

# TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 96 No. 3

TODAYSCATHOLIC.org

## Eucharistic Formation Days Increase Hunger for Christ



### Pro-Life Special Section

*Helping Men Who Have Experienced Abortion, Abortion and Women's Health, How Ultrasounds Make a Difference, and More*

Pages 8-15

### Holy Eucharist

*Local Author Helps Children Understand the Mystery*

Page 4

### Help for Undocumented

*Indiana Senate Bill Would Provide Legal Path to Driving*

Page 5

### Bishop Dwenger High School

*Theology, Special Education Program Highlighted for Bishop*

Page 20



Chris Lushis

**Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades addresses a crowd of more than 500 people at the Eucharistic Formation Day held on Saturday, Jan. 14, at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Fort Wayne.**

BY CHRISTOPHER LUSHIS

One of the elements of the on-going Eucharistic Revival is becoming more deeply educated about the truths of this life-giving mystery at the heart of the Church. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, one of the primary leaders of the

National Eucharistic Revival, sought to address this need personally by leading formation days on each end of the diocese. The first of these occurred on Saturday, Jan. 14, at St. Charles Borromeo, Fort Wayne, where more than 500 faithful gathered to participate.

The formation event for the South Bend area will take

place at St. Pius X, Granger, on Saturday, Feb. 11.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church emphasizes that to every bishop, "Christ has entrusted the office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing in His Name and power." As the spiritual leader of the diocese who also served as professor and rector at Mount Saint Mary's Seminary,

Bishop Rhoades expressed his desire to instruct and explain the scriptural, theological, and historical treasures of the mystery of the Eucharist.

Bishop shared three presentations on aspects of Eucharistic doctrine essential for growing

**FORMATION, page 2**

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in reverence and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament: understanding the Eucharist as Sacrifice, Presence, and Communion. Each of these talks was designed not only to provide knowledge, but also to lead the Catholic faithful into greater love for God by seeing more clearly the immensity of the Lord's love for His Church.

Between the talks, Bishop celebrated a votive Mass of the Most Holy Eucharist, accompanied by Eucharistic-themed sacred music from choir members of St. Charles. Deacon Robert Lortie, recently ordained to the permanent diaconate, assisted and proclaimed the Gospel at Mass. Afterwards he shared, "the experience of the day brought forth the importance of my new vocation", explaining "how necessary it is in preaching and setting an example for parishioners to keep the Eucharist central in everything I do."

Megan Quigley, parishioner at St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, and Assistant Director of the Assisi Scholars Program at the University of St. Francis, recounted that "It was inspiring to see so many people gathered out of love for Jesus in the Eucharist and a desire to go deeper." She emphasized that celebrating Mass with Bishop and so many people across the city brought his talks to life in a tangible way and that the liturgy "was such a fitting experience, with such gorgeous music, to have as the center of the day and was a beautiful reminder of our unity in Christ."

The event also included an exhibit on Eucharistic Miracles, revealing how throughout history and across continents, God has revealed the truth of His presence in the Eucharist through physical phenomenon, such as the appearance of Our Lord on the host or it turning into literal blood or heart tissue — verified through scientific testing — for the purpose of strengthening the faith of those struggling to believe in Him. These types of miracles have occurred at least four times around the world since the year 2000.

Chris Langford, Diocesan Eucharistic Revival Point Person, expressed his gratitude for the overall day, saying, "I thought the event was fantastic! Bishop's talks were outstanding, captivating, and full of excellent content. The graphics of his presentation were engaging and the Eucharistic Miracles exhibit drew a lot of attention. I was also grateful we were able to accommodate those who were auditorily challenged, with sign language interpreters arranged by Allison Sturm, Ministry Specialist for Persons with Disabilities and the Deaf. Additionally, I thought the turnout was great and was another healthy sign of our diocese that so many would give up almost



Photos by Chris Lushis

**Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrates a Mass of the Holy Eucharist as part of the Eucharistic Formation Day held on Saturday, Jan. 14, at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Fort Wayne.**

More photos are available at [www.todayscatholic.org](http://www.todayscatholic.org)



a full Saturday for this!"

Parish and school leaders were encouraged

to attend to grow in spiritual knowledge and become better equipped for ministry. Dennis Wiegmann, Principal of Queen of Angels School, Fort Wayne, asked each of his school teachers to attend if they were able.

Wiegmann shared, "Spiritual professional development is just as important, if not more important, than strictly educational development in our Catholic Schools. Administrators are allotted extra days that can be used as "teacher only days." After speaking with the pastor, Fr. Spenser St. Louis, we agreed to use one of the days for this formation because the Eucharist is the source and summit of our Faith. If we do not have a full understanding of the true presence, then who better than the shepherd of the diocese

to educate us?" I thoroughly enjoyed all three talks, however the last one that highlighted the teaching of divinization (what it means to share in the divine life of God) was particularly amazing! Others who I have spoken with about this here said the same thing." When asked what he thought his staff would take from the experience, he responded, "I am sending them that exact question and will be curious to get their answers. My hope is that they found this as an opportunity to catechize our students on the importance of the Eucharist."

Jill Henderson, one of Wiegmann's teachers, provided a response to his question on the spot. She expressed, "Our Eucharistic Formation Day with Bishop Rhoades was enlightening and was time well spent! His inspirational stories really allowed for greater understanding and prayerful contemplation of the depth of Christ's love for us." She continued, "my students engage in several research-based writing assign-

ments that involve the beauty, truth, and goodness of our Catholic Faith. After listening to Bishop Rhoades, I am excited to have my students research and write about Eucharistic miracles involving saints!"

Tommy and Pam Lapsley, parishioners of Our Lady of Good Hope, Fort Wayne, shared another reason why this was such a special event. They exclaimed, "we are truly blessed that we have such close proximity to one of the men leading this revival for the entire nation. Bishop is our father in faith. We are blessed for him to take the entire day — twice — to speak about this and share real world application of this mystery! It is invaluable." Tommy added, "every time I hear him speak, I receive something new ... every time! While it was a large event, it was also an intimate setting and it felt very personal."

Parker Zurbach and his wife Maria serve as catechists and youth ministers at St. Joseph, Garrett. He likewise expressed appreciation for the pastoral



Photos by Chris Lushis

effort of Bishop Rhoades to educate and evangelize our diocese. He emphasized, "we are so fortunate to have one of the bishops who helped craft the national document on the Eucharist as our own spiritual father. I would love to see him do more teaching events like this because he seems so alive when he teaches; it is apparent that he is a catechist at heart."

Tony Staley, a parishioner at St. Pius X who knew he would have a schedule conflict for Bishop's South Bend event, chose to drive to the Fort Wayne conference with his wife, Carol. He shared that he came to understand the Eucharist in a new way, adding, "Today was a once in a lifetime opportunity! I implore all you brothers and sisters to attend this same retreat on Feb. 11 at St Pius X in Granger. Today our beloved shepherd guided us to hear how the One who created everything gives us everything by offering His Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist."

Registration is open for the Eucharistic Formation Day at St. Pius X in Granger, and can be found at [diocesefwsb.org/eucharist](http://diocesefwsb.org/eucharist). Cost is \$10 and includes morning refreshments and lunch. All are welcome.



**Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades accepts the gifts during Mass of the Holy Eucharist at noon in the top photo and answers questions during the Q&A session at the end of the day in the bottom photo. In the center photo, volunteers share information about the National Eucharistic Revival and planned events as part of the Eucharistic Formation Day held on Saturday, Jan. 14, at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Fort Wayne.**



## Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Tuesday, Jan. 24: 10:30 a.m. – Priest Personnel Board Meeting, Sacred Heart Church, Warsaw  
 Wednesday, Jan. 25: 4 p.m. – Pro-Life Panel Event, Geddes Hall, University of Notre Dame  
 Sunday, Jan. 29: 10 a.m. – Mass, The Historic Church of St. Patrick, Toledo, Ohio



## Priest Announcement

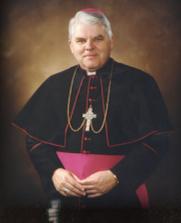
The Most Rev. Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has made the following announcement:

**Reverend Eustace Okorie** Parochial Vicar, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Fort Wayne, effective Jan. 16, 2023.

## Mass to commemorate the death of Bishop John M. D'Arcy

The Very Rev. Mark A. Gurtner, JCD, Vicar General for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will celebrate a Mass commemorating the 10-year anniversary of the death of Bishop John M. D'Arcy.

Friday, Feb. 3, at 12:05 p.m.  
 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, 1102 S. Clinton St., Fort Wayne.



## First Saturday Devotion

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Special Guest Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades,  
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend



# Local Author Writes Book to Help Children Understand the Eucharist

BY ERIN LYNCH

The Eucharistic Revival aims “to renew the Church by enkindling a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.” This goal is one that is incredibly necessary and fundamental to a Church that is alive and growing. Throughout this year, beginning on the Feast of Corpus Christi back in June, there have been many events in our diocese aimed at inspiring a love for the Eucharist and a deeper understanding of the Eucharist.

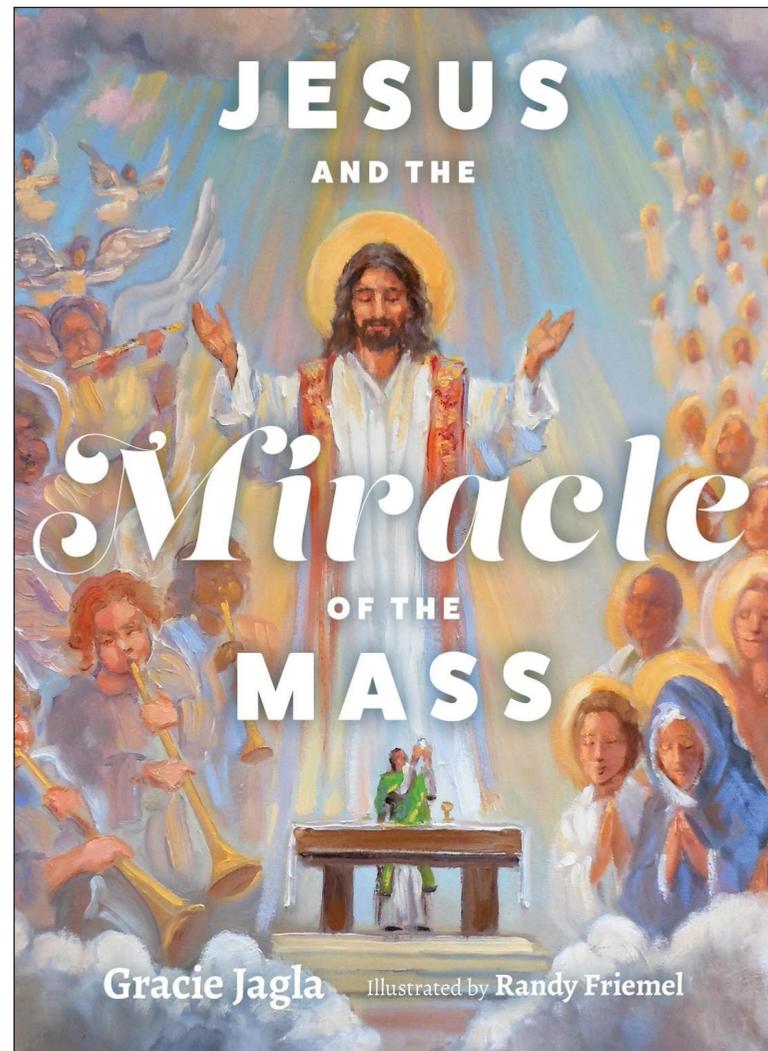
The Eucharist is a beautiful gift and mystery that sometimes even adults find difficult to comprehend. So to teach the significance of the Eucharist to children can be an even more challenging task at times.

