Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades has appointed Associate Superintendent of Schools David Maugel as the new Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Maugel will take over the top leadership role in the Catholic Schools Office from Dr. Joseph Brettnacher on July 1, after the end of the 2022-23 school year. Brettnacher announced his retirement on Monday, March 20.

In a letter to teachers and administrators, Brettnacher expressed gratitude to Bishop Rhoades for the opportunity to lead and to grow in his roles within the vocation of Catholic education. He said there are many priests, administrators, and educators within the diocese who have "worked to deepen students’ relationship with Jesus Christ within His mystical body, the Church, to form disciples of Christ, and to help them to fulfill their destinies to become saints and to reach heaven, the ultimate goal of Catholic education. All have helped me deepen my Catholic faith."

Brettnacher had experience in the industry and as a public-school teacher when, in 1996, he was hired by Bishop John D’Arcy as principal of Marian High School, Mishawaka. He served in the position until 2004. In 2019, he was offered the position of Superintendent of Schools by Bishop Rhoades. He steps down acknowledging that his greatest gratitude is for the many blessings he has received from God.

“All that one can hope for in any role is to advance the great work of those who preceded us,” he said. “I pray that I have done so. Know that I will pray for everyone and miss you and the work of Catholic education.”

Maugel has been the Associate Superintendent of Schools since 2021. He is a former math teacher and served as the principal at NorthWood High School in Nappanee for 16 years. During that time, he was also an Indiana Principal Leadership Institute Mentor, helping principals develop their own leadership capabilities and resources. He served on the Indiana Association of School Principals Board of Directors for six years, sharing the voice of principals in District 2 of the State of Indiana, and has been doing the same for schools within the Indiana State School Music Association since 2018. He is a graduate of IPFW, Goshen College, and the Indiana Principal Leadership Academy.

Maugel’s tenure in education, including his nearly two years with the diocese, has been characterized by strong leadership and extensive experience in professional collaboration, which he foresees forming part of his mandate as superintendent.

“Education in general is a
Reproductive Justice Series Promotes Injustice of Abortion and Provides Platform for Abortion Activists, in Opposition to Notre Dame’s Commitment to Culture of Life

Academic freedom, cancel culture, and the proper ends of higher education are in the news lately. Recently, a video of law students at Stanford University shouting vulgar epithets at a sitting federal judge and refusing to let him finish his case with the acquittal of a defendant, perhaps even approval of one of the law school’s associate deans) has gone viral, prompted much discussion, and elicited an apology to the judge and from the university’s president. He noted that the behavior of the students and academic staff were inconsistent with Stanford’s policies relating to academic freedom and freedom of expression.

For a Catholic university, the matter is even more complex, because alongside obligations to pursue truth for the sake of itself, advance knowledge, and educate students, there is the responsibility to explore the religious and theological dimensions of the questions under study, provide service, and form students and cultivate the university community in a way that reflects the Catholic Church’s understanding of and commitment to the dignity of the human person, justice, mercy, and the common good.

As the shepherd of a diocese that includes several Catholic institutions of higher learning, I have a unique obligation to teach and bear witness on these important questions, and a recent controversy surrounding the invitation of an “abortion doula” to Notre Dame to address the question of abortion prompts me to dedicate today’s column to the issue.

By way of background, Notre Dame’s Gender Studies Program and the John J. Reilly Center for Science, Technology, and Values are hosting a series of lectures entitled “Reproductive Justice: Scholarship for Solidarity and Social Change.” The theme of the series is meant to persuade and form hearts and minds for “social change,” which is why many of its invited participants are activists rather than academics.

In fact, the lecture series appears to be an explicit act of dissent from Notre Dame’s admirable institutional commitment to promoting a culture of life that embraces and affirms the intrinsic equal dignity of the unborn, pregnant mothers, and families (president.nd.edu/homilies–writings-addresses/institutional-statement-supporting-the-choice-for-life). To their credit, the organizers of the lecture series admit as much, and as required by university policy, email event registrants a list of pro-life organizations that create the space for free inquiry and open discussion, and a list of events that reflect the university’s pro-life commitments and Catholic teaching. A timely and targeted rebuttal would, of course, be preferable in a manner that reflects grave moral concern.

