a couple of these.

Some are what are known as first-class relics, meaning they are a part of a saint's body, such as bone fragments from St. Linus and St. Pius V. Others are second-class relics, which is something that a saint owned, such as a piece of clothing. A third-class relic is something that has been laid on the body of a saint. Relics need to have authenticated papers to be considered genuine and relics cannot be put up for sale.

Sacred Heart has multiple cases for these relics and Father Wojdelski maintains a list of those on display. The



East Fort Wayne

priests of the parish bring individual relics out to put on display and to venerate on a saint's feast day. Relics from such honored saints as Mary Magdalene, Cecelia, Felicity and Perpetua, Polycarp, Irenaeus, and Ignatius can be viewed after Mass times. The Sacred Heart website has a link to the list of relics and a schedule of feast days in which a particular relic may be exposed (sacred-heartfw.org/about-us/sacred-relics/).

'Fertile Ground'

Father Wojdelski has made a home in the diocese, Fort Wayne in particular. "Fort Wayne is phenomenal with Catholicism. I have never seen so many confessional options. ... I think this is a great place to be a Catholic. It's very fertile ground."

Due to growth within the parish, Father Dominic Savoie, FSSP, has recently been assigned as Parochial Vicar to assist in the life of the parish. Father Wojdelski attributes this growth to a rise in young families "looking for a reverent worship experience and tradition."

He proudly stated that: "We have a five percent growth by babies alone," with 14 infant

baptisms and a handful of adult converts to the faith this year.

Father Wojdelski speaks enthusiastically of the people of his parish, some of whom travel an hour or more to attend Mass there. Groups like the Militia of St. Joseph, a scouting group for boys and their fathers based completely in Catholicism; the Handmaids of St. Joseph, a woman's group currently studying the Catechism of the Catholic Church; and the Young Ladies' Sodality all make for a bustling civic life for a small parish of roughly 400 people. When Bishop Rhoades visits the parish, Father Wojdelski said that the people receive him warmly, spending time with him and showing him their appreciation. He also shared how several vocations have come from Sacred Heart since its becoming a personal parish, particularly in the FSSP.

For those attending a Latin Mass for the first time, Father Wojdelski's advice is simple. "Don't follow along, just experience it. Look at the [red translation] book before you come, but don't worry about anything else. Immerse yourself in the experience ... your Catholic heritage."




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Opening his Heart to the Lord Led Anderson to Ordination

BY ERIC PEAT

Sam Anderson will never forget the events of Holy Week during his junior year of college, when – after years of hearing the Lord's call – he finally opened his heart to desiring God's will for his life.

"At Holy Thursday Mass, when we celebrate the institution of the priesthood at the Last Supper, I felt just a resounding clarity," recalled Anderson. "Then on Holy Friday, when the priests lay prostrate on the floor before the liturgy begins, I had an outpouring of desire to give myself in that way."

On Sept. 29, Anderson will take the next step towards fulfilling this self-giving vocation. Along with 24 of his classmates, he will be ordained to the diaconate at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. It's the culmination of years of a renewed faith for Anderson – a journey that began while growing up in his hometown of Fort Wayne.

As a child, Anderson and his four sisters were provided "a pretty beautiful family life," by their parents, including Mass on Sundays and a Catholic education at St. Vincent de Paul School and Bishop Dwenger High School. His pastor growing up was Monsignor John Kuzmich, whose priestly example left an indelible mark on Anderson.

"He was a joyful, gentle, and humble man who had

such an appreciation for the mystery of God," Anderson said of Monsignor Kuzmich. "He was someone who really lived that idea that all is grace, that everything is from the Lord, and that was very inviting to me."

While faith was always a part of his life, Anderson admitted that it was not a priority when he graduated high school and arrived on the campus of Indiana University. "I kind of had my own plans I wanted to pursue," Anderson said. "I studied biology and business, and I planned to open a medical practice and have a large family."

It was during these college years that Anderson's own vision for his life was challenged. Father Tom Kovatch, Pastor of St. Charles Borromeo in Bloomington, invited him to commit to a weekly holy hour his junior year. Slowly but surely, Anderson felt the Lord's plans beginning to eclipse his own.

"The Lord's call was always in my mind and on my heart, even through high school," said Anderson. "But for a long time, I wasn't open to it. It wasn't until I took ownership of my faith and recommitted myself that if I believe this, I need to live this. And that means actually discerning the Lord's will for my life."

In the process of discernment, Anderson began feeling "a very strong call to serve and love as a priest." Although this



SAM ANDERSON

*"The Lord's call
was always in my mind
and on my heart,
even through high school!"*

SAM ANDERSON

call initially came as a surprise to his family, it has only been strengthened as issues such as mental illness and loneliness tighten their grip on society.

Anderson said he believes the Church is uniquely positioned to bring about healing in people's lives.

"I look at the priests who I admire and the way they have been present and active in the family life of parishes," said Anderson. "I look at the way that the family is suffering in the United States and under attack in many ways, and I see that as a huge goal today as a priest – to serve our families not just sacramentally, but to walk with them and journey with them in the Lord."

Some of these priests who have been instrumental in Anderson's walk of faith include Fathers Andrew Budzinski, Jacob Meyer, and Jason Freiburger. In addition, Father Dan Scheidt has been "an incredible spiritual father and mentor" to Anderson at his home parish of St. Vincent de Paul. Anderson is also extremely grateful to Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, who extended the opportunity for Anderson to study theology in Rome after two years of pre-theology in Maryland.