One local author, Gracie Jagla, has written a book called “Jesus and the Miracle of the Mass” which aims “to pull back the veil between heaven and earth so children can see what is the miracle that is hidden behind every Mass and hopefully this will bring the Eucharist a little bit more to life for children.” The story is told from the perspective of Jesus in the Eucharist, hoping to show children how Jesus is truly present.

Jagla is a mom of two girls with another baby on the way and she said, “there is nothing more important to write about for children than the Eucharist. It’s the most important thing for them to learn and understand. But it’s very hard to understand because it’s a mystery. It’s one of the biggest mysteries and very little of it is visible to us with our eyes.”

This book, though targeted towards children, also gives language to parents to help them to talk to their children about the Eucharist. Jagla says the book gives parents “ways to open the door to conversations that they might not have considered before either.”

Jeanette Dripps, a mom of eight children and Director of Faith Formation at Mishawaka Catholic Schools, said, “I think children’s books are an incredible resource for helping children form their moral imagination. It takes imagination for children ... well really for all of us ... to be able to look at a tiny piece of what looks like bread and instead see the Body of Christ. It takes imagination to be able to ‘see’ all the invisible things taking place during the celebration of the Mass. Children’s books and illustrations can help bring these hidden realities to their attention and deepen their devotion. My own children have leaned



“Jesus and the Miracle of the Mass” is a children’s book by local award-winning author Gracie Jagla written to help children understand the Holy Eucharist. The book is set for release in February.



Gracie Jagla is a local award-winning author of children’s picture books. She has a book coming out in February written to help children understand the Holy Eucharist.

over during the Mass to tell me about the angels surrounding the altar. This happened after learning about this in school from a picture book.”

When talking about how this book will speak to children, Jagla noted that it was very important to her that the book combined theologically sound teaching with imagination, since imagination is one of the great strengths of children. She did extensive

research of Eucharistic miracles and incorporated these stories into some of the more imaginative aspects of the book.

The book has received an Imprimatur by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, which means that the book is theologically sound, and also received the Seal of the National Eucharistic Revival on it, which means that the book is authorized by the Eucharistic Congress. The book comes out in February, and Jagla said, “I hope that children learn that the Eucharist is alive, that the Eucharist is an encounter, that it’s an opportunity for them to be closer to Jesus than any other point in their lives. It’s the one moment that they can be so unified with Him and I hope that they see how closely linked heaven and earth are.”

In this year of the Eucharistic Revival, the Church has an opportunity to invite her members into a deeper understanding and love for the Eucharist. Imparting this beautiful belief to children in the Church will affect the Church for years to come. Children’s literature is one way to invite children into this encounter and encourage them in their love of the Eucharist throughout their life.

# Public Safety Benefits Propel Case for Providing Undocumented Residents Legal Path to Driving

**B**oosted by bipartisan support and backing from a broad coalition of advocates including law enforcement officials, business leaders, and the Indiana Catholic Conference, momentum is growing across the state for providing undocumented immigrants with legal driving privileges.

For the ninth year, legislation has been introduced in the General Assembly to issue driving privilege cards to residents of Indiana who cannot provide proof of their identity and lawful status in the United States. Indiana is home to an estimated 100,000 undocumented immigrants, and the cards would allow them to drive legally and to purchase car insurance.

Such a move would address basic human needs for this population while protecting everyone on the road, according to Sen. Blake Doriot (R-Goshen), the author of Senate Bill 248.

"This is a public safety bill," said Doriot, who was among the lawmakers who led a summer study session on the issue that resulted in overwhelming support. "In this population, a lot of the people drive, a lot of them have vehicles, and we're trying to make sure that they're trained properly. In our summer study committee, we had a plethora of people testifying, and all were in favor of this type of legislation — from prosecutors to defense attorneys to mayors to police chiefs."

"We've got a big push," Doriot continued. "Now we just have to get over the misunderstanding of the bill."

The key, according to the northern Indiana lawmaker, is clearly defining what the proposed legislation will and will not do.

"I want to make sure that everyone knows that the driving privilege card cannot be used for voting," Doriot said. "It is strictly for driving and obtaining insurance, which will be required. People who seek the driving card will have to

meet the same qualifications as any other motorist as far as training and driving experience. They will go through the same process as obtaining a driver's license, but this is not a driver's license. It's a driving privilege card."

Doriot's efforts follow those of longtime champions of driving card legislation including Sen. David Niezgodski (D-South Bend). While previous attempts have hit roadblocks in the General Assembly, the lawmakers hope that the vast coalition of support demonstrated in the summer study session will help sway those who have been skeptical in the past.

"We have to get rid of some old embedded thoughts about (the undocumented) population," said Doriot, whose district is nearly 25 percent Hispanic, including a proportion of undocumented immigrants. "You can come to my district and you will not see a more family-oriented, hard-working group of people who want to be here and want to be good citizens."

"The individuals who will be using the cards want to participate in society," continued Doriot, a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Goshen. "They want to do the most basic things like drive their kids to school. I've talked to many people who have been here 15, 20 years and they're terrified to drive to work or to a soccer game. They just want to participate, and if the federal government would work on their immigration process, this would be a lot better. But this is not an immigration issue. It's a public safety issue."

Senate Bill 248 has been assigned to the Committee on Homeland Security and

## INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

BY VICTORIA ARTHUR

Transportation. Doriot said that committee chairman Sen. Michael Crider (R-Greenfield) — a retired law enforcement official — has promised a hearing on the bill, most likely in late January.

The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), which represents the five Catholic bishops across the state, strongly supports the proposed legislation.

"We are encouraged that the topic was discussed this summer," said Angela Espada, Executive Director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. "This matter has been presented before in bills and we are optimistic that this time it will go farther. Passage of a driving card bill has the capacity to put the Catholic social teaching tenet of promoting the common good into practice by positively impacting the lives of the card holders as well as those around them."

Among the driving forces behind the effort is a diligent group of students at the University of Notre Dame who have conducted research on the issue and supplied lawmakers with their findings. The student-led Indiana Driving Record Card Project has published a report entitled "Safer Roads, A Stronger Indiana: Projected Social and Economic Effects of Driving Privilege Card Legislation in Indiana," which details a range of public

safety and economic benefits that could result from Indiana joining 18 other states and the District of Columbia in offering driving cards.

"We want everyone to be trained, certified and insured," said Benjamin Rascón Gracia, a sophomore at Notre Dame and a co-leader of the project. "We want them to be trained, because this type of legislation — through analysis and comparisons we have done with other states — saves lives. The more people who are trained on the road, the more people are saved from traffic fatalities and hit and runs. In every single state that has passed this legislation, we have seen traffic fatalities plummet — as much as 30 percent, where there are large percentages of undocumented immigrants."

"We want everyone to be certified, meaning they're identifiable to law enforcement, they're registered with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, and abiding by the law like everyone else," continued Rascón Gracia, a graduate of Westfield High School who was a child when he emigrated legally with his parents to the United States from Mexico. "And we want them to be insured, which would provide Indiana with \$68 million in revenue in the first three years."

Rascón Gracia, a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, views his work through the lens of Catholic social teaching.

"I very much believe in the Catholic concept of human dignity," said Rascón Gracia, who emphasizes that he did nothing to earn his citizenship as a child and that many families just like his want to work and live as active members of society but face obstacles in

obtaining citizenship. "I think that the law needs to recognize everyone's human dignity. What we are doing (through this project) is God's work. It's helping people who are in need, who are our brothers and sisters in the state, who deserve to be treated with equal human dignity. That's something that's profoundly Catholic."

"It's also a reminder that Catholicism is a religion of immigrants in this country, and that the Catholic Church has always been and ought to continue to be standing with immigrants everywhere."

Bertha Melendres, Director of the Office of Hispanic Ministry in the Diocese of Evansville, echoed those thoughts.

"Allowing people the privilege of driving is a life-changing opportunity," said Melendres, who came to the United States from Mexico at age 11 as an undocumented immigrant. As a resident of California, for years until she was able to obtain legal citizenship, Melendres drove to school, work, and church without a license and with constant anxiety.

"I am encouraged that there is growing support for this type of legislation," said Melendres, a member of Holy Rosary Parish in Evansville. "This is vital for people."

**To follow priority legislation of the ICC,** visit [indianacc.org](http://indianacc.org). This website includes access to I-CAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church's position on key issues. Those who sign up for I-CAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.



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# NEWS BRIEFS

## Thousands Gather at Site of Jesus' Baptism in Jordan for Special Mass

BETHANY BEYOND THE JORDAN, Jordan (OSV News) — The officially recognized site of Jesus' baptism drew thousands of Catholics and others nationwide to the east bank of the Jordan River on Jan. 13 for a special Mass as COVID-19 restrictions dropped. Families, youth, dignitaries, nuns, and priests joined the pilgrims' throng gathered first at the lush, reed-filled banks of the river as bagpipe music welcomed the faithful. Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, emphasized in his homily the importance of Bethany Beyond the Jordan, recorded in the New Testament as not only the place of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist, but for the act that heralded the start of Jesus' public ministry. "It comes two months after Jordan's official announcement to develop lands adjacent to the site" to accommodate pilgrims for longer stays in the area, Father Bader, Director of the Catholic Center for Studies and Media in Jordan told OSV News. Funds are needed for this project as well as for the completion of the church. More than 25 years ago, excavations began on the east bank of the Jordan River and uncovered the baptism site. Now Jordan wants the site to be more accessible and to be capable of hosting more tourists.

## Cardinal Pell's Faith, Suffering Remembered at Vatican Funeral

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The death of Australian Cardinal George Pell was a shock because just five days earlier he had concelebrated the funeral of Pope Benedict XVI and "seemed in good health," said Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, Dean of the College of Cardinals. In his homily at Cardinal Pell's funeral Mass on Jan. 14 in St. Peter's Basilica, Cardinal Re described the Australian prelate as often being "a strong-willed and decisive protagonist" with "a strong temperament that, at times, could appear harsh." Cardinal Pell died of a heart attack on Jan. 10 at a Rome hospital after undergoing hip surgery. He was 81. His burial was scheduled for Feb. 2 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney, where he had served as archbishop before Pope Francis chose him as prefect of the Vatican Secretariat for the Economy. The pope, who had praised the cardinal for keeping his faith "with perseverance even in the hour of trial," arrived in St. Peter's Basilica at the end of the Mass to preside

## Deadly Tornado Tears Through Alabama



OSV News Photo/Jake Crandall/USA Today Network via Reuters

An American flag is draped on the remnants of a home destroyed in Old Kingstown, Alabama, on Jan. 13, 2023, after a tornado ripped through the town. A giant, swirling storm system billowing across the South on Jan. 11 killed at least six people in central Alabama, the Associated Press reported.

over the final rite of commendation, as he usually does for cardinals who die in Rome.