On March 20, the lecture series features an event entitled “Trans Care + Abortion Care: Intersections and Questions,” which includes a historian from John Hopkins, a doula to provide an unrebutted case for abortion activism. As the shepherd of a diocese that includes several Catholic institutions of higher learning, I have a unique obligation to teach and bear witness on these important questions, and a recent controversy surrounding the invitation of an “abortion doula” to Notre Dame to address the question of abortion prompts me to dedicate today’s column to the issue.

By way of background, Notre Dame’s Gender Studies Program and the John J. Reilly Center for Science, Technology, and Values are hosting a series of lectures entitled “Reproductive Justice: Scholarship for Solidarity and Social Change.”

Williams “has a tattoo on his left forearm of a tool used for manual vacuum aspiration that he has been vigorously fighting to expand around the country. He is a doula to provide an unrebutted activist’s case that abortion is a tool of justice for the marginalized. (genderstudies.nd.edu/events-and-news/2023/03/20/trans-care-abortion-care-intersections-and-questions/).”

In a recent profile, it was noted that Williams “has a tattoo on his left forearm of a tool used for manual vacuum aspiration — a type of abortion procedure. Williams said he loves the procedure because, ‘it’s one done and it’s quick.’”

These lectures are meant to persuade and form hearts and minds for “social change,” which is why many of its invited participants are activists rather than academics.

As a Catholic university, one of its distinctive goals is to provide a forum where, through free inquiry and open discussion, the various lines of Catholic thought may intersect with all the forms of knowledge found in the arts, sciences, professions, and every other area of human scholarship and creativity. ... Notre Dame’s character as a Catholic academic community presupposes that no genuine search for the truth in the human or the cosmic order is alien to the life of faith.

But Williams is not a scholar or even a prominent public intellectual. The Gender Studies Program and the Reilly Center (and the other units on campus supporting them) are simply providing Williams — a person who literally facilitates abortions — a platform for unanswerable pro-abortion activism. Academic freedom is meant to create the space for free inquiry and intellectual exchange in service of pursuing and sharing the truth in charity. But this lecture is simply a conduit for activist propaganda that is not merely wrong, but squarely contrary to principles of basic human equality, justice, dignity, and non-violence that the Catholic Church, Notre Dame, and many others (including non-Catholics) have affirmed for millennia.

A timely and targeted rebuttal would, of course, be preferable in a manner that reflects grave moral concern. The University is dedicated to the pursuit and sharing of truth for its own sake.
U.S. Bishops: Catholic Health Care Providers Shouldn’t Perform ‘Gender Transition’ Procedures

BY JONAH MCKEOWN

(CNA Newsroom) — The U.S. Catholic bishops released a statement on Monday, March 20, offering moral guidance for Catholic health care institutions, reiterating that “gender transition” interventions are not to be performed because they do not respect the fact that God has created each person as a unity of body and soul.

“The body is not an object, a mere tool at the disposal of the soul, one that each person may dispose of according to his or her own will, but it is a constitutive part of the human subject, a gift to be received, respected, and cared for as something intrinsic to the person,” the U.S. Bishops’ Committee on Doctrine wrote.

“As the range of what we can do expands, we must ask what we should or should not do. An indispensable criterion in making such determinations is the fundamental order of the created world. Our use of technology must respect that order.”

To that end, the bishops wrote, “Catholic health care services must not perform interventions, whether surgical or chemical, that aim to transform the sexual characteristics of a human body into those of the opposite sex or take part in the development of such procedures.”

“They must employ all appropriate resources to mitigate the suffering of those who struggle with gender incongruence, but the means used must respect the fundamental order of the human body. Only by using morally appropriate means do health care providers show full respect for the dignity of each human person.”

The March 20 statement, titled “Doctrinal Note on the Moral Limits to Technological Manipulation of the Human Body,” is intended, the bishops say, to provide moral criteria for Catholic health care institutions for discerning which medical interventions promote the authentic good of the human person and which are injurious. The bishops said they developed the statement in consultation with medical ethicists, physicians, psychologists, and moral theologians.

The bishops note that modern technology offers chemical, surgical, and genetic interventions for the functioning of the human body as well as for modifying its appearance. There are two scenarios, they said, whereby “technological interventions” can be morally justified: when they are aimed at repairing a defect in the body or sacrificing a part of the body for the sake of the whole, such as with amputation. These kinds of interventions “respect the fundamental order and finality inherent in the human person.”