"I was surprised and knew I had to prayerfully consider it," Anderson remarked of studying in Rome. "I definitely saw it as an opportunity to learn and be formed in a particular setting so close to the Holy Father, but I was certainly nervous about being so far from the [Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend]. But I think it was aligned with my natural desires. I studied abroad in college, and I love learning about different cultures and languages. It's been challeng-

ing but a great blessing and opportunity."

Anderson is now fluent conversationally in both Spanish and Italian, and he's passionate about getting involved with Hispanic ministry in the diocese. He was able to practice his Spanish on his summer assignment at St. Michael in Plymouth, an assignment that Anderson called "providential placement," as his ordination date of Sept. 29 is also the Feast of the Holy Archangels.

However, St. Michael isn't the only saint who has walked beside Anderson on his journey. He also acknowledged his confirmation saint, St. Augustine, and the powerful experience of reading "The Confessions" during his undergraduate studies. St. Philip Neri, Apostle of Rome, has been an intercessor for Anderson by showing him "a heart that is full of joy for the Lord." Finally, Anderson has leaned on the prayerful example of St. Theresa of Calcutta.

By keeping his heart open to God's will in his life, Anderson's own plans to open a medical practice and have a large family may in fact be realized after all: he's preparing to minister to the spiritual health of his brothers and sisters in Christ, while his Church and parish families will only continue to grow. As Anderson takes one step closer to the priesthood, he looks forward to "making that 'yes' definitive in a permanent and sacramental way – to be consecrated to the Lord and belong to Him entirely."



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A 'New Life of Ordained Ministry' Awaits Langenbrunner

BY JENNIFER BARTON

“Here is my future; I’m giving it to You completely.” Zane Langenbrunner spoke this prayer before the Blessed Sacrament when his life plans came crashing down on him in the form of a broken engagement. For years prior, he had told people: “I’m open to whatever the Lord calls me to.” Yet it was only after he had “been stripped of everything I knew about my future” did he give himself fully to the God who called him to the priesthood. “It’s just like total surrender,” he stated in awe.

Langenbrunner is the younger of two sons born to Michael and Angela. Raised in Mishawaka, both he and his brother Adam attended St. Bavo School prior to its merging into Mishawaka Catholic before transferring into public schools. He described his upbringing in “a pretty normal Catholic family,” where the faith was an important part of his life.

He maintained his Catholic faith through involvement in youth group, but until his Confirmation retreat in eighth grade, he had been only nominal in practice. At the retreat, he began thinking about his life. One particular talk brought him into a profound encounter with Jesus. “That was the moment the Lord used to drop a grace bomb on me and opened my heart. ... It totally transformed my heart.”

Through his high school years, the priesthood was little more than a “fleeting thought,” easily brushed aside. He studied speech pathology at Ball State University, where he continued to grow in his faith through the campus Newman Center. There he thought he discovered a vocation to the married life with a young woman he dated for two years. Not long after they became engaged, however, she began to have doubts that were surely the nudging of the Holy Spirit. They broke their engagement

just before graduation.

“I had what I thought was the Lord’s plan for my life ... it’s not like it was so much I was resisting the will of God ... it really was genuine; I had discerned and thought very much that God was calling me to marriage.”

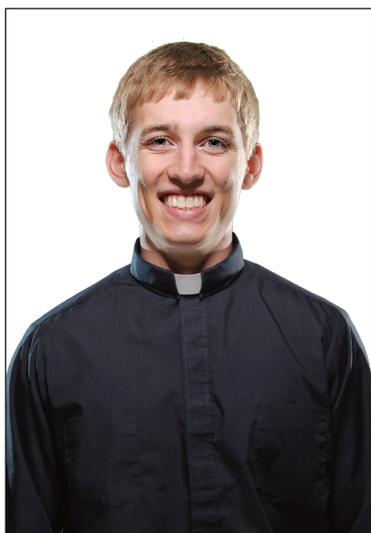
The dismantling of his plans left him unsure of his path as a 22-year-old college graduate. During the summer between his graduation and his upcoming year in graduate school in Cincinnati, his discernment process began to bear fruit. He was working in Mishawaka and rode his bicycle to the convent of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration every day after work. Here, Langenbrunner laid himself bare at the feet of Jesus, surrendering to what God wanted of him.

Suddenly, “I just kind of felt this desire to be a priest rise in my heart that I had never really noticed before,” he said. “I think the seeds of it were probably there from that first initial conversion, but I wasn’t

“I just kind of felt this desire to be a priest rise in my heart that I had never really noticed before.”

ZANE LANGENBRUNNER

ready to hear the call to be a priest until I had been kind of stripped of all the plans that I’d had. And the Lord taught me to trust Him, even without knowing what was going to be in the future. So I was ready to hear that call at that time, and it was so persistent.”



ZANE LANGENBRUNNER

Everything he read in the Bible, every prayer he spoke led to the same conclusion. Instead of shrugging the signs off as he did in high school, Langenbrunner decided to take the next school year to prayerfully consider priesthood. As it happened, he met a young priest in Cincinnati who invited him to visit a nearby seminary, the Pontifical College Josephinum, which “kind of opened the door” for him to pursue seminary studies. He met the future Father Benjamin Landrigan, studying there at that time, and found a mentor and friend in him.

With that, “It’s just been a series of walking through the next open door.”

Those doors eventually opened on an invitation by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades to study in Rome at the North American College along with fellow seminarian Sam Anderson. After much prayer, both men accepted the bishop’s invitation.

Studying in Rome has been a unique and privileged experience. It took a period of transition to learn the language, and adjust to the fast pace of life in Rome and the educational style. The pandemic proved a blessing in disguise, and as the seminarians were sent home, Langenbrunner had the chance to reconnect with his support system. He returned to Rome the next year equipped with the

knowledge of what to expect.