## New Abortion Pill Rules Challenge Catholics to Reimagine Effective Pro-life Outreach

WASHINGTON, D.C. (OSV News) — Just six months after the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision that abortion is not a constitutional right, America's pro-life advocates and health care providers are preparing for another consequential shift following the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's finalization of a rule change that significantly expands availability of the abortion pill mifepristone. While a prescription is still necessary, patients will be able to acquire Mifeprex — and its approved generic — at retail pharmacies. Both Walgreens and CVS officials said they plan to offer mifepristone in states

where it is legal. The FDA's rule changes are challenging pro-life advocates to rethink effective, lifesaving strategies, from creating pro-life health clinics to digital ads. Molly Sheahan, Associate Director of Life & Family Advocacy at the California Catholic Conference, noted that with abortion pills and the internet, "The frontier on the issue of abortion isn't necessarily the abortion clinic — it's the mobile phone."

## Catholics Must Be 'Active Participants' In MLK's 'Unfinished' Work, Cardinal Gregory Says At Mass

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (OSV News) — Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is best honored when people "recall to mind and heart that the issues Dr. King placed before our nation have not been adequately accomplished," and strive to continue his work, Cardinal Wilton Gregory said during a Jan. 15 Mass he celebrated honoring the late civil

rights leader's legacy. "Dr. King courageously and consistently invoked the truth of the Gospel in calling the men and women of our nation to live as sisters and brothers," Cardinal Gregory, the Mass's homilist, said at St. Joseph Church in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. "The truth that [Dr. King] announced reflected the light that is Christ Jesus." The cardinal added, "We who are the followers of Christ in a Church that is simultaneously universal as well as one must be active participants in the healing of any residual wounds of racism, bigotry, and intolerance that still plague this wonderful ecclesial family of ours."

## Catholic Priest Burned to Death in Nigeria; Other Christians in Congo Killed

PAIKORO, Nigeria (OSV News) — Deadly violence hit Christians in Africa on Jan. 15, with a Catholic priest in northern Nigeria burned to death and as many as 17 Christians killed

in a blast in eastern Congo. In Nigeria, Father Isaac Achi was burned to death at his residence in Paikoro, a local government area of Niger state. The armed men had set his house ablaze after a failed break-in at 3 a.m. Another priest who was at the house, identified only as Father Collins, was shot and injured as he tried to escape. It was not the first attack against Father Achi, who in 2011 survived an attack by Boko Haram, the north Nigerian militant group, at a Christmas church service. The attack left 44 parishioners dead. He also had been shot while blessing a child and had survived an abduction by militants. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the death toll from a Jan. 15 church attack is an estimated 17 people, according to figures provided by DRC's government spokesman, with some sources however saying 10 people were killed and 39 others were injured.

## Health Care is a Universal Right, not a Luxury, Pope Says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Health care is not a luxury, it is a right that belongs to everyone, Pope Francis told health care workers. "A world that rejects the sick, that does not assist those who cannot afford care, is a cynical world with no future. Let us always remember this: health care is not a luxury, it is for everyone," the pope said on Jan. 16 during a meeting with members of an Italian federation of professional associations of technicians and specialists working in the fields of radiology, rehabilitation, and preventative medicine. He expressed his deep gratitude for their work, especially during the pandemic. "Without your commitment and effort, many people who were ill would not have been looked after," he said. "Your sense of duty inspired by the power of love enabled you to serve others, even putting your own health at risk." In a world marked by a throwaway culture, the health professionals promote a culture of care, embodied in the good Samaritan, who does not look the other way, but approaches and helps a person in need with compassion, the pope said. People who are ill are "asking to be cared for and to feel cared for, and that is why it is important to engage with them with humanity and empathy" along with meeting the highest professional standards, he said.

# Personal Accompaniment Key to Vatican's Expanded Vision for Marriage Formation

BY MARIA WIERING

(OSV News) — When Adriana Vasquez was working in marriage ministry for the Archdiocese of New York two decades ago, she helped enrich the theology expressed in its materials and workshops for Spanish-speaking Catholics.

She later discovered, however, that excellent content was not enough.

"I was dismayed years later to find out that some of those couples who attended those workshops were later divorced," she told OSV News.

As she has continued working in marriage ministry in several other dioceses, Vasquez has identified an approach that does make a powerful difference for engaged couples: evangelization through personal accompaniment.

Ahead of Valentine's Day — the most popular day for couples to get engaged, according to the wedding planning website WeddingWire — marriage ministry experts say the practice of personal accompaniment could become a worldwide trend in Catholic marriage preparation, due to a renewed vision for marriage formation introduced last year in a document from the Holy See's Dicastery for Laity, Family, and Life.

First issued in Italian in June with an English translation published in October, "Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life" presents a three-stage approach to preparing men and women for Catholic marriage. It also addresses the wedding celebration and pastoral accompaniment for the couple's first married years.

The approach aims not only to transmit doctrine, but also to "let the mystery of sacramental grace resonate among the spouses," the document states.

In an introduction to "Catechumenal Pathways," Pope Francis frames "accompaniment" as an important action of the Catholic Church as a whole, writing that "we have a primary duty to responsibly accompany those who manifest their intention to be united in marriage, so that they may be preserved from the trauma of separation and never lose faith in love."

The document shares a vision of accompaniment tailored to each couple by their parish's priests, pastoral workers, and other married couples. It states that "it is not so much a matter of sharing notions or imparting skills. Rather, it is about guiding, assisting, and being close to couples along a path to walk together."

The idea of a "marriage cat-



Julio Prendergast and Christina MacDougall are all smiles as they exit St. John the Baptist Church in Wading River, N.Y., following their wedding Mass on Aug. 20, 2021.

CNS file/OSV News photo, Gregory A. Shemitz

echumenate" has roots in St. John Paul II's writings about family life, and the language draws a connection to the Church's process for welcoming new members.

That is appropriate, because it allows an engaged couple to rediscover the mystery of the faith, said Julia Dezelski, Assistant Director of Marriage and Family Life for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth.

The breakdown of marriages in the United States and worldwide, and its implication for children and family life, indicates that the Church should be investing more in engaged couples, she said.

According to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., the number of annual Catholic weddings in the United States fell 65 percent from 426,309 in 1969 to 148,134 in 2014 — with a dramatic drop to 97,200 weddings in 2020 (the next available year of captured data). Between 1969-2020, the self-identified Catholic population grew from 54.1 million to 73.2 million.

*"It's crucial that we build stronger families and stronger marriages, starting with stronger marriages."*

JULIA DEZELSKI

A 2015 Pew Research study found that among Catholics who have ever been married, 34 percent have obtained a divorce. Meanwhile, 44 percent of Catholics report having cohabitated with a romantic partner outside of marriage.

"It's crucial that we build stronger families and stronger marriages, starting with stronger marriages," Dezelski said.

The current marriage preparation landscape among U.S. dioceses "varies somewhat drastically," she said. However, Dezelski has observed more dioceses and parishes incorporating mentor couples for personal accompaniment in mar-

riage formation. Several widely used marriage preparation programs require them. Mentor couples are also recommended in the USCCB's 2021 document "Called to the Joy of Love: National Pastoral Framework for Marriage and Family Life Ministry."

Under many of these models, a pastor or parish marriage ministry coordinator assigns a married, program-trained mentor couple to an engaged couple.

One popular marriage-formation apostolate, Witness to Love, has flipped that approach, encouraging the engaged couple themselves to choose a couple to mentor them so long as they meet certain criteria, such as regularly attending church, actively practicing their faith, and being married five years or more.

The hope is that, by connecting with mentors they already trust and respect, the engaged couple will discuss their faith authentically, be more attracted to the church and open to personal conversion, and continue their relationship with their mentors beyond their wedding day. It also gives mentor couples

an opportunity to evangelize, experience deeper conversion, and strengthen their marriages.

Witness to Love contains many aspects of what the "Catechumenal Pathways" document envisions for a marriage catechumenate, said Mary-Rose Verret, who founded the apostolate in 2011 with her husband, Ryan.

The marriage catechumenate "isn't an invitation (for dioceses and parishes) to fit something new into their existing process," she said. "It's a plea to completely rethink the way that they're approaching forming couples getting married today. It's obvious that the best content that's ever been created in the history of the Church isn't doing the trick. It's not because it isn't great content. It's because ultimately evangelization moves at the pace of relationships."

Disappointed by a dearth of young couples in the pews and reports of divorces among recently married couples in their own Louisiana parish, Mary-Rose — who has worked in marriage preparation on both diocesan and parish levels — and Ryan began interviewing couples in 2008 about their marriage preparation. The testimonies of more than 400 couples convinced them that conventional marriage formation approaches are insufficient, and that trust and relationships are key factors missing from most couples' marriage preparation experiences. That led the Verretts to make chosen mentor couples a hallmark of Witness to Love.

"This is calling people back to the basics of what we've always known as a Church," Verret said. "Friends bring friends to Christ."

More than 80 U.S. dioceses use Witness to Love in their parishes. It's among marriage preparation options in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, where Vasquez is now Managing Director of Marriage and Family in its Center for the New Evangelization. She said the marriage catechumenate's emphasis on accompaniment reflects a trend she sees in parish ministries across the board.

"It's that encounter with Christ that the couple is desperately starved for: not just content about the sacrament, not just information, but the actual conversion experience — to meet each couple where they are, in their own particular journey, individually and as a couple," she said.



# I Think About That Child Every Day

PROJECT JOSEPH  
765-860-6006  
MEN'S AFTER ABORTION HEALING

Photo by whoislimos on Unsplash

## Project Joseph Retreats Make their Way to Indiana: Offer Men the Opportunity to Heal

BY KATHERINE CALBRO-SANDERS

*"The retreat allows us to let down our guard so that wounds long left unattended may begin to heal."*

— Eric Slaughter

KOKOMO, Ind. — In 2022, Catholic and Christian pro-lifers celebrated the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade. The overturn was seen as a win for life, but work has only just begun for pro-lifers around the country as they continue to build up a post-Roe America.

Part of building a post-Roe America includes providing support for women and families in need. A ministry well known for its work in helping women heal from abortions is Project Rachel, which was started in 1985 by Vicki Thorn. As part of the Church's mission in helping families heal and providing support, Project Joseph started in 2002. Much like Project Rachel, the ministry offers men the opportunity to heal from abortions.

The program is offered to men as a peer-led weekend retreat to help guide them through the suffering they are experiencing due to the loss of a child to abortion. David Bangs, a parishioner at St. Patrick Church in Kokomo and a retreat facilitator of Project Joseph, explained that this loss doesn't just have to be that of their own child. It could be a grandchild, a sibling, or even the child of a friend.

"But they bear a burden; a wound, due to an abortion that touched their life," said Bangs. "Through the retreat and follow-up support, we seek to help men find healing and forgiveness."

In his late teens, Bangs lost a child due to an abortion. His involvement caused him to suffer for decades from guilt, depression, and anger before he began his journey of healing. Healing meant creating a deeper relationship with Christ and the Church, and eventually, a Rachel's Vineyard post-abortion retreat.