However, gender transition surgeries “regards this order as unsatisfactory in some way and proposes a more desirable order, a redesigned order,” and thus are not morally permissible.

“These technological interventions are not morally justified either as attempts to repair a defect in the body or as attempts to sacrifice a part of the body for the sake of the whole,” the bishops asserted.

The March 20 statement goes on to reiterate that “gender transition” medical interventions, the bishops noted, that Catholic health care institutions are not to take part in these interventions because they do not respect the “fundamental order of the human body” as being “sexually differentiated.”

“Such interventions, thus, do not respect the fundamental order of the human person as an intrinsic unity of body and soul, with a body that is sexually differentiated,” the bishops continued.

“The soul does not come into existence on its own and somehow happen to be in this body, as if it could just as well be in a different body. A soul can never be in another body, much less be in the wrong body;” the bishops wrote.

“Because of this order and finality, neither patients nor physicians nor researchers nor any other persons have unlimited rights over the body; they must respect the order and finality inscribed in the embodied person.”

The bishops quoted Pope Francis, who wrote in his encyclical Laudato Si’: “The acceptance of our bodies as God’s gift is vital for welcoming and accepting the entire world as a gift from the Father and our common home, whereas thinking that we enjoy absolute power over our own bodies turns, often subtly, into thinking that we enjoy absolute power over creation.”

Relying on medical interventions that do not respect the body-soul unity is a “mistake,” they wrote.

“An approach that does not respect the fundamental order will never truly solve the problem in view; in the end, it will only create further problems. The Hippocratic tradition in medicine calls upon all health care providers first and foremost to ‘do no harm.’ Any technological intervention that does not accord with the fundamental order of the human person as a unity of body and soul, including the sexual difference inscribed in the body, ultimately does not help but, rather, harms the human person.”

Jonah McKeown is a Staff Writer and Podcast Producer for Catholic News Agency.
Celebration of 150 Years for Historic Irish Church in Lagro

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

When local employers rejected Irish laborers in the mid-1800s, many earned their wage by constructing the Wabash-Erie Canal which once cut through part of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

After finishing the canal, some of the Irish settled in communities along its route, including the town of Lagro, Indiana. It was 150 years ago when the Irish of this community dedicated their newest Catholic church, St. Patrick, the second building in their parish history. Although no longer a parish, on Friday, March 17, Bishop Rhoades celebrated Mass in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the dedication of the building.

Thomas Fitzgibbon, a contractor for the Wabash-Erie Canal, donated the property on which the Irish built their first church. In 1870, Bishop Henry Luers laid the cornerstone of the present church. As Bishop Rhoades greeted the congregation, he noted his curiosity of how long it must have taken Bishop Luers to reach Lagro in the 19th century, saying that it took 50 minutes to arrive by car that evening.

Father Jay Horning, Administrator of St. Patrick Oratory, assisted with Mass, as did Father Tony Steinacker, whose nearby parish of SS. Peter and Paul in Huntington provided a choir for the celebration.

During his homily, Bishop Rhoades recounted the story of St. Patrick: both the bishop and the parish, starting by unpacking the saint’s historic writings in the “Confession.” He recounted that, in the “Confession,” St. Patrick wrote that it was “most necessary to spread our nets” so that a great multitude would be brought to God. St. Patrick noted that the people of Ireland had once not known God, but that “now they had been made people of the Lord, and are called sons and daughters of God.”

Bishop Rhoades then mentioned that his Irish ancestry influenced his life in a major way. His father’s family was Lutheran, and his maternal grandfather was Greek Orthodox. But it was his Irish maternal grandmother who connected his family to the Church.

Speaking about the Irish who constructed the building, he said, “They came here as immigrants who helped to build the Catholic Church in our diocese and nation.”

Bishop Rhoades said that when Bishop Joseph G. Dwenger dedicated the present building on March 17, 1873, the church served approximately 300 families.

Eventually, though, parish membership and attendance declined to unsustainable levels. The last resident pastor, Father James Rose, left in 1980. Many in the parish had, at that point, joined neighboring parishes. Then, in 1997, Bishop John M. D’Arcy officially suppressed the parish — a canonical mechanism by which a bishop declares a parish has closed. Bishop D’Arcy, however, allowed for the church building to remain an oratory under control of the neighboring St. Bernard Parish in Wabash.