Through all that, he has been led to “an even greater dependence on the Lord.”

He reflects on those who have influenced his path over the years, whether he realized it or not at the time, including his childhood pastor, Father Barry England, who served at St. Bavo until his retirement in 2015. “He was always there, he was always present. And that spoke volumes to me of just the fidelity of the priesthood.”

Through the summer, the two reconnected and Father England gifted Langenbrunner with a pyx, a paten, and the chalice with which he had celebrated his first Mass.

Langenbrunner was floored by the gifts, saying, “That was an incredible moment of the tradition, the handing on of priestly ministry from one generation to the next. That was really powerful.”

Ordination to the diaconate for him, is “the end of a process that’s really only the beginning of a new life; a new life of ordained ministry.”

While being ordained at St. Peter’s Basilica is an extraordinary opportunity, what Langenbrunner most looks forward to on that day “is to make the promises and to commit myself completely to ordained ministry.”

Additionally, he anticipates preaching homilies and baptizing children as a deacon. His ordination will fall on the Feast of the Archangels, another exciting aspect as his parents both bear names pertaining to the angels.



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Queen Elizabeth II: Faithful Disciple

I was in Rome last week to give a presentation to the Pontifical Academy of the Sciences. I was supposed to go the following week with my Word on Fire team to England for a series of talks and events. But midway through the Roman part of the journey, word came to us that Queen Elizabeth II had died. We immediately made the decision to postpone the England trip to a later time. But I've been thinking a good deal about the queen during these days, especially as I have taken in the marvelous pageantry around her funeral exercises. I agree with the army of pundits and commentators who have praised Elizabeth for her steadfastness, devotion to duty, sangfroid in the face of trials, and love of country. But I should like to draw special attention to a dimension of her life too often overlooked – namely, her unapologetically Christian faith.

Perhaps it is not as well known today as it once was, but the monarch of Great Britain is not simply a political and cultural figure but clearly a religious one as well. During Queen Elizabeth's coronation ceremony in 1953, the new ruler was presented with scepter, orb, ring, and crown, each one of which was emblazoned with the cross, symbolizing Christ's lordship over the world. And though she was surrounded during that ceremony with the crown jewels, she received a Bible which was described as fol-

lows: "the most valuable thing that this world affords." The most sacred moment of the coronation was the anointing, during which Elizabeth, stripped of royal insignia and wearing only a simple white dress, was anointed with chrism by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who prayed that the Holy Spirit would set her apart for service. Of course, by means of this sacred ceremony, Elizabeth became not simply head of state, but also head of the Church of England. Just days before her coronation, she made this moving request to everyone in the British Commonwealth: "I want to ask you all, whatever your religion may be, to pray for me on that day – to pray that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making, and that I may faithfully serve Him and you, all the days of my life."

That she took this identity and its obligations seriously is evident to anyone who looks objectively at her life. At a time when many Christians fell away from the practice of their faith, Queen Elizabeth remained, throughout her reign, a weekly churchgoer. Moreover, she took special joy in listening to fine Christian preaching, including that of Billy Graham, with whom she maintained a decades-long friendship. In her annual Christmas addresses to the nation, the queen showed herself to be, in her own right, a fine evangelist, declaring her faith, not simply in God, but



WORD ON FIRE

BISHOP ROBERT BARRON

also in Christ Jesus. In the millennial year of 2000, she said, "To many of us, our beliefs are of fundamental importance. For me, the teachings of Christ and my own personal accountability before God provide a framework in which I try to live my life. I, like so many of you, have drawn great comfort from Christ's words and example." In the Christmas address of 2008, she said, "I hope that, like me, you will be comforted by the example of Jesus of Nazareth who, often in circumstances of great adversity, managed to live an outgoing, unselfish, and sacrificial life." And in 2012, she preached, "This is the time of year when we remember that God sent his only Son to serve and not to be served."

That these were not simply fine words that the queen spoke on solemn occasions becomes clear when we attend to some of the remarkably Christian gestures that she made throughout her reign. Perhaps the most extraordinary was the simple handshake she offered to Martin McGuinness, head of Sinn Féin, an organi-

BARRON, page 13

Love and Support Catechists

Catechetical programs have resumed activities or will soon start in most Catholic parishes in the United States. Children, youths, young adults, and adults prepare to return to sessions where they will learn and reflect about their faith.

Just as we speak of the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist, as essential to nurture our spiritual life, catechesis is essential to nurture our love for our faith and for God's word.

Central to the work of catechesis are the many women and men of all ages who exercise their discipleship by serving their communities as catechists. They are missionary disciples who understand the importance of passing on the faith.

Although the first and most essential catechists, especially for children and youth, are the parents and other adults who live in a household, catechists expand and enhance that first catechesis by sharing their faith in small groups.

In many cases, catechists play a remedial role, mindful that many parents fall short in sharing the basics of the faith at home with the younger ones.

If you look at the catechists in your parish, you will notice that there is not necessarily a specific profile that restricts this important ministry to a narrow group. We want catechists



JOURNEYING TOGETHER

HOSFFMAN OSPINO

to be witnesses of what they believe, do their best modeling their faith through their actions, and share the faith with joy.

However, these expectations apply practically to all the baptized. We all are called to be catechists.

Stay-at-home moms, teachers, doctors, nurses, lawyers, farmworkers, administrators, retirees, young adults, grandparents, tour guides, hotel and factory workers, taxi drivers, academics, cooks, nuns, priests, deacons, married couples, single people, among many others, join the ranks of catechists in our parishes every year.

What do all these people have in common? We all love our faith and we all are passionate to share it with others! Nearly all of us do it as volunteers. This is what makes being part of a faith community exciting.