As he found forgiveness and peace, Bangs believed God wanted him to use his experience to help others heal. In 2012, at a Rachel's Vineyard post-abortion retreat in Indianapolis, he met Eric Slaughter, a coordinator of Holy Rosary Pro-Life Ministry and volunteer and facilitator for Rachel's Vineyard and Project Joseph.

"That helped me understand that I wasn't the only man on earth who had been wounded by abortion," Bangs said of meeting Slaughter.

In 2014, with help from

Jennie Hack, Bangs led a Rachel's Vineyard retreat in the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana, which had not been offered for several years. Bangs noted that men very rarely attend Rachel's Vineyard retreats, which led him and Slaughter to look at healing programs specifically for men.

The two looked at modifying some existing programs, but had the opportunity to attend a Project Joseph retreat in Texas last year and liked it so much that they held their first retreat in Indiana last September.

"At the start of the retreat, I felt that I would be more of an observer rather than a participant because of the healing I had previously received and the many years I had helped other men and women find healing," Slaughter explained. "However, Project Joseph helped to begin the healing of wounds I have not yet acknowledged."

Going forward, Bangs and Slaughter plan to offer two Project Joseph retreats each year. The next one is scheduled within the diocese in April. After that, another one will be offered in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in September.

"For every woman who has lost a child to abortion, there is also a man who has lost a child to abortion," Bangs said. "We, as a society, don't often think about that."

For him, offering this kind of support for men with help from Project Joseph is long overdue.

"Men don't like to talk about feelings, pain, guilt, and regret, let alone talk about them in front of a group of women," Bangs said. "While Rachel's Vineyard is open to men, it's very rare for a man to attend. We wanted to offer a men-only opportunity for them to find forgiveness and healing from their involvement in abortion."

"The retreat allows us to let down our guard so that wounds long left unattended may begin to heal," Slaughter added.

For those who have never attended a Project Joseph retreat, the program begins with lunch, which gives men the opportunity to get to know each other. It consists of the team leader, one or two facilitators, a licensed therapist, and a spiritual advisor (either a deacon or priest).

"During the retreat, Jesus is present through the reading of Scripture passages upon which the retreatants are asked to meditate," Slaughter said. "Figures are brought to life — like King David, and of course, St. Joseph — stories of men to remind us what it means to be a man while we live in a society that seems to have forgotten."

While men do not experience the physical pain and trauma of the abortion itself, they still experience the loss of a child nonetheless. Project Joseph can help men begin to heal, just as it has for both Bangs and Slaughter.

"Our society tells us that abortion is a woman's choice and that men have no business even talking about abortion. This also means a man should have no feelings about our children lost to abortion," Slaughter said. "How can this be? A father is a father at conception — when life begins. We are called to protect our children, our wives, and our families. We have a right to feel, and a right to heal. Project Joseph can help."

For information on post-abortion healing or to register for a Project Joseph retreat, call David Bangs at 765-860-6006.

*Katharine Calabro-Sanders, writes for The Catholic Moment.*

# The Truth About **Abortion** & **Women's Health**

## Abortion does not save women's lives.

**Abortion** is the **direct** and **intentional** killing of a child in the womb.

**Abortion is never medically necessary.** It does not treat or solve any pregnancy-related complication.

## Outlawing abortion will not affect treatment for miscarriage.

### Treatment for miscarriage and abortion is not the same thing.

There is a complete moral and legal difference between losing a child through miscarriage and intentionally taking the life of a child.

In the tragic case of miscarriage, surgery may be necessary—and is an ethical treatment—to remove the remains of an unborn child who has *already died*.

While the same surgery is done to perform an abortion, abortions impose this procedure on a **living child** with the **intention** of ending his or her life.

## Women can get the lifesaving treatments they need—without abortion.

In rare cases, and in the absence of better alternatives, life-threatening maternal health conditions may require interventions that **indirectly** and **unintentionally** lead to the death of an unborn child. **Abortion restrictions will not prevent women from receiving these treatments.**

When the lives of mother and child are in immediate danger, the goal is to fight to save both patients. **Effective treatments exist that seek to save the life of the mother and never to intentionally harm her unborn child.**

When a woman's life is at risk in pregnancy, preterm delivery may be used as a lifesaving medical intervention to preserve the life of both mother and child.<sup>1</sup>

### Ectopic pregnancies

result when an embryo implants outside the uterus—often in the fallopian tube. Sadly, such embryos cannot survive and this condition can pose serious risks to the mother. While ectopic pregnancies sometimes resolve naturally, interventions are often necessary.

### When done ethically, treatment for an ectopic pregnancy is not

**abortion.** Ethical interventions include the removal of the damaged fallopian tube containing the embryo or, if embryo death has already occurred, medication can be used to resolve the ectopic pregnancy.

## Bottom line: **Abortion restrictions never prevent women from receiving life-saving treatment.**<sup>2</sup>

*If you or someone you know is struggling after involvement in an abortion, the Church offers confidential, compassionate help through Project Rachel Ministry. Visit [www.hopeafterabortion.org](http://www.hopeafterabortion.org) for more information.*

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<sup>1</sup> Buskmiller, C. 2018. "The ethics of interstitial and cesarean scar ectopic pregnancies: four case studies and a review of the literature". The Linacre Quarterly 85(3): 252-269.  
<sup>2</sup> For further information on these topics, reference: [1] National Catholic Bioethics Center, "Medical Interventions During Pregnancy in Light of Dobbs," <https://www.ncbcenter.org/ncbc-news/bioethics-public-policy-report-august-12-2022-ezqx2>. [2] American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, "Myth vs. Fact: Correcting Misinformation on Maternal Medical Care," [https://aaplog.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/AAPLOG-Myth-v-Fact\\_v5.pdf](https://aaplog.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/AAPLOG-Myth-v-Fact_v5.pdf).

## Resources for Life Awareness

### Walking with Moms in Need

This is an ongoing initiative where Catholic parishes and communities “walk in the shoes” of local pregnant and parenting women in need.

Visit [walkingwithmomswsb.com](http://walkingwithmomswsb.com)

### Miriam's Blessing

This is a ministry whose purpose is to provide support to parents who receive a poor prenatal diagnosis.

Visit [diocesefwsb.org/miriams-blessing](http://diocesefwsb.org/miriams-blessing)

### Ava's Grace

This is a ministry which offers spiritual, emotional, and practical support to families who suffer miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant loss.

Visit [diocesefwsb.org/avas-grace](http://diocesefwsb.org/avas-grace)

### Natural Family Planning

Natural Family Planning (NFP), sometimes called Fertility Awareness Based Methods (FAMB), is a term for scientifically based, morally acceptable methods of regulating conception based on daily observation and interpretation of the natural signs of fertility and infertility which occur in a woman's body. Using this knowledge, a couple can identify the days on which conception is possible should they desire to either achieve or to avoid a pregnancy.

Visit [diocesefwsb.org/nfp](http://diocesefwsb.org/nfp)

### Infertility

Hope For the Journey offers spiritual, emotional, and practical support rooted in the Catholic faith for couples who are experiencing infertility or secondary infertility.

Visit [diocesefwsb.org/hope-for-the-journey](http://diocesefwsb.org/hope-for-the-journey)

### Adoption Services

Catholic Charities Adoption Planning is a licensed child placing agency in the state of Indiana. Additionally, they provide pro-life professional counseling as well as helping parents who chose adoption as an option design their plan and guide them through a legal adoption process.

Visit [ccfwsb.org/adoption-pregnancy-counseling](http://ccfwsb.org/adoption-pregnancy-counseling)

### Project Rachel

Project Rachel is a post-abortion reconciliation program offered by the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. This ministry offers hope and healing for all those who suffer from the pain of abortion and its aftermath.

Visit [diocesefwsb.org/project-rachel](http://diocesefwsb.org/project-rachel)

# Another Look at A

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) provides educational resources about abortion and pro-life in the Catholic Church. The following information provides a basic overview which summarizes key points about abortion.

## Uniquely You

From your first moments of existence, you had all the DNA that would determine your sex, facial features, physique, and the color of your skin, hair, and eyes. At 24 days, your heart began beating. By eight weeks, all your organs were present, and your unique fingerprints were forming. Ultrasounds show that by 18 weeks, you could swim, somersault, suck your thumb, and even cover your ears if you heard loud music. If you'd been born just 23 weeks after conception, your chance of survival would be 50-80 percent; by 25 weeks, it's more than 90 percent, and that's still *months* before full-term birth.<sup>[1]</sup>

Now, if someone takes an innocent person's life after he or she is born, it's against the law; just minutes before birth, it's legal in many states and called abortion.

## Abortion and the Law

The Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* ended the nearly 50-year nationwide regime of abortion on demand that was ushered in by the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973. This regime was based on the indefensible view that the U.S. Constitution forbids government from protecting the preborn child in the womb from the violence of abortion. The Supreme Court in *Dobbs* concluded that there is nothing in the Constitution's text, history, American legal tradition, or the Court's precedents that justified the extreme holding of *Roe*.

In *Dobbs*, the Supreme Court returned the issue of abortion to the people's elected representatives at the Federal and State levels. It will take time for the *Dobbs* decision to play out and there is great variation in how states treat abortion. In the meantime, abortion is legal in more states than not, and more work is needed in the coming months and years.

## Effects of Abortion

Abortion results in the death of a child. For many mothers, abortion causes severe and long-lasting emotional, psychological, and spiritual trauma. Many women experience overwhelming guilt, shame, and grief. Other effects have also been documented: depression, withdrawal from others, eating disorders, self-punishing behaviors like “cutting,” sexual dysfunction and problems with intimacy, alcohol and drug dependency, problems bonding with other or subsequent children, abortion-related nightmares, and other sleep problems.<sup>[2]</sup>

Family relationships may suffer as the aborted child's father, grandparents, or other family members experience their own guilt, grief, or loss. Even if the mother keeps her abortion secret, family members can be distressed by changes in the mother's behavior and mental or emotional health.<sup>[3]</sup>

## What the Church Teaches

The Church has consistently taught that every human life is precious and worthy of protection. Every intentional abortion is gravely wrong.<sup>[4]</sup> In April of 2018, Pope Francis wrote: “Our defense of the innocent unborn ... needs to be clear, firm, and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of development.”<sup>[5]</sup>

The Church does not approach difficult pregnancy decisions with a false “either/or” mentality, pitting mother against child. For example, a baby conceived in rape is not an aggressor deserving death by abortion. She is innocent, like her mother. They both deserve compassionate care and support, not more violence. Abortion doesn't bring healing or peace, but both can be found in the courageous decision to give birth to the baby.

# Abortion

Today, many babies diagnosed prenatally with a disability are aborted. Frightened parents, unsure of their ability to care for such a child, can trust that God gave *them* this child for a reason. Parents raising children with disabilities often write about the unexpected joys and transformative effect on their families.<sup>[6]</sup>

Even when the disabilities are so severe that the baby is likely to die before or soon after birth, “many parents who carried their children to term say that protecting their baby and honoring his or her natural life, no matter how brief, was profoundly healing.”<sup>[7]</sup>

Very rarely, continuing a pregnancy may put a mother’s life at risk — for example, because of a tubal pregnancy or aggressive uterine cancer. It is morally licit to remove the threat to the mother’s life by removing the cancerous uterus or the fallopian tube where the child implanted, even though it is foreseeable that the child will die as an indirect and unintended result of such surgery. But abortion — a direct and intentional taking of a child’s life — is never morally permissible.