The Code of Canon Law defines an oratory as “a place for divine worship designated by permission of the ordinary for the benefit of some community or group of the faithful who gather in it and to which other members of the faithful can also come with the consent of the competent superior.”

This means that an oratory is not a parish church, like one that people would attend every Sunday to fulfill their weekly obligation. A few years after the suppression of the parish, a group called the Friends of Saint Patrick formed to maintain and care for the oratory. In addition to maintaining this historic building, the Friends of Saint Patrick also promote a monthly Mass which is celebrated at the oratory.

At the end of the anniversary Mass, Bishop Rhoades thanked the group for their support and continued dedication to ensuring that the building stays in shape for continued worship.
Bill Allowing Birth Control Prescriptions Raises Concerns

A measure that would allow Indiana pharmacists to prescribe contraceptives is moving through the General Assembly amid serious objections from the Catholic Church and many health care practitioners.

House Bill 1568 would grant pharmacists the authority to prescribe and dispense hormonal contraceptives including birth control pills and patches to women at least 18 years old who complete a self-screening.

Proponents argue that passage of the legislation would expand access to what they consider necessary health care, while also providing conscience protection for pharmacists who object on moral grounds to prescribing and dispensing contraceptives. At the same time, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) and others raise concerns regarding both moral and ethical considerations and potential risks to women’s health.

“We have concerns with this bill on a lot of levels,” said Angela Espada, Executive Director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. “We have objections from Catholic social teaching about contraception, along with serious concerns about a woman’s health. Pharmacists are highly educated and skilled professionals, but they wouldn’t necessarily know a woman’s medical or family history or how these hormones would affect her. This is clearly not the same as having a personal relationship with a doctor.”

Currently in Indiana, only physicians can prescribe contraceptives. If House Bill 1568 passes the General Assembly and becomes law, Indiana would join approximately half of the states in extending prescribing rights for those products to licensed pharmacists.

The bill, authored by Rep. Elizabeth Rowrav (R-Yorktown), passed the House 86-12 and was scheduled for a March 22 hearing in the Senate Health and Provider Services committee. The ICC has been meeting with lawmakers to request adding language to the bill requiring pharmacists to also provide information about Natural Family Planning (NFP) during their discussions with patients if the measure becomes law.

“We are working very hard to get information about NFP — natural, non-invasive, non-pharmaceutical methods — included in this legislation,” Espada said. “If pharmacists can prescribe contraceptives, they can also give out information about NFP.”

NFP, which is fully supported by the Catholic Church and highly effective when used correctly, encompasses several scientific methods that track a couple’s fertility to help achieve or postpone pregnancy. In discussions with lawmakers, the ICC is also advocating for insurance coverage of NFP training and materials.

Kelli Lovell, a trained NFP practitioner who is also a licensed pharmacist, brings a unique perspective to the legislation before the General Assembly.

Lovell has worked as a pharmacist in Evansville for 16 years and has witnessed growth in her profession, including the authority for pharmacists in Indiana to now prescribe diabetic testing supplies and smoking cessation products. But she has significant concerns about House Bill 1568 and its implications.

“I am pro-pharmacist prescriptive authority in the appropriate circumstances,” said Lovell, a graduate of the Purdue University College of Pharmacy. “This is not what I think is an appropriate circumstance. That’s not because I don’t think that pharmacists can do it, but because I don’t think they should do it.

“I don’t think it gives the right message to the public that this medication is so benign and safe that you can have somebody who doesn’t even know you prescribe it to you in a five-minute counseling session.”

Lovell says she is grateful that House Bill 1568 includes a conscience protection clause for pharmacists who have moral objections to prescribing and dispensing contraceptives. Still, she acknowledges the tension that this legislation poses for a practicing Catholic who also has the utmost respect for professionals in her chosen field.

“The biggest conundrum is being put in this position where you feel like you have to go against the advancement of your profession because of a moral standard, and I’m going to go with the moral standard every time,” said Lovell, a member of Good Shepherd Catholic Parish in Evansville.

A trained practitioner in both the Creighton and Marquette models of NFP, Lovell also points to the well-established medical risks of artificial contraception, including the potential for blood clots and other side effects.

“Women’s bodies are not meant to be under that level of steroid-based hormones. This is hormonere,” she said. “Simply put, contraceptives are not good for women. They go against natural law.