The Holy Spirit moves the hearts of the baptized, regard-

OSPINO, page 13

Be Rich in What Matters



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time Luke 16:19-31

The Book of Amos is the source of this weekend's first reading. The book itself states that it was written during the reign of King Uzziah of Judah, or between 783 and 742 BC.

The two Hebrew kingdoms of Judah in the south, and Israel in the north, were at peace, and most people were prosperous, but many were not so fortunate.

Also, tranquility and ease had dulled in the people's collective mind their sense of needing God.

Along with this, apparently

many were lax in their religious observances. So, Amos rebuked them, condemning their sluggishness in religion and morally careless living.

More than a denunciation of outright vice, Amos blasted their lukewarmness and their living as if nothing good, noble, and of God mattered. Along with all the prophets, Amos saw in such circumstances clear signals that the society was weakening, and as it weakened, peril awaited.

St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy supplies the second reading. Timothy was an early convert to Christianity. As his life unfolded, he became Paul's disciple and a Christian leader in his own right, destined to be one of the major figures in the development of Christianity.

The epistle calls Timothy to be resolute, citing the example of Jesus in the Lord's trial before Pontius Pilate. Being distracted from such faithfulness was easy because everywhere was the glory, power, and excesses of the mighty Roman Empire.

Despite all this seeming

power of Rome, the reading insists that God's goodness and justice will endure and that Jesus will come again in triumph and vindication.

St. Luke's Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is a parable, rather straightforward in its message. The picture vividly presents a setting for the message of the parable.

A rich man is enjoying all the benefits of financial success and well-being. By contrast, Lazarus is desperately poor. He has nothing. He is hungry. He yearns to have the scraps that fell from the rich man's table.

In time, Lazarus dies. Eventually the rich man also dies. When the rich man reaches the hereafter, he realizes that now he himself is in great need, whereas Lazarus is being held close to Abraham, the father of the Hebrew people.

By this time, the once-rich man is desperate. He pleads with Abraham for just a drop of water. This once-rich man implores Abraham to send Lazarus back to earth to warn the rich man's brothers that they too will be punished

unless they turn to God and forsake greed.

This end to the story is thought-provoking. Abraham replies that messengers already have been sent, namely Moses and the prophets, and were ignored.

People can wreck their lives and their eternal lives, but their doom is their choice. God warned them, showing them the right way.

Reflection

The readings, especially that from Luke's Gospel, are clear lessons. It is more than a question of not being greedy or unjust in commercial dealings. Rather, Christians must judge earthly life by a standard that often the world rejects.

At the time of Jesus, many thought that earthly riches showed that God had blessed the rich, whereas poverty and want indicated that a great sin somehow lay in the background of the sinner.

Some Christian, although not Catholic, theologies tend toward this notion today.

Surely popular opinion holds that God's blessings are material.

Jesus totally debunks this notion. Only peace and union with God are worth anything. They are worth everything. So, the Christian standard sees everything else as secondary, or even irrelevant.

The story of the rich man and Lazarus presents reality. When we end our earthly lives, riches will mean nothing.

READINGS

Sunday: Am 6:1a, 7 Ps 146:7-10 1 Tm 6:11-16 Lk 16:19-31

Monday: Jb 1:6-22 Ps 17:1bcd, 2-3, 6-7 Lk 9:46-50

Tuesday: Jb 3:1-3, 11-17, 20-23 Ps 88:2-8 Lk 9:51-56

Wednesday: Jb 9:1-12, 14-16 Ps 88:10b-15 Lk 9:57-62

Thursday: Dn 7:9-10, 13-14 Ps 138:1-5 Jn 1:47-51

Friday: Jb 38:1, 12-21; 40:3-5 Ps 139:1-3, 7-10m, 13-14b Lk 10:13-16

Saturday: Jb 42:1-3, 5-6, 12-17 Ps 119:66, 71, 75, 91, 125, 130 Lk 10:17-24

Love and Lament Alike – A Brief Reflection for All Who Care About the Church

As a priest and pastor, I work very closely with others: clergy, religious, laity who work for the Church, and laity who volunteer. We all work for the Church because we love her and her people.

At times, though, there is disappointment, hurt, or even disillusionment. Perhaps these feelings result from issues in the wider Church: sexual abuse by clergy, the lack of courage and leadership from some bishops and priests, the scandal of dissent at the highest levels, questionable partnerships with anti-life and anti-Catholic organizations, the breakdown of discipline, and the strange severity of response to some infractions contrasted with the almost-total laxity in the face of others. Perhaps they are the result of local problems found in any group of human beings: gossip, hurtful actions, hypocrisy, power struggles, misplaced priorities, favoritism, and injustice.

While these things happen everywhere, many hope that there will be fewer occurrences in the Church. Some who come to work for the Church begin by thinking, "How wonderful it will be to work for the Church instead of out in the cutthroat business world!" Maybe they envision a place where people pray together and support each other more. Perhaps they think the Church will be a place with less competition and strife.

Alas, such hopes are usually dashed quickly. We are, after all, running a hospital of sorts; and just as hospitals tend to attract the sick, so the Church attracts sinners and those who struggle. Jesus was often found in strange company, so

much so that the Pharisees were scandalized. He rebuked them by saying, "People who are well do not need a doctor, sick people do. I have come to call sinners, not the righteous." (Mk 2:17)

Idealistic notions of working in and for the Church evaporate quickly when the phone rings with an impatient parishioner on the line, or when two group leaders argue over who gets to use the parish hall, or when the pastor is irritable and disorganized, or when the maintenance engineer is found to be drinking on the job, or when certain members of the choir are making anything but harmony, or when some favored parishioners get attention from and access to the old guard leaders while newcomers are resisted.