## What Are We to Do?

Love them both! Support women who need help during *and after* difficult pregnancies through the work of your diocesan Respect Life office and local pregnancy care centers.

Educate yourself and others about struggles some experience after abortion, and find out where to refer those seeking help at [hopeafterabortion.org](http://hopeafterabortion.org). If you feel called to support your local ministry, contact your diocesan Project Rachel Ministry office for ways you might help.

Stay informed about key federal legislation and the voting records of your elected representatives by visiting [humanlifeaction.org](http://humanlifeaction.org) and [usccb.org/prolife](http://usccb.org/prolife). Stay updated on state issues by signing up to receive information from your state Catholic conference or diocesan pro-life office.

Most importantly, pray daily for the end to abortion, that all mothers and children experience the loving support of the Church community, and that all who suffer after abortion find healing and peace.

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<sup>[1]</sup> “Fetal Development,” Perinatology.Com; <http://perinatology.com/Reference/Fetal%20development.htm>; J.L. Hopson, “Fetal Psychology,” *Psychology Today*, Sept. 9, 1998 (last reviewed June 9, 2016); <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/articles/199809/fetal-psychology>.

<sup>[2]</sup> D.P. Sullins, “Abortion, substance abuse and mental health in early adulthood: Thirteen-year longitudinal evidence from the United States,” *SAGE Open Med.*, Sept. 23, 2016; <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2050312116665997>; P.K. Coleman et al., “Women Who Suffered Emotionally from Abortion: A Qualitative Synthesis of Their Experiences” *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons* 22:4 (2017) 113-118; <http://www.jpands.org/vol22no4/coleman.pdf>; G. Pike, “Abortion and Women’s Health,” Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, 2017; <https://www.spuc.org.uk/abortion/~media/C69E4B25A78D433F94780BD29240CA21.ashx>.

<sup>[3]</sup> P.K. Coleman et al., “Women Who Suffered Emotionally from Abortion: A Qualitative Synthesis of Their Experiences” *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons* 22:4 (2017) 113-118; <http://www.jpands.org/vol22no4/coleman.pdf>; P.K. Coleman et al.,

“Induced Abortion and Intimate Relationship Quality in the Chicago Health and Social Life Survey,” *Public Health* 123:4 (2009) 331-8; <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19324381>.

<sup>[4]</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2271.

<sup>[5]</sup> Pope Francis, *Gaudete et Exsultate*, (Libreria Editrice Vaticana), 101.

<sup>[6]</sup> See also: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “A Perfect Gift” (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2018).

<sup>[7]</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Supporting Families Who Receive a Prenatal Diagnosis,” (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2015).

# Women's Care Center Provides Thousands of Ultrasounds Each Year In Diocese

BY ERIN LYNCH

The Women's Care Center is a pregnancy resource center started in South Bend in 1984. This one small center has grown and flourished and now serves women across the country with 34 centers in 12 states. Here in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, there are 10 Women's Care Centers providing care and compassion to women and their children.

When women come to the Women's Care Center, often-times they can be overwhelmed and scared by what a pregnancy will mean for them. Each woman who walks through their doors is welcomed through a model of radical hospitality, allowing each woman to be served and met exactly where she is. The counselors at the Women's Care Center take the time to learn her story, see her strengths, and empower her to make a decision for life.

One important tool in serving these women is the ability to do ultrasounds, giving women the opportunity to actually see their baby on the ultrasound screen. Last year, in the



Photos provided by the Women's Care Center  
**Women's Care Center Ultrasound Technician Barb holds a model of a baby at the size it would be in the mother's womb in comparison to the ultrasound image shown on the screen.**

diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, 6,870 ultrasounds were performed at the Women's Care Center. One first-time mother, Kristina Ferraro, described her experience and said, "Getting an ultrasound at the Women's Care Center felt like I was at home. It was super comfortable, warm, and welcoming. And seeing my baby onscreen was the best sight ever. She was dancing around so much, it was as if she knew we were watching her. And the sound of her heartbeat was the most reassuring sound."

Robin Elkins-Martin is one of the ultrasound technicians for the Fort Wayne locations. She spoke of her time at the Women's Care Center and said, "I have been a diagnostic medical sonographer for many years. I have worked in multiple states while performing several different modalities of ultrasound, however, working here with Women's Care Center has been one of the most rewarding and satisfying positions I've held in my 25+ years. This position has allowed me to meet our young ladies and see the strength and challenges they have, and to encourage, enlighten, and teach when

**"The  
 ultimate  
 test of your greatness  
 IS THE WAY YOU TREAT  
 every  
 human being."**

— Pope John Paul II

**St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Fort Wayne**



A proud big brother shows off the ultrasound image of his sibling inside his mother's womb at an appointment at a Women's Care Center.

necessary as I follow them through their journey. Whether I'm beaming with excitement and pride because of what they have accomplished, or giving them a hug and crying with them, spending that time with them is the favorite part of my position."

This emphasis on ministering to the whole person is one that was echoed by many of the ultrasound technicians. Anna Balsbaugh is an ultrasound technician who works at several of the locations in the Michiana area. She discovered the Women's Care Center while in school for sonography and spent time working on her clinicals at the Women's Care Center. She spoke of that time of training and said, "During training, I learned not only how to scan better, but how to make the whole experience more comfortable for the client. It was something I wasn't taught in school or in clinicals but now I can't imagine just scanning someone and not getting to know and love them as a person. I cannot imagine a more positive, joy-filled, and meaningful work experience."

For some women, a pregnancy was not in their plans and they are uncertain what they will do. An ultrasound can provide an important opportunity for bonding and making a pregnancy seem more real. Balsbaugh recalled one of her first experiences scanning a woman who was unsure what she wanted to do about the pregnancy. She said, "I think ultrasound is key for women to bond with their baby very early on. When I had my first client who was considering abortion, I was so nervous. During the scan, I noticed

## RESPECT LIFE

"Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn, and the poor, are masterpieces of God's creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect."

-Pope Francis

St. Patrick Church  
ARCOLA



JOIN US SATURDAY, JAN. 28, 2023!

Join thousands of pro-life advocates from our region to show that you support life from conception to natural death.

The Rally will take place at University of St. Francis Performing Arts Center, 431 W Berry St, Fort Wayne, IN, at 12 p.m., doors open at 11:30 a.m. The March will start after the Rally.

2023  
MARCH  
FOR LIFE

University of St. Francis  
Performing Arts Center  
431 W Berry St  
Fort Wayne, IN



Scan this QR code for more information on the 2023 March for Life or go to [www.ichooselife.org](http://www.ichooselife.org) to find more details.



**Know that the Lord is God.**  
**It is He who made us, and we are His;**  
**we are His people, the sheep of His pasture.**

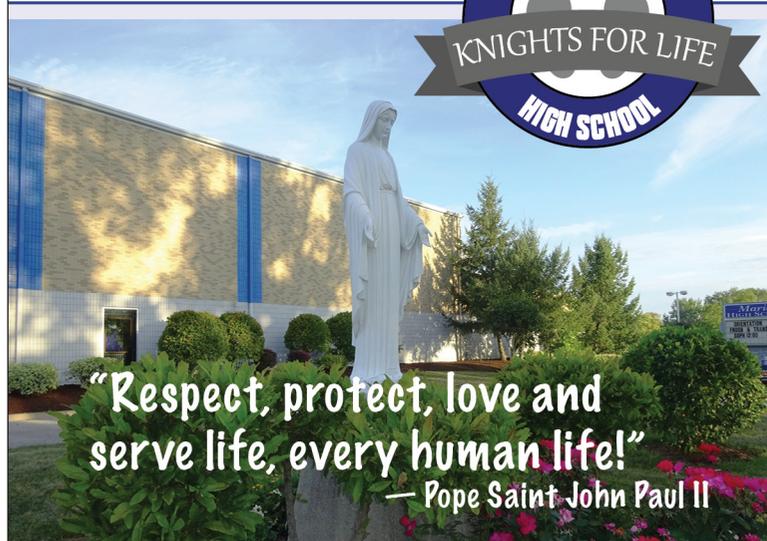
— Psalm 100:3

**St. Stanislaus Kostka**

55756 Tulip Road - New Carlisle



**MARIAN**  
**HIGH SCHOOL**  
LEARN. SERVE. LEAD.



**"Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary."**

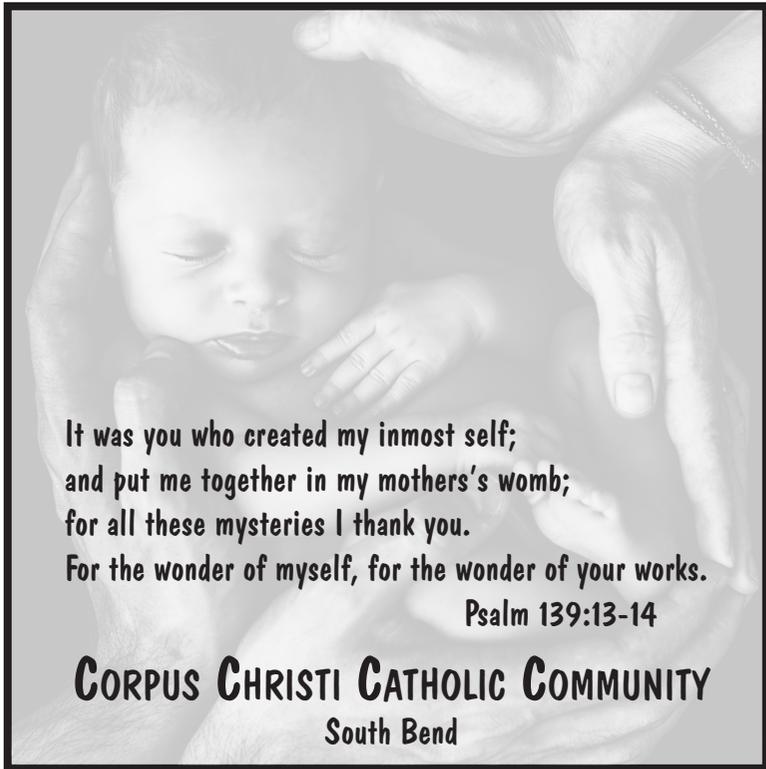
*Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI*

God, author of all life,  
bless, we pray, all unborn children;  
give them constant protection  
and grant them a healthy birth  
that is the sign of our rebirth one day  
into the eternal rejoicing of heaven.

*Adapted from the Rite of Blessing of a Child in the Womb*

**Christ the King Catholic Church**  
**52473 State Road 933**  
**South Bend, Indiana 46637**





It was you who created my inmost self;  
and put me together in my mothers's womb;  
for all these mysteries I thank you.  
For the wonder of myself, for the wonder of your works.  
Psalm 139:13-14

**CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**  
South Bend

**ULTRASOUND, from page 13**

that the baby was lying in its mother's uterus in exactly the same position that mom was on the exam table. I chuckled a little bit and pointed it out for the client. She laughed and said "wow, it really is my kid then." When she went to have a follow-up meeting with her counselor, I was left wondering if I had made a difference or not ... wondering if maybe seeing her baby could actually change her mind. When her counselor came back to the office, she sought me out and told me that this client was going to keep her baby. The client had told her counselor that seeing the baby sitting like her, "she couldn't possibly harm that baby." I was absolutely floored. I have never experienced anything like that feeling and I still hold onto that. Seeing and bonding with your baby can make all the difference for a mom."