“The contraceptive pill when used as a contraceptive is the only time in medicine that we would prescribe a medication to disable a functioning system of the body in the absence of disease,” Lovell said.

Dr. Andrew Mullally, a Catholic physician who operates a pro-life family practice office in Fort Wayne, shares numerous concerns about both the medical and ethical ramifications of House Bill 1568.

“The lack of medical supervision is concerning just because patients do not appreciate the intricacies of many medications, and birth control in particular,” Mullally said. “Birth control definitely poses risks for blood clots. It also can interact with other medications. No one would be watching for this, and it would likely get missed at other medical appointments because it’s not something that was prescribed by the patient’s physician.”

Mullally noted similar objections to the legislation raised by the Indiana State Medical Association (ISMA).

“It’s clearly bad just from a secular medical perspective,” said Mullally, a member of both the ISMA and the Catholic Medical Association.

Supporters of the legislation view it as a means of serving a larger number of women in Indiana, especially in smaller communities with limited access to contraception, doctors, and nurse practitioners.

But ICC officials offer a much different view.

“This is opposed to this legislation due to the risks to women’s health, unborn life, and the false narrative behind this bill that increased access to contraception leads to fewer abortions,” said Alexander Mingus, Associate Director of the ICC.

Mingus points to extensive Catholic social teaching on the subject, particularly St. Pope John Paul II’s groundbreaking encyclical “Evangelium Vitae,” or “The Gospel of Life,” which documents, arguably the best-known and most-quoted affirmation of the Catholic Church’s moral teaching on the sanctity of life.

One especially serious concern involves instances in which hormonal birth control can actually serve as an abortifacient — that is, a drug that can cause abortion or prevent the implantation of a fertilized egg.

“As a pharmacist, I think all of this is really dangerous,” Lovell said. “If it was going to be done well, if we were going to meet the goal that this bill says it is to meet — to give women better access — it needs to be with significant amounts of education.

“I just think women deserve better,” she continued. “If people see passage of this bill as a big win for women, then they sadly have very low expectations of health care.”

— By Victoria Arthur

To follow priority legislation of the ICC, visit indiana.cc.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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Church Groups Propose Ways to Meet Children’s Needs in Wake of Bolsonaro’s Cancellation of Policies

SÃO PAULO (OSV News) — As severe childhood malnutrition grows in Brazil, church organizations have been active in proposing public policies concerning the protection of children and are taking part in state councils that define and monitor the application of such decisions. A recent study conducted by the Brazilian Society of Pediatrics showed that every day, 11 children under age 5 are hospitalized in the South American nation due to malnutrition. Between January and November of 2022, 4,135 children were hospitalized — the worst number in more than 10 years. “On his first day in office, in January of 2019, Bolsonaro extinguished the National Council for Food and Nutritional Security,” Fabio Garcia Paes, Advocacy Coordinator of the Franciscan Solidarity Service (SEFRAS) and a longtime activist for children’s rights, told OSV News. Since President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva took office in January, the government has been reestablishing the public policy councils or reinforcing their structure. “This week, the Children’s Pastoral Ministry will have meetings with different ministers to present the current humanitarian crisis concerning childhood malnutrition and to suggest actions,” Maristela Cizeski, a National Coordinator at the Brazilian bishops’ Children’s Pastoral Ministry, told OSV News.

Church Commits to Education, Health for India’s Tribal Peoples

ALIBAG, India (OSV News) — Although most of India’s 105 scheduled tribes are not Christian, the Catholic Church has shown a commitment to work on their behalf. Tribals, sometimes referred to as Adivasis, make up nearly 9 percent of the Indian population. The Indian Constitution ensures their educational interests, provides economic safeguards, and takes steps for political empowerment. In late February, visits from the Pontifical Mission Societies-USA met with the animators and tribals under a shelter in the center of a rural village outside Alibag. The animators spoke of the challenges they face: children reluctant to attend school; child marriage; addiction; making villagers aware of the importance of health. Although most of the animators are not Christian, they said they share with the Catholic Church a commitment to do social work and to love one another.