For all these sorts of situations that engender irritation, disappointment, or disillusionment, I keep a little prayer card near my desk. Sometimes I read it for my own benefit and sometimes I share it with those who feel discouraged at what happens (or doesn't happen) in the Church. It is a beautiful mediation; it recalls that although great love often generates the deep disappointment, in the end love still abides.

Consider, then, the following words. They are perhaps over-the-top in places, but love has its excesses. Take these words as a kind of elixir that speaks to the pain that love can cause.

*How baffling you are, Oh Church,
and yet how I love you!
How you have made me suffer,
and yet how much I owe you!
I would like to see you*



COMMUNITY IN MISSION

MSGR. CHARLES POPE

*destroyed,
and yet I need your presence.
You have given me so much scandal
and yet you have made me understand what sanctity is.
I have seen nothing in the world more devoted to obscurity,
more compromised, more false,
and yet I have touched nothing more pure, more generous,
more beautiful.
How often I have wanted to shut the doors of my soul in your face,
and how often I have prayed to die in the safety of your arms.
No, I cannot free myself from you,
because I am you, though not completely.
And besides, where would I go?
Would I establish another?
I would not be able to establish it without the same faults,
for they are the same faults I carry in me.
And if I did establish another,
it would be my Church,
not the Church of Christ.
(from *The God Who Comes*, by Carlo Carretto)*

Yes, where else would I go?

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

BARRON, from page 12

zation at the time closely connected to the Irish Republican Army. The IRA had been responsible for the assassination of Prince Philip's uncle, Lord Mountbatten, a close confidant to Prince Charles and a friend to the entire royal family. How easy it would have been for the queen to speak words of condemnation or, at the very least, to have ignored this Irish official. In point of fact, many argue that her offer of forgiveness helped enormously to heal tensions within Irish society and between the Irish and the British. On a much smaller scale, but in a manner touching in its simplicity, the Queen commented on the infamous and embarrassing interview that Prince Harry and Meghan Markle gave to Oprah Winfrey.

When asked her reaction, she said, "Harry, Meghan, and Archie will always be much-loved family members." Once again, forgiveness rather than retribution was paramount in her mind.

And so I am happy to honor Elizabeth II as the longest-serving monarch in British history, as the anchor for her country during turbulent times, and as the queen who presided over the peaceful transition from the British Empire to the British Commonwealth. But I am especially pleased to honor her as an evangelist, and a faithful and unpretentious disciple of her Lord.

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

OSPINO, from page 12

less of our background or social location, and inspires us to build the church as catechists.

While there are many Catholics who love to share our faith as catechists, the numbers are not always enough. We need many more catechists and thus we have a responsibility to encourage one another to serve our faith communities in this capacity.

At the same time, we should avoid taking our catechists for granted. Our faith communities need to cultivate a permanent culture of support for our catechists.

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

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for September 25, 2022

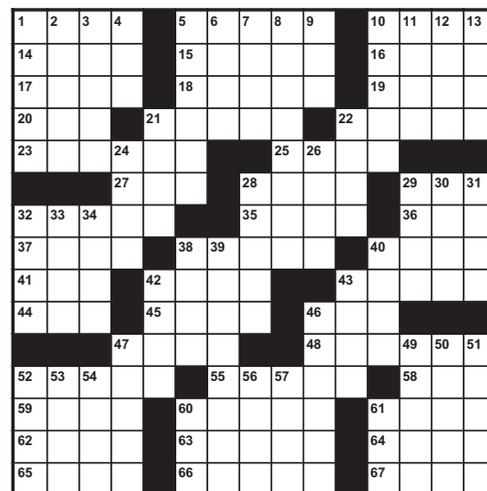
Luke 16: 19-31

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C: The fate of a rich man and a poor man. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| DRESSED | IN PURPLE | NAMED |
| LAZARUS | TABLE | DOGS |
| CARRIED | ANGELS | FATHER |
| ABRAHAM | WATER | COOL |
| MY TONGUE | FLAMES | MY CHILD |
| CHOSEN | MOSES | PROPHETS |
| LISTEN | REPENT | FROM THE DEAD |

RICH AND POOR

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



ACROSS

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1 Liturgy of the _____ | 43 Minor Prophet noted for having been swallowed by a great fish | 30 Suffix (zool.) |
| 5 Abrade | 44 Halloween hello | 31 The emblem of St. Simon the Zealot has a book and this on it |
| 10 Increases | 45 Raison d' _____ | 32 Strikebreaker |
| 14 Garfield's pal | 46 _____ rosa | 33 Commotion |
| 15 Muscular type | 47 "Granting that..." | 34 Very very |
| 16 Resound | 48 Mixes dough | 38 Soaks, as flax |
| 17 Repeat | 52 Catholic actress who won an Academy Award for her role in "The Farmer's Daughter" | 39 Vigorous exercises |
| 18 Something to ride | 55 A knife is named after this Catholic defender of the Alamo | 40 Roundish projection |
| 19 Assess | 58 Exclamation of contempt | 42 Alphabet string |
| 20 Hollowed out | 59 "It was _____ joke." | 43 The feast of St. Anthony of Padua is in this month |
| 21 "... dominion over the fish of the sea, the _____" (Gen 1:26) | 60 Donate a portion of money to church | 46 St. Bernard is the patron saint of these athletes |
| 22 Assisted | 61 "Judith" composer | 47 Flying |
| 23 Odors | 62 Prefix for small | 49 Abraham, in the beginning |
| 25 OT book of teachings | 63 Less hospitable | 50 Catholic actor of "Taxi" fame |
| 27 Silent | 64 Where Samson died | 51 Clip wool |
| 28 Egyptian deity | 65 Fly | 52 Edible roots |
| 29 Idiot | 66 Donkeys | 53 Potpourri |
| 32 Jesus referred to Himself as this, rejected by the builders | 67 "Rubaiyat" name | 54 Bone that parallels the radius |
| 35 Arguing | DOWN | 56 Frequent Mayberry jail occupant |
| 36 LXI + XXX | 1 The Seven Last of Jesus | 57 Slider's shout |
| 37 Small salmon | 2 Music hall | 60 Madre's hermana |
| 38 Certain inert gas | 3 Crest | 61 What you should give it? |