Many Women's Care Center locations even offer 3D ultrasounds, giving mothers an opportunity to really imagine and picture what her baby will look like. These ultrasounds can provide hope and light, in a time of uncertainty and fear, by giving women an opportunity to truly see the humanity of the child growing within them.

For more information about Women's Care Centers and what services are offered, visit [womenscarecenter.org](http://womenscarecenter.org).



A 3D ultrasound image is shown here as it is during an appointment at a Women's Care Center, giving the mother a more real-life picture of what their baby looks like in utero.



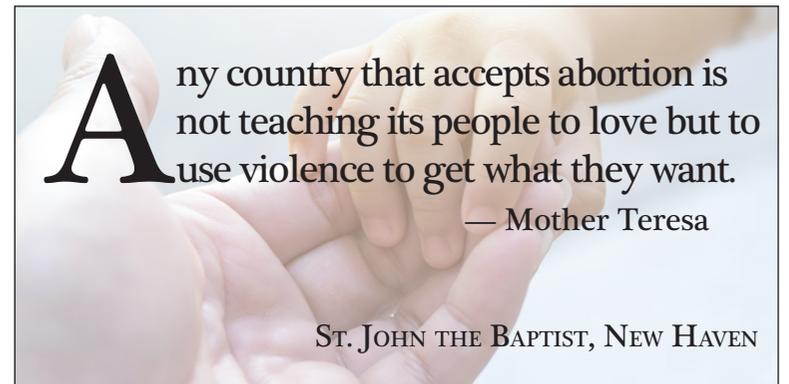
Speak up for those who can't speak for themselves.  
Speak up for the rights of all those who are poor.  
— Proverbs 31:8

Parishioners of  
**St. John the Evangelist**  
GOSHEN



*May the Divine Guidance that assisted Saint Joseph prevail for those who are active in the Pro-Life Movement.*

**St. Joseph**  
**Hessen Cassel**



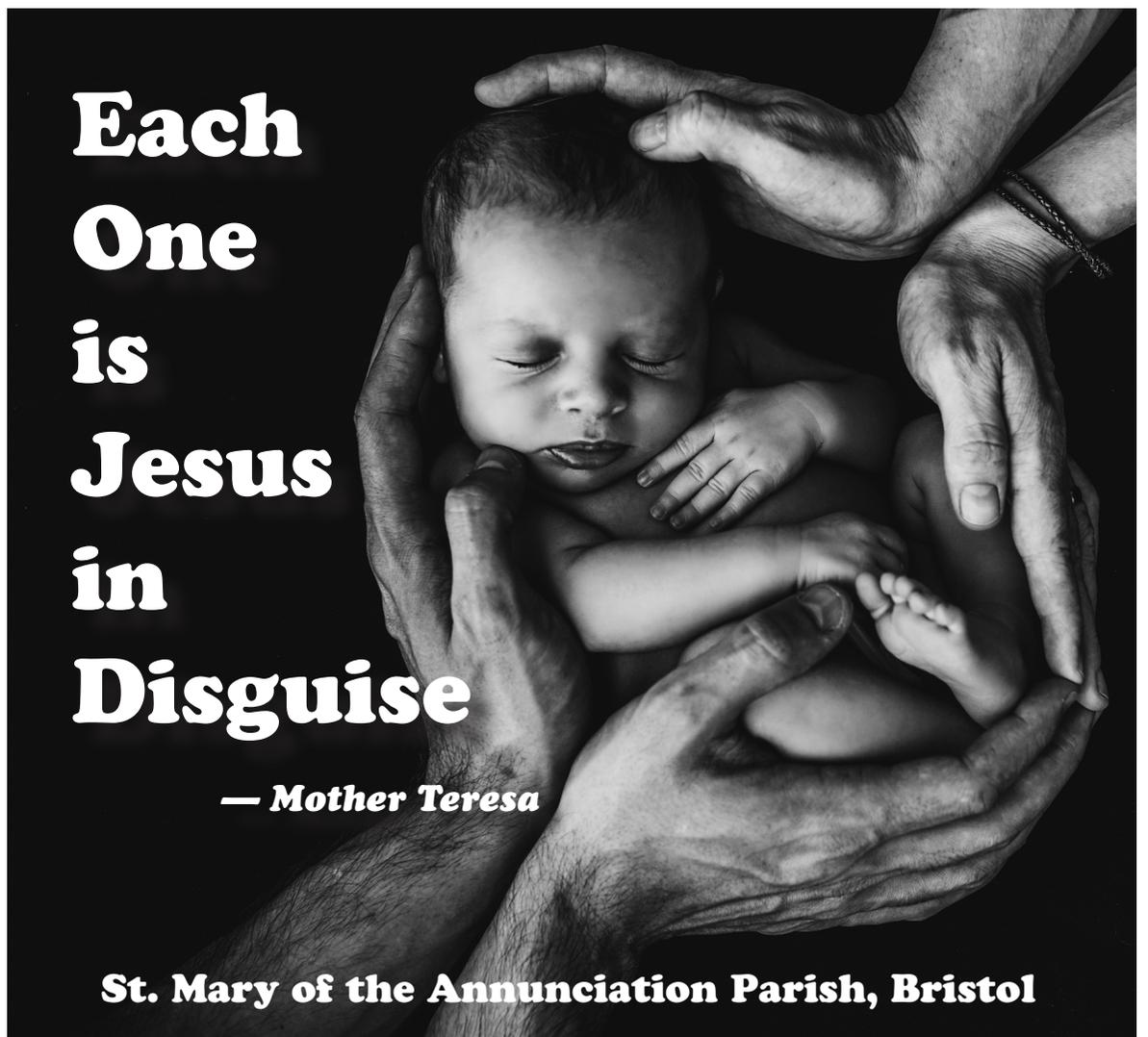
**A**ny country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love but to use violence to get what they want.  
— Mother Teresa

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, NEW HAVEN



**"I** have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."  
John 10:10

*St. Vincent de Paul Parish*  
Fort Wayne



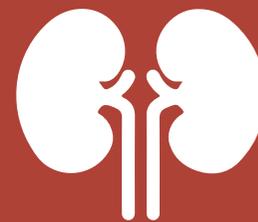
**Each One is Jesus in Disguise**  
— Mother Teresa

**St. Mary of the Annunciation Parish, Bristol**

# 15 FACTS AT 15 WEEKS



In the summer of 2022, the Supreme Court heard the case of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, in which they overruled both *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992), giving individual states the full power to regulate any aspect of abortion not protected by federal law.



All major organs have formed and almost all are functional.

Kidneys are filtering out toxins, the heart is pumping blood, nerves have developed, and stomach and pancreas are producing digestive enzymes.



The unborn child can bend his or her fingers and thumbs and explore the womb.



The heart pumps 26 quarts of blood per day. Comparatively, an adult's heart pumps 6,000 quarts of blood per day.

The entire body of the unborn baby responds to touch.



The heart has already beat about 15,800,000 times. The heart starts beating at only 22 days after fertilization and will beat about 54 million times between conception and birth.

Surgeons have successfully performed surgery on unborn babies at 15 weeks' gestation, treating twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome, spina bifida, congenital heart defects, and more!

Not only can the unborn baby taste the food the mother eats, but he or she has some taste preferences! If the amniotic fluid tastes sweet, he or she will swallow more amniotic fluid than if it tastes bitter.

At 15 weeks, unborn female babies have most of the eggs that they will ever produce. Future egg cells start dividing immediately until she has about 7 million eggs around 21 weeks' gestation.



The brain creates 250,000 neurons per minute.

The unborn child practices breathing to get ready for birth, when oxygen no longer comes from the placenta.



Brain connections (synapses) formed now will last into adulthood.

The fetus' skeleton can be visible through an x-ray. Most of the unborn baby's skeleton has hardened from cartilage to bone.

The fetus prefers sucking one of his or her thumbs, and it is possible to determine via ultrasound whether the child is right or left-handed.

While the eyes are still fused shut, eye movements can be easily seen in ultrasounds.

The unborn child can feel pain.



# How to Read Pope Benedict XVI if You Never Have Before

The Dec. 31 death of Pope Benedict XVI has brought much discussion of his prolific pen, with his numerous theological writings, pastoral letters, and encyclicals. Mentions of his many books, including his stirring “Jesus of Nazareth” trilogy — a highly personal project which plumbs the depths of his love for Jesus Christ — have triggered curiosity among Catholics (and non-Catholics) who until now have read little or nothing of Benedict’s work. On social media, the question pops up with some frequency: “There is so much to choose from,” people marvel, “where is the best place to start?”

As someone who found the writings of his predecessor so dense as to be nearly impenetrable, I, too, had avoided reading the offerings of Joseph Ratzinger until I was gifted with a beautifully wrought book featuring a daily excerpt of his collected works. There I discovered theological writing that was wonderfully clear, accessible, reader-friendly, and downright tasty. More than once I would close my book after that day’s selection and think, “Well, that was delicious!”

So, when I recommend reading Benedict, I always suggest beginning with some similar collection that will give a new reader bite-size morsels of thoughtful, often easily-identified-with essays, homilies, papal audiences, and books culled throughout his long service to the church. Through

reading such books, I eventually “graduated” to reading Benedict full-on. If that sounds good, then look at “Co-Workers of the Truth” or “Seek That Which is Above,” or “Benedictus: Day by Day with Pope Benedict XVI.”

Even before his papacy, as Cardinal Ratzinger, Benedict sat for long interviews with his eventual biographer Peter Seewald, and the resulting books are surprisingly entertaining reads. They go down so easily that one feels like a guest invited to observe an exchange between one shrewd mind and one that is nimble and unguarded. “God and the World,” published in 2002, is a great place to get to know Benedict in a less formal, yet still edifyingly instructive way.

For readers less interested in becoming acquainted with Benedict through intriguing appetizers and want to make a full meal of his work, take a look at the 2004 edition of “Introduction to Christianity,” first published in 1968. Cardinal Ratzinger brings the reader on a deep dive into the Apostles’ Creed, including its scriptural inspirations both Old Testament and New, coming up for air regularly in order to relate the declaration of faith to the reality of our lived experiences. It is a book that leaves the reader instructed, inspired, and oddly refreshed.

Another good choice is “In the Beginning...’: A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall.” As with



## GUEST COMMENTARY

ELIZABETH SCALIA

so many Ratzingerian works, the title tells you that Benedict was not afraid to go large in his thinking. This book is a collection of four homilies and a concluding essay wherein Ratzinger takes us through the creation stories of Genesis. “(All creation) comes from one power, from God’s eternal Reason, which became in the Word the power of creation. ... This is the living God, and this same power which created the earth and the stars and which bears the whole universe is the very one whom we meet in the Word of Holy Scripture. In this Word we come into contact with the real primordial force of the world and with the power that is above all powers.”

Isn’t that gorgeous? The immense thought that we can absolutely know and have a relationship (even consent to co-create) with this God of such power and might is served up so simply. Benedict says this as comfortably as the rest of us might observe that it is raining outside.