Earthquake in Ecuador Kills 15 and Injures Hundreds

PHILADELPHIA (OSV News) — Catholic leaders in the U.S. are applauding the International Criminal Court’s March 17 decision to issue arrest warrants for Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Commissioner for Children’s Rights, Maria Alekseyevna Lvova-Belova. The ICC charged the two with the war crimes of “unlawful deportation” and “unlawful transfer” of children from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation. Ukraine’s government has said more than 16,200 of its children have been deported to Russia so far. While Russia does not recognize the ICC, the arrest warrants send a strong message, giving “victims a new hope that in the future justice will be done,” said Metropolitan Archbishop Borys Gudziak of Philadelphia, who heads the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the U.S. Now, Putin “is being named as an alleged criminal,” said the archbishop. “The documentation of the war crimes and the abduction of children is abundant. The victims now have a new hope that in the future justice will be done.”

Indigenous Canadians Seek Support from Catholics, Pope to Fight Violence Against Women, Girls

UNITED NATIONS (OSV News) — Women leaders from among Canada’s Indigenous nations were at the United Nations’ New York headquarters, seeking broad support, including from Pope Francis, in their ongoing campaign to end violence against Indigenous women,” RoseAnne Archibald, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations in Canada, said in her March 8 address to a U.N. event marking International Women’s Day. “It’s a national emergency,” said Archibald, explaining that in their view this unprecedented crisis is part of ongoing genocide.” Michele Audette, an Indigenous leader and Senator from Canada’s Quebec province, noted Pope Francis’ Canada visit and subsequent apologies were useful in shedding light nationally and globally on abuses of Indigenous peoples, that Catholic authorities had “covered up” for years. She encouraged him to do more to help hold those people accountable, and to “make an official declaration … of what he saw and heard in Canada” as well as provide access to Vatican archives and return to their nations “our sacred objects from Vatican vaults.”

Wyoming Becomes First State to Ban Abortion Pills

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (OSV News) — Wyoming became the first state in the nation to specifically ban the use or prescription of abortion pills on March 17. Gov. Mark Gordon, R-Wyo., signed the law with a ruling by a federal judge in Texas still outstanding that could potentially implement a nationwide ban on the drug mifepristone amid a legal challenge brought by pro-life groups. The state’s legislature passed two pieces of legislation in March that would restrict abortion in the state, but the governor allowed the other bill to become law without his signature.

Franciscans in Holy Land Advance Next Phase of Jerusalem’s Terra Sancta Museum

JERUSALEM (OSV News) — Objects cared for by the Franciscans in the Holy Land, including a collection of 13 church bells discovered hidden in Bethlehem and dating back to the Middle Ages, have traveled to some of the great museums of the world. But now they will have a permanent home in Jerusalem as the Custody of the Holy Land moves forward toward creating a new “Historical Section” of its popular Terra Sancta Museum, which opened to the public in 2017. The museum is situated at the Church of the Flagellation, the first station of the Way of the Cross in Jerusalem. Until now, that section has been limited to a point of dialogue and exchange with the local Muslim, Jewish, and Christian communities — as well as pilgrims and visitors of all faiths and backgrounds who come to Jerusalem to explore its history and cultures. “We want to make a Christian museum here in Jerusalem so there is something Christian to occupy the space of culture even if you are only one and half percent of the population,” Franciscan Father Stéphane Milovitch, Director of the Cultural Heritage Office for the Custodia Terrae Sanctae, told OSV News. “The church is still here and has 2,000 years of presence here; it can be a bridge with the different communities.”

Church Leaders Applaud International Criminal Court’s Arrest Warrants for Putin

Philadelphia (OSV News) — Catholic leaders in the U.S. are applauding the International Criminal Court’s March 17 decision to issue arrest warrants for Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Commissioner for Children’s Rights, Maria Alekseyevna Lvova-Belova. The ICC charged the two with the war crimes of “unlawful deportation” and “unlawful transfer” of children from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation. Ukraine’s government has said more than 16,200 of its children have been deported to Russia so far. While Russia does not recognize the ICC, the arrest warrants send a strong message, giving “victims a new hope that in the future justice will be done,” said Metropolitan Archbishop Borys Gudziak of Philadelphia, who heads the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the U.S. Now, Putin “is being named as an alleged criminal,” said the archbishop. “The documentation of the war crimes and the abduction of children is abundant. The victims now have a new hope that in the future justice will be done.”
Adoration by Candlelight Proves to be Powerful Experience for Faithful in Attendance

BY CHRISTOPHER LUSHIS

When Jesus encountered the Samaritan woman at the well, He said, “give me a drink” (John 4:7). His desire was not for well water, but for the outpouring and trust of her heart. When she realized that she was conversing with the true Messiah and that He knew and loved her beyond anything she had ever experienced, she was overwhelmed with joy, left her water jar behind, and ran to tell others.