Answer key can be found on page 15

Bristol Parishioner Turns Grief into Mission to Help Others

BY DENISE FEDOROW

Tom Rose lost his beloved wife of 58 years, Joyce, when she died from breast cancer on Aug. 5, 2019, and through his personal battle with grief said he's "learned a few things." He also feels the experience has brought him closer to his faith.

He recently released a book titled "Balloon in a Box: Coping with Grief" that came about as a result of journaling his own grief, but through this process, he discovered the changes in himself and how he is being called to help others through their grief journey.

For 13 years, the couple had hosted a cooking segment on a local South Bend-area Fox station, "Cooking Together with Tom and Joyce." They also published the cookbooks "Cooking Together Style" and "Cooking Together Quick and Easy."

After Joyce's death, Tom took a suggestion from a doctor friend and fraternity brother, who told him about a patient who coped with his own grief by writing in a journal. That led Tom to start one of his own.

After reading some of Tom's journal notes, his friend asked him to turn it into a paper and then told him, "You have to write a book."

Publishing a cookbook was easy, but for Tom, writing a book on grief was completely different. "Then COVID hit and I was stuck at home and I just started writing and it all poured out," he commented.

Joyce and 'Balloon in a Box'

Joyce was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 2004 and had a mastectomy in 2005.

"Then everything was great," Tom said. "Until 2017 and the cancer came back and she was told she had 4-6 months to live, but she lived two years."

"She was very strong, considerate, and straightforward. She was very generous, particularly with her time. Even two months before she died, she was still helping people."

On her deathbed, she helped Tom by informing him of her last wishes for the funeral and about a green bag containing the clothes she wanted to be buried in. The bag also contained their cookbooks and articles about them from the local newspaper — things that they'd done together. Her last words to him were directions for his future.

"She said, 'I love you and I'll see you in church.'"

Tom was raised Catholic; Joyce was a convert. He admit-

ted that he thought she was more dedicated to the practice of the faith than he and this was her way of ensuring his adherence to it. "Women can't finish a sentence without giving a man something to do," he said with a laugh.

As for the title of the book, Tom said it came from something he heard about grief being like a ball in a box, but for him it was more like a balloon in a box, touching all sides of the box, causing all sorts of scrambled emotions — confusion, sadness, loneliness. And it is painful.

"As time passes, the balloon becomes smaller, floating around in the box, and sometimes it touches a side, bringing back memories — some good, some bad. The trick is to keep the balloon from touching the corners; only the sides with pleasant memories," he said.

As a person grows stronger in their grief, he said they are able to take the balloon string and guide it to the pleasant memories, though they can sometimes lose their grip and the scrambled emotions will return again. While someone suggested releasing the balloon, Tom said that would also mean losing the memories, and he would not sacrifice those memories.

Changed Man

Tom admitted that there was an evening when he was angry at Joyce for dying and at God for allowing it and expressed that anger out loud. He then felt bad and apologized aloud to both of them.

He came to the realization that moving on didn't mean he had to leave Joyce behind. That realization helped. Though he



Provided by Tom Rose

Goshen resident and St. Mary of the Annunciation (Bristol) parishioner Tom Rose signs copies of his new book titled "Balloon in a Box" in his home office. The book is about his grief journey after losing his beloved wife. Rose is available to speak to church groups about the book and grieving.

struggled with God for a few months, he now realizes how much he needs Him.

He quoted Venerable Fulton Sheen, who said: "Sometimes God has to break a heart to get into it. I think that's what He did to me."

And when he attends church at St. Mary of the Annunciation in Bristol, he feels Joyce's presence. He said, "I probably love her more today — my love has been allowed to grow because there's no roadblocks."

He dislikes the word "grief," so he searched for another and found in the Bible the word "pragma," which means continuing love. That's what grief is to him — continuing love.

Today, he feels like a changed man. "I'm a different person than I was three or four years ago. I think I'm a better person because I'm more understanding, I listen better, I understand things better."

He related a story of helping

a widower cope when his wife died and he didn't know how to cook or shop or clean. Tom went with the man to the grocery store, showed him how to do laundry, and gave him easy recipes to make.

"I would've never spent the time doing that before Joyce died," he admitted. "I'm not as selfish as I was."

He's now on a grief committee at St. Mary of the Annunciation and said sharing with others is also helpful.

"That probably helped me more than anything — helping someone else," he said.

Since the book came out, Tom has been getting requests for interviews and speaking engagements from all over the country. He did a podcast interview, appeared on a local morning show, and was featured in a Cape Corals, Florida magazine.

One request that surprised him most was being asked to

speak at a Kosciusko County jail drug rehabilitation group. "I thought, 'do they know who they're talking to?'"

The coordinator of the program explained that about 70 percent of the reasons people turn to drugs is because of grief of some kind. So, Tom went and spoke to them and was touched by the response of the men.

Another surprise was an email from a young man who shared that he asked his mother, "How do you know when you're in love?" and she answered by giving him Tom's book to read. "I haven't thought of my book in that way," he marveled.