SCALIA, page 17

# ‘Ordinary Time’

Welcome to the wearing of the green, green vestments that is. The weeks of the year outside of seasons such as Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter are termed “ordinary time.” It’s a rather dull-sounding description, isn’t it? “Ordinary” time, hmmm ...

But in this case, the word “ordinary” does not refer to its typical meaning: “common, usual, or unremarkable.” Instead, it comes from the English word “ordinal” meaning “relating to a thing’s position in a series.” Some examples of ordinal numbers are “first,” “second,” and “third.” Thus, ordinary time refers to weeks/Sundays that are numbered (e.g., 15th Week/Sunday in Ordinary Time).

The Latin description for this time is *Tempus per annum* (time through the year). Each week is merely designated as “Hebdomada # x” (Week # x).

These terms or titles seem somewhat uninspiring. This is especially the case when we consider that the old calendar (replaced in 1970, but still used in the Extraordinary Form of the Mass) numbered these Sundays and weeks in reference to Epiphany or Pentecost (e.g., Third Sunday after Epiphany, or Fourth Sunday after Pentecost). The pivotal events of Epiphany and Pentecost therefore set the tone for the following weeks e.g., “This is Third Sunday since our Lord was manifested to us,” or “This is the Fourth week since the Holy Spirit was granted to us for our mission.”

Alas, we are not likely to see



## COMMUNITY IN MISSION

MSGR. CHARLES POPE

the current calendar replaced any time soon, so welcome to Ordinary Time!

But maybe there is some inspiration here after all. The faith is not just something reserved for extraordinary moments and seasons. It is meant to be lived in all the ordinary moments of life, too; it is meant to be lived throughout the year.

The liturgical readings and prayers of Ordinary Time emphasize discipleship. What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus in matters involving money, time, priorities, etc.? How do we encounter the Kingdom of God and perceive it in our daily lives? What are the conditions of discipleship? How will we ultimately be judged? These are some of the themes of Ordinary Time.

So, encounter God in the “ordinary,” in the time throughout the year, even when on vacation this coming summer. There is no vacation from our vocation. Do not miss what God is doing, even in the ordinary.

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

# It is Never too Late to Turn Your Devotion to God



## THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

### Third Sunday in Ordinary Time Matthew 4:12-23

The Book of Isaiah offers us a powerful lesson.

Isaiah lived in a time when God’s people were skating on thin ice. They still had their independence, at least after a fashion. Hebrew kings still reigned in the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. The religious, social, and political structures all still gave lip service to the ancient religion and to the holy covenant between God and the Chosen People.

Everything, however, was at risk because devotion to the cov-

enant, and obedience to God’s law, were at low ebb and covetous neighbors were nearby.

Isaiah loudly warned that disaster was just around the corner. He said that the people could rescue themselves by returning to religious faithfulness and by obeying God, as the prophets had taught. He thereby implied a certain potential within the people.

They were weak because they ignored God. If they were determined, they could be virtuous and resist all enemies.

In the second reading, Paul obviously loved the Corinthian Christians. He yearned to see them saintly and eternally with the Lord, but just as obviously they troubled him, because they seemed so attracted to the many vices of their great, worldly, and wealthy city, and they seemed so vulnerable to the feelings of competitiveness and insecurity that vex all humans if not checked.

Never willing to be passive or indifferent, Paul loudly called the Christians in this commu-

nity to be true to their identity with Christ.

He taught a basic message. Earthly reward will pass, more quickly than many might realize. Earthly wisdom is only folly, disproven so often. True wisdom is to understand the meaning of the cross, and this understanding requires grace, available only to those who earnestly follow the Lord.

St. Matthew’s Gospel supplies the last reading. It is situated in Capernaum, the fishing village located at the northern tip of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was there after leaving Nazareth. His public ministry had begun.

As a center of commerce, albeit very modest commerce, Capernaum saw many people come and go. Jesus used this coincidence as an opportunity to encounter many people. He called them to fidelity to God. He repeated for them the admonitions of the Hebrew prophets.

In this place, Jesus met Andrew, and then Jesus met Simon, whom Jesus renamed

Peter, brothers because of the first of the Apostles in the sequence of calling.

It is interesting that the Gospels, such as the case in this reading, refer to these Apostles so specifically by giving their names. The Gospel leaves no doubt whatsoever about their identity. It was vital in the early Church that the teachings of the genuine Apostles be known and be kept intact.

## Reflection

These readings remind us of how blind we humans can be, and of how effective God-fearing humans can be.

In the first reading, Isaiah criticized the people for their religious listlessness, but he also presumed that, if they wished, they could reverse their wayward hearts and turn again to God.

In essence, the same message was in the second reading, from Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians. He boldly denounced the Corinthians’ sins and quarrels. By calling

them to conversion, he insisted that they had the power within themselves to be holy.

We are sinners, but we need not be sinners. Sin binds us. We truly can be free by seizing the power of our wills, allowing divine grace to empower us even more, and disdaining sin to be one with Christ.

The teachings of the Apostles reliably guide us and draw us to the Lord.

## READINGS

**Sunday:** Is 8:23—9:3 Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14  
1 Cor 1:10-13, 17 Mt 4:12-23

**Monday:** Heb 9:15, 24-28 Ps 98:1-6  
Mk 3:22-30

**Tuesday:** Heb 10:1-10 Ps 40:2, 4ab,  
7-8a, 10-11 Mk 3:31-35

**Wednesday:** Acts 22:3-16 Ps 117:1-2  
Mk 16:15-18

**Thursday:** 2 Tm 1:1-8 Ps 96:1-3, 7-8,  
10 Mk 4:21-25

**Friday:** Heb 10:32-39 Ps 37:3-6, 23-24,  
39-40 Mk 4:26-34

**Saturday:** Heb 11:1-2, 8-19 (Ps) Lk  
1:69-75 Mk 4:35-41

# Did I Make the Right Choices as Dad was Dying?

Sometimes people will contact the National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) wondering if the decisions they made on behalf of a dying family member were the right ones. The NCBC provides a free Ethics Consultation Service where individuals can ask questions and seek guidance about ethics and medical decisions.

Some who call are interested in reviewing the details of how a loved one died, along with the advice they were given by doctors, nurses, hospice workers, family members, and friends. While their loved one may have died months or even years earlier, they may still be unsure or unsettled about the treatment decisions they made.

End of life situations are not easy to sort out. Important practical details and medical facts may no longer be available or may have been forgotten with the passage of time. Sometimes family members may have disagreed with each other or were feuding about how best to proceed, or may not have wanted to seek out expert advice or guidance, so the decisions they made might have been hasty or under duress.

A friend once spoke to me about a young man who had shared with her some details about his father's death. He told her that as he looked back on it, he had doubts that he had made the right decisions as his dad became more debilitated. He felt he had failed his dad because of the limited kinds of care he ended up authorizing on his behalf. My friend sought to reassure him that he really shouldn't be troubled about it because she couldn't imagine that he would have done anything but his best under the circumstances and so his dad likely had received very good care.

When she recounted the story to me, I asked, "But how would you actually know that

his dad received good care and that the son really did make the right choices? Objectively speaking, the son may be right that some of the decisions were poorly made or selfish or otherwise flawed." I asked her whether her first instinct may have been to try to soothe his feelings and emotions, rather than considering the specific medical and ethical concerns he was raising.

I continued and offered: Maybe he really does need to discuss the facts of the case as best he remembers them. Perhaps he might benefit from bringing some of his concerns to the Sacrament of Confession. Assuming his concerns have some basis, even while acknowledging the uncertainties in his own decision-making, such a step would help him find needed healing. By turning to the infinite mercy of God, and "clearing the decks" with the Lord in this manner, he would be strengthened to move forward in a new way without continually having to look over his shoulder and wonder endlessly about whether he did right by his dad. Finding a sense of peace and resolution in this way is important, and his father, now long deceased, would, we could presume, want to see that kind of healing for his son as well.

My friend was intrigued by my comments and acknowledged that her first inclination had been to try to palliate and calm the situation by mostly talking around the issues and concerns he had raised. On further reflection, she could see the value of dealing more directly with those concerns so he could find a real measure of closure.

Dying well, of course, is a profound grace, not only for the person who passes on, but for all who are left behind. To die well does not imply that we have to use every medical treatment that may be available. We are required only to



## MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

FATHER TAD PACHOLCZYK

use those medical treatments or procedures that are deemed reasonable or "ordinary." In other words, we should avail ourselves of those treatments that offer us more benefits than burdens.

It can be challenging to find useful and reliable sources of information to assist us as we try to make informed decisions about complex health care situations that may arise as death approaches.

I typically recommend these resources from the NCBC: (1) some of my writings on *End of Life Decision-Making* available at [Tiny.one/EOL-decisions](http://Tiny.one/EOL-decisions), (2) a newly-released video, entitled *The Gift of Dying Well*, available at [Vimeo.com/bioethicsvideos](http://Vimeo.com/bioethicsvideos), and (3) the NCBC's *Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decisions* available at [Tiny.one/NCBC-Guide](http://Tiny.one/NCBC-Guide).

Our efforts to lovingly support our family members through the dying process and to make careful and morally correct decisions on their behalf as they decline in health are very important. Those committed efforts are signs of our desire to be faithful to the beautiful bonds of love connecting us to our dear ones and to the Lord of life. Therefore, we should never be afraid to seek counsel and to avail ourselves of the Church's wisdom in these areas.

**Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D.**, serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia.

theologian and Servant of God Romano Guardini (who also authored a book titled "The Spirit of the Liturgy" in 1918), while opening up the liturgy of the Mass and the liturgical movement of the Second Vatican Council — all the whys, wherefores, and theological nuances that we so easily lose sight of. The second is an exposition of Catholic prayer taken from a series of Wednesday audiences from May 2011 through October 2012. Subtitled "The Saints Show Us How to Pray," these brief lessons take us through the prayers of the Old Testament prophets and the psalms and into the prayers

of Jesus and Mary, Peter, John the Baptist, and so much more. Chapter 39 on the Christological hymn is simply stunning.

Pope Benedict's pen was so very busy that an entire book could be written on his books, but these are good starts. And never forget the "Jesus of Nazareth" trilogy, which shows us so much of the Man-God, and a bit of the man who loved him so well, too.