Tom has speaking engagements at several churches and other organizations around the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. He will be speaking at SS. Peter and Paul Church in Huntington on Oct. 3 at the request of Father Tony Steinacker and St. Jude Church in South Bend on Nov. 2 at the request of Father John Delaney. Both priests are former pastors at St. John the Evangelist in Goshen where the Roses attended prior to St. Mary of the Annunciation.

Helping Those in Mourning

Tom expressed his frustrations over what well-meaning people often say at funerals or to someone in mourning, but he realizes that people simply don't know what else to say. "Don't try to fix it, don't try to give solutions — my heart is breaking, just listen to me," Tom urged.

In the book, he lists what, in his opinion, is helpful and not helpful.

To him, "You'll get it over in time," is one of the worst. "Maybe I don't want to get over it, maybe I want to experience it and grow because of it," he stated.

Remembering those friends and family members who said "I love you" and embraced him sustains him the most of all.

The most important thing for those who are grieving to know is that "It's not going to get better; it'll get different. Don't be afraid to move on and take those memories and that person with you."

And for everyone else, "Tell the people you love that you love them on a daily basis."

To order "Balloon in a Box" or other products that Rose offers to help breast cancer support groups, go to the website at www.ThomasLRose.com, call him at 574-596-6256, or email roseandrose@comcast.net. The YouTube show "Cooking Together Generations" can be viewed at www.cookingtogether.com.



St. Mary of the Annunciation (Bristol) parishioner Tom Rose (seated) recently held a book signing for his book "Balloon in a Box" about his grief journey at a Goshen book store.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

WHAT'S HAPPENING carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. View more Catholic events and submit new ones at www.todayscatholic.org/event. For additional listings of that event, please call the advertising sales staff at 260-399-1449 to purchase space.

St. Joseph Hessen Cassel Fall Festival

FORT WAYNE — St. Joseph Hessen Cassel, 11337 US Hwy 27 S., will have a fall festival on Saturday, Sept. 24, from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. A carnival, country store, auction, BBQ food truck, beer tent, band, and more will be available. A Friday night kickoff party will be in the beer tent with a Euchre tournament and food trucks from Big Eyed Fish and Whip & Chill. Contact Matt Hille at 260-403-9724.

World Apostolate of Fatima Annual Mass and Breakfast

FORT WAYNE — World Apostolate of Fatima annual Mass and breakfast will be held on Saturday, Oct. 1, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, 1102 S. Clinton St., beginning at 7:30 a.m. with confessions, rosary, First Saturday meditations, and Mass at 9 a.m. Concelebrants will be Father Glenn Kohrman, Spiritual Director, and Father Robert Garrow, Associate Spiritual Director. A Marian procession will follow with a breakfast at the Grand Wayne Center. Breakfast speaker is Dr. Paul Kengor. Contact Seth Ball at 260-442-9957 or seth@fatimafwsb.org.

Kingdom Builders Conference

FORT WAYNE — Kingdom Builders Conference will be held on Saturday, Oct. 1, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, 400 Parnell Ave. The conference will include Mass,

reconciliation, adoration, four Catholic speakers, a lovely lunch, and time to reconnect with other women. Visit www.buildingthroughhim.com for more information.

Walk to Remember for Perinatal and Infant Loss

HUNTERTOWN — The ninth annual Walk To Remember for Perinatal and Infant Loss will be held on Saturday, Oct. 1, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Huntertown Family Park Pavilion, 2303 Woods Rd. A highlighted activity is a one-mile memorial walk around the park following a banner with your baby's name on it. Other stations with additional activities will be available. Everything at Walk to Remember is at no cost. Visit www.walktorememberfw.org.

St. John the Baptist Parish Festival

FORT WAYNE — St. John the Baptist Parish, 4500 Fairfield Ave., will have a Parish Festival

on Saturday, Oct., 8, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. with games, bounce houses, face painting, balloon artists, horse wagon rides, and more. From 5:30-7:30 p.m., food trucks featuring Chau Time, Flora & Lilly, and King Arthur's Trolley will be on site with music and a raffle drawing for \$10,000 in prizes. From 7:30-11 p.m., a silent auction, Adam Strack Band, Texas Hold'Em Tournament, Blackjack tables, and cash bar will close out the evening for those 21 and older. Visit www.SaintJohnFortWayne.com for information.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

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REST IN PEACE

Bremen
Karen Smith, 69,
St. Dominic

Margaret Sullivan, 96,
St. Charles

James McCaffery, 93,
St. Joseph

Bristol
Mary Grace Miller,
95, St. Mary of the
Annunciation

Huntington
James Ray Beemer, 70,
SS. Peter and Paul

Carmela Salaiz, 69,
St. Joseph

Christine Ogar, 77,
St. Mary of the
Annunciation

Mishawaka
Peggy Mahank, 82,
St. Bavo

Marilyn Schmitt, 79,
St. Joseph

Fort Wayne
Joyce Kelley, 80,
St. Jude

Dorothy Bartolini, 94,
St. Joseph

Waneta Verhamme,
93, St. Joseph

Teresa McIntyre, 61,
St. Jude

Tom Burkart, 79,
St. Joseph

South Bend
Yanatti Aleyda
Aguirre, Newborn,
St. Adalbert

Elsie Doyle, 93,
St. Joseph

SUBMIT EVENTS
at
TodaysCatholic.org/event

CAREER OPPORTUNITY



Saint Anne Communities is seeking a **Senior Accountant** for the Fort Wayne office. Responsibilities for this position include coding AP invoices, processing standard accounting entries, reconciling accounts, and preparation of reports including tax statements, cost reports, and audit documents. The ideal candidate will hold an Associate's Degree in Accounting and have a minimum of two years experience in long-term care accounting, excellent communication skills, and proficiency with the use of accounting software.