**Elizabeth Scalia** is the Culture Editor for OSV News.

## SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for January 22, 2023

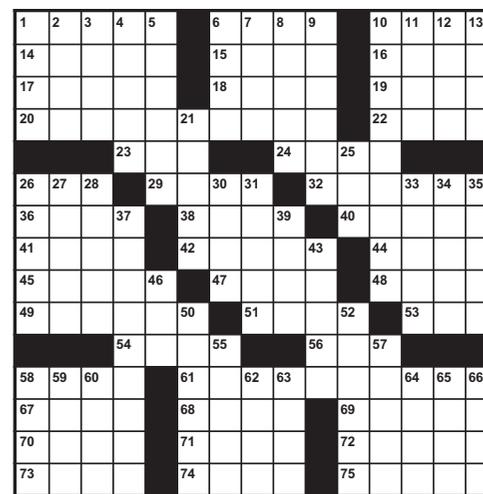
Matthew 4:12-23

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A: Jesus begins his ministry. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

- |           |         |               |
|-----------|---------|---------------|
| JESUS     | HEARD   | JOHN          |
| ARRESTED  | GALILEE | NAZARETH      |
| CAPERNAUM | ZEBULUN | GENTILES      |
| DARKNESS  | SEE     | A GREAT LIGHT |
| DEATH     | REPENT  | HEAVEN        |
| ANDREW    | A NET   | ZEBEDEE       |
| BOAT      | CURING  | DISEASE       |

### LIGHT DAWNS

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



#### DOWN

- 1 Some outdoor gear
- 2 Spanish pot
- 3 Spotted
- 4 Muse of lyric poetry
- 5 Run aground
- 6 Monk's hood
- 7 Muslim title of respect
- 8 Arrogant
- 9 Liturgical \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 One role of a priest
- 11 Space
- 12 Yes \_\_\_\_!
- 13 Sleeps briefly
- 21 Jesus compared a rich man to this animal
- 25 Charitable org.
- 26 Chip choice
- 27 Loathe
- 28 The wine, after the consecration
- 30 God, to Pedro
- 31 Genesis serpent
- 33 Set apart as sacred
- 34 Author Zola
- 35 Vertical face of a stair
- 37 It precedes Philipians
- 39 Cut
- 43 Selfie look
- 46 Noah built one
- 50 Number of sacraments, in Mainz
- 52 Against
- 55 Tally
- 57 Wearies
- 58 Mother of Jesus
- 59 Primary symbol of Baptism, in Spain
- 60 Two sad brothers, when they lost an "m"?
- 62 Israeli semiautomatic weapons
- 63 Rock clinging plant
- 64 Metal containers
- 65 Entr' \_\_\_\_\_
- 66 To a smaller extent

#### ACROSS

- 1 Adoptee in Genesis
- 6 Headwear
- 10 Slayer of Abel
- 14 On one's toes
- 15 Barbarous person
- 16 Killer whale
- 17 Pellucid
- 18 Command to stop a horse
- 19 A tide
- 20 Father Christmas
- 22 Summer blowers
- 23 "Three \_\_\_\_ Match"
- 24 It returned to Noah with an olive branch
- 26 Arrest
- 29 Molar drs.
- 32 Pater \_\_\_\_
- 36 Ready, willing and \_\_\_\_
- 38 Ones in Berlin
- 40 "Same here"
- 41 Hew
- 42 Bank transactions
- 44 Sashes
- 45 Uproar
- 47 Glide on surface
- 48 Part
- 49 Sacerdotal sacrament
- 51 Big picture
- 53 Poetic expression
- 54 Hits the slopes
- 56 His wife was turned to salt
- 58 Wise guys
- 61 Type of council
- 67 Taj Mahal locale
- 68 He's a down
- 69 Vestige
- 70 Undoing
- 71 Greek goddess of strife
- 72 Leases
- 73 Edible roots
- 74 Promontory
- 75 Donkeys

Answer key can be found on page 19

#### SCALIA, from page 16

There is real poetry in Benedict's writing here, too: "These words with which the Holy Scripture begins always have the effect on me of the solemn tolling of a great old bell, which stirs the heart from afar ..." These asides give us little glimpses of a man whose heart is awestruck and humbled by a Creator who permits Himself to be known, and in that glimpse, we recognize ourselves.

"The Spirit of the Liturgy" and "A School of Prayer" are also highly recommended. The first shows us something of Benedict's high regard for the



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The deadline for consideration is  
**Friday, Feb. 3, 2023.**

# Pope Announces Ecumenical Prayer Before Synod Assembly in October

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Encouraging Catholics to participate in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Pope Francis also announced that before the assembly of the Synod of Bishops opens in early October, there will be an ecumenical prayer vigil in St. Peter's Square.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is observed every year from Jan. 18 to Jan. 25, and the pope and representatives of other Christian communities in Rome close the week with vespers at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

The theme for 2023, "Do good; seek justice," is taken from Isaiah 1:17.

"Let us thank the Lord who guides his people toward full communion with faithfulness and patience, and let us ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten us and sustain us with his gifts," Pope Francis told people who had joined him on Jan. 15 for the recitation of the Angelus in St. Peter's Square.

"The path toward Christian unity and the path of the synodal conversion of the church are linked," he told the crowd.

So, he said, "I would like to take this opportunity to announce that on Saturday, Sept. 30, in St. Peter's Square, an ecumenical prayer vigil will take place, with which we will entrust to God the work of the 16th ordinary general assem-



CNS photo/Vatican Media

**A crowd gathers in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Jan. 15, 2023, for the midday recitation of the Angelus led by Pope Francis.**

bly of the Synod of Bishops." The assembly's working sessions are scheduled for Oct. 4 through Oct. 29 and again one year later.

Pope Francis also announced that the France-based Taizé ecumenical com-

munity will lead a special program for young people the weekend of the vigil.

"I invite all brothers and sisters of all the Christian denominations to participate in this gathering of the people of God," the pope said.

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# 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](http://www.todayscatholic.org/event). For additional listings of that event, please call the advertising sales staff at 260-399-1449 to purchase space.

**Most Precious Blood's Trivia Night**

FORT WAYNE — Most Precious Blood will host a trivia night on Saturday, Jan. 21, in the school gymnasium, 1529 Barthold St. Doors open at 6 p.m., and trivia starts at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$100 per table, with 10 people max per table. Players must be 21 or older. BYO snacks and food. Adult beverages provided by Tower Bar and Grill. To register, call Angela Gernhardt at 260-424-4832.

**Theology on Tap**

FORT WAYNE — This winter's Theology on Tap Series, titled "Called by Name", offers a unique opportunity for young

adults to build community and explore a deeper relationship with the Lord. Beginning on Tuesday, Jan. 24, weekly talks at the Historic Women's Club in Fort Wayne will explore an in-depth understanding of our identity which is rooted in the Lord who calls us by name into communion and urges us on

mission. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the talk begins at 7. Food and drink are available for purchase. The series will conclude on Feb. 21 with a 6:30 p.m. Mass at the USF Chapel followed by a party at the Brookside Manor on the USF Campus. For more information visit [diocesefwsb.org/tot-fw](http://diocesefwsb.org/tot-fw).

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## REST IN PEACE

**Arcola**

Stefan Mannes, 90, St. Patrick

**Fort Wayne**

William R. Gillen, 81, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Jayne A. Minnich, 66, St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel

Vivian A. Minnich, 91, St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel

Alan Nichter, 64, St. Jude

Alva Clay, 90, St. Vincent de Paul

Matthew McKenzie, 67, St. Vincent de Paul

**Granger**

Ramona Buzas, 93, St. Pius X

Demetria Smith, 44, St. Pius X

**Mishawaka**

Joan McLane, 75, St. Bavo

**New Carlisle**

Irene (Gadacz) Wroblewski, 88, St. Stanislaus Kostka

**New Haven**

Margaret A. Kuhn, 79, St. John the Baptist

**South Bend**

John J. Murray, 90, Christ the King

Gabor Oross, 85, Christ the King

Thomas Waldron, 65, St. Adalbert

Carol Podemski, 80, St. Casimir

Thomas G. Deranek, 87, St. Jude

**Pork Chop Dinner and Pierogi Sale**

SOUTH BEND — St. Patrick Parish, 329 S. Scott St., will have a pork chop dinner and pierogi pre-sale only until Jan. 27, by calling 574-339-2375. Pork Chop Dinner is \$16 and

includes pork chop, pierogi, and green beans. Pierogies also sold separately: frozen \$5 or fresh \$7. Contact Karen Horvath at 574-339-2375 or [niswongerpg1963@yahoo.com](mailto:niswongerpg1963@yahoo.com) for information.

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# Special Education Program Highlight of Pastoral Visit to Bishop Dwenger High School

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

**B**ishop Kevin C. Rhoades made his annual pastoral visit to Bishop Dwenger High School on Friday, Jan. 13. During the visit, Bishop Rhoades celebrated Mass, visited theology classes, and took time to discuss school happenings with the student council.

During his homily, Bishop Rhoades spoke of Hilary of Poitiers, a 4th-century Bishop who went against the current of his culture to defend the teachings of the Church.

“Courageously, Bishop Hilary defended the true faith in Gaul, in the West, like the great St. Athanasius defended the true faith in the East. This wasn’t very popular to do. In fact, at the instigation of the bishops in Gaul, the emperor Constantius II, exiled Bishop Hilary to Phrygia where there were also a lot of Arians.

“St. Hilary spent his three years in exile continuing his defense of the true divinity of Christ through writing. He wrote a great work on the Trinity and a wonderful commentary on the Gospel of Matthew. He was a great theologian, writer, and preacher.”

Bishop Rhoades continued that, as a bishop, he has a special devotion to St. Hilary especially because he was installed as Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend on his feast day 13 years ago.

“St. Hilary teaches me that sometimes I have to go against the current in my teaching and shepherding as bishop. If we’re faithful disciples of Jesus and believe in His divinity and His teachings, we need to have the courage to not just follow popular trends and ideas when they are against our faith. We may not be sent into exile like Hilary was, but we may experience some ostracism and rejection, a kind of exile.”

After Mass, Bishop Rhoades visited several theology classes, including morality, ecumenism, and ecclesiology.

In Cynthia Wolf’s morality class, the students were watching “Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story” in order to examine the moral questions that Carson faced in his upbringing and in his medical practice.

Bishop Rhoades also met with a theology class that comprised students who are a part of the Saint Teresa of Calcutta Program at Bishop Dwenger. The high school established this program in 2020 to improve the skills of students with moderate special education needs.

There, the students told Bishop Rhoades about their

hobbies and interests. One student commented that he really enjoyed the sound of the bishop’s voice, especially when he sings the Hail Mary.

The student council met with Bishop Rhoades during lunch, where they talked about newly ordained deacons, highlights of the school year, and answered questions about the day-to-day life of a Bishop Dwenger Saint.

One student told Bishop Rhoades, “Last semester, I took Honors Catholic Social Teaching with Mr. Kenny. That’s probably my favorite theology course I’ve had at Dwenger. We really took a dive into things that were beyond the surface level, and it taught us how to approach those things in a non-traditional way. But it also was led in a way that wasn’t just ‘by the book’ and ‘by notes,’ but it was more like a discussion-based class, which I felt that I got a lot from.”

Bishop Rhoades also asked the students how many language classes the school offers, and they answered that they have the choice to take Latin, French, or Spanish. Bishop Rhoades told them that while he only took one year of formal

Spanish classes, continued practice during his ministry as a priest greatly improved

his skills and fluency in the language.

At the end of the day, Bishop Rhoades met with the theology teachers as a group before helping to dismiss the students after the end-of-day announcements.

More photos are available at [www.todayscatholic.org](http://www.todayscatholic.org)



**Bishop Rhoades visited several theology classes, including a class comprised of students from the Saint Teresa of Calcutta Program, which was started in 2020 to assist students with moderate learning needs.**



Photos by Joshua Schipper

**Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades made his annual pastoral visit to Bishop Dwenger High School on Jan 13. During his homily, he told students to be defenders of Church teaching, even if it goes against the current of the culture. After Mass, Principal Jason Schiffli talked to students about striving for greatness, and how alumni of the high school have accomplished great things after graduation.**