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CNS photo/courtesy Joe Ybarra via The Criterion

Joe Ybarra, right, of Indianapolis, prepares to help fight the Osgood Fire in Nevada that was started by lightning in July of 2020, and fueled by heavy winds from passing thunderstorms.

Firefighter's trust in God is forged by fire and faith

BY JOHN SHAUGHNESSY

INDIANAPOLIS (CNS) – Joe Ybarra reached for his rosary as the wildfire raged across the Idaho mountainside, threatening his life and the lives of seven other U.S. Forest Service firefighters.

As the flames rushed toward the team, Ybarra held his rosary beads and prayed that he would be safe so he could return to his family and friends in Indiana.

At first, the threat had been minimal when the fire on Scarface Mountain began on Aug. 7, 2021. Arriving on the scene by helicopter, the firefighters noticed that the blaze appeared to be dying following a dousing of water from an airborne fire crew.

Awakening early the next day to build a line to contain the fire, Ybarra recalled how the wind kicked up quickly, causing the flames to roar again. The combination of fire and smoke was so dense that the firefighters had difficulty seeing, forcing them to rush back to their base camp.

The fire grew rapidly and Ybarra's team had to abandon the camp to go to a safe location.

"While retreating, we observed that the fire had made its way to where our base camp was," Ybarra said.

The group's commander searched for a safe spot for the firefighters while instructing them to get their fire shelters ready. A shelter can help someone survive for more than an hour in nonburning areas surrounded by intense flames.

"The prospect of possibly having to use them had me worried because they are typically used as a last resort," Ybarra said.

"I remember asking myself what I was doing out there,

26 hours away from family and everything I know. As my mind began racing, I grabbed my radio, a water bottle, my fire shelter, and my rosary as we got to our safe spot and waited to see what the fire was going to do next. When I found my rosary, it was then when my racing mind stopped."

Seconds later, helicopters arrived overhead, dropping water on the blaze. One swooped down to shuttle the team to safety. A single thought filled Ybarra's mind: "I felt God had answered my prayers."

The Scarface Mountain fire raged for nearly four weeks, scorching 88,000 acres. Coming face to face with a wildfire still didn't dampen Ybarra's enthusiasm to be a firefighter. It also continued to inflame the 32-year-old's trust in God.

In the year since, Ybarra became a firefighter in a fire department near Indianapolis. He also became a member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

His journey to both of those points in his life has been marked by a series of twists and turns, forged by fire and faith.

Ybarra's faith journey leads back to his mother, who faced her own life-threatening situation when civil war raged in her homeland of Nicaragua during the 1970s and 1980s. After immigrating to the United States, she married and gave birth to Ybarra, instilling her Catholic faith – and her belief in the power of the rosary – in him.

"She prayed the rosary, through the good, through the bad," said Ybarra, the older of her two sons. "She always remained faithful. It was a constant in her life, something that guided her decision-making and heavily influenced her values."



CNS photo/John Shaughnessy, The Criterion

As a young adult Catholic in Indianapolis, Joe Ybarra has seen his faith in Jesus grow, touching every part of his life.

Like many young adults, Ybarra lost connection with God during his first few years as a student at Indiana State University. Then came a faith-changing invitation from a fraternity brother to attend Mass at St. Benedict Church in Terre Haute. The sound of the choir filled Ybarra with joy, so he approached the choir director about joining it.

"He said, 'Yes, of course,'" Ybarra recalled. "From there they were very welcoming to me. At that point, it was something that I wasn't doing with my family. It was something I was doing of my own accord."

Ever since, he has been seeking to connect with God.

"My relationship with Him is pretty strong right now," Ybarra said. "Initially, I would

go to God only when there was bad stuff that was going on. Now it's more that I'm talking with Him daily, whether it's through music, through the rosary, even through just taking a walk. Through the good, through the bad, that conversation with Him is almost like a constant daily thing now."

Ybarra relied on those conversations when he made a dramatic change in his life.

A saxophone player, Ybarra majored in music education at Indiana State, where he also earned a Master's Degree in Higher Education Administration, leading to a stressful desk job at Purdue University. Yet as a young adult nearing 30, Ybarra didn't feel fulfilled, "doing all these reports, reporting to eight

bosses."

He began volunteering as a firefighter in a nearby township, and he realized he loved the work. He took a job with Nevada's Bureau of Land Management from May to December of 2020. In the summer of 2021, he joined the U.S. Forest Service. It was an experience that included the reality of seeing a raging fire – and his life – flash before him on Scarface Mountain.

In nature's beauty and its fury, Ybarra always found God's presence was constant. "You just felt immersed in His creation and having Him around you at all time – even when the wind is blowing through the trees," he said.

"On the opposite side, during the fires, you definitely felt God was there, too."

Ybarra also carried another constant with him – his rosary. It has been with him every day since he started as a firefighter in Indiana. Most of his emergency runs have been medical in nature. He finds it rewarding to calm people in serious pain as well as family members and to be thanked for his work.

He has the same gratitude for the presence of God in his life when he starts each day with prayer.

"It's a mindset, just calming everything down. It's just me and God during that time. It's like, 'Hey, God, it's me again.'

"My relationship with Him has definitely had a huge impact. Like for my mom, I can see how it influences my decision-making, how it influences my trajectory in life. Through my faith, I've been able to have a lot of positive experiences and meet a lot of amazing people. It's been a blessing in my life."

Shaughnessy is Assistant Editor at The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.