A recent Lenten prayer service at Our Lady of Good Hope, Fort Wayne, invited local faithful to have a similar “outpouring” experience of encounter with the Lord.

For this, Father Daniel Whelan, Parochial Vicar at Our Lady of Good Hope, organized a special “Adoration by Candlelight” event on the evening of Sunday, March 12, with the musical accompaniment of the “Ecce” choir, directed by Jessica Schuster.

In the darkened church, illuminated only by numerous candles surrounding the Eucharist, Father Whelan read a personal reflection from the perspective of the woman at the well, whose story had been recounted that weekend at Mass.

Father Whelan shared about how Jesus had thirsted for her heart in that first encounter and how it changed her. He explained that by letting go and setting down the things of her life that had previously held her back, she began to follow Christ with authentic and passionate faith. He suggested that we could even imagine she was present with Him among the crowds at the crucifixion, hearing Him repeat those words of loving desire, this time directed toward all humanity, when He cried out from the cross, “I thirst.”

Father Whelan emphasized that even now, in the Blessed Sacrament, Jesus thirsts for us and continues to desire the outpouring of hearts, for all to trust and follow Him. Father Whelan invited those present to consider “pouring out” whatever they felt Jesus was calling them to give Him and to pray about it with sincerity of heart.

The experience was noticeably moving for those present, some afterwards declined to speak about the event because they were so touched and overwhelmed by the love of God.

Others enthusiastically shared their appreciation, especially about the candles and sacred music. Dylan Arrango, a parishioner from St. Vincent de Paul, Fort Wayne, exclaimed, “by candlelight is my favorite way to experience Our Lord in adoration. The Ecce choir was absolutely phenomenal, they elevated the whole experience, helping facilitate reverence and prayer. I’d tell anyone who desires to have an encounter with Jesus to come spend time in prayer in this way, it’s a game changer.”

Dylan Arrango, a parishioner from St. Vincent de Paul, Fort Wayne, exclaimed, “by candlelight is my favorite way to experience Our Lord in adoration. The Ecce choir was absolutely phenomenal, they elevated the whole experience, helping facilitate reverence and prayer. I’d tell anyone who desires to have an encounter with Jesus to come spend time in prayer in this way, it’s a game changer.”

The Ecce Choir, directed by Jessica Schuster, performs the singing of sacred music by candlelight during a Lenten prayer service of Adoration by Candlelight.
An engaged audience reflected on the urgency of the message of Fatima during a Lenten mission offered by the World Apostolate of Fatima U.S.A. Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocesan Division on Thursday, March 16. The hearts of around 200 people gathered at the Orchard Events and Catering Center in New Haven were prayerfully prepared by WAF Chaplain Glenn Kohrman and Father Brian Isenbarger during a Eucharistic liturgy that preceded dinner and the talk, and then were opened to deep reflection on the apparition whose message is still so impactful today.

Theologian Dr. Ralph Martin of Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit was the evening’s invited speaker. Martin, the President of Renewal Ministries and the Director of Graduate Theology Programs in Evangelization, is an author, a well-known radio personality, and has the longest-running Catholic television show on EWTN. He has been appointed by the Vatican to two positions on a council and synod on the New Evangelization.

Thursday night, Martin began by expounding on what he called “some of the major deceptions” that are affecting life in the Church today. One of those is the changed perception of marriage and sexuality.

“Our culture has just gone off the deep end,” he said, noting that even some Church leaders advocate for changing Church teaching to accommodate same-sex relationships and marriages.

“One of the things that Mary said when Jacinta was dying was that so many souls are going to hell because of sins of the flesh. The world is trying to get us to think they’re no big deal. People in the Church are starting to think it’s no big deal. But Jesus said I haven’t come to take it easy — I say to you don’t look with lustful thoughts in your heart. Don’t entertain them, don’t enjoy them. Reject them. And of course, St. Paul said in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 5, ‘Don’t let anybody deceive you, the immoral will not enter the kingdom of God.’”

Indulging in temptation is an offense to God, he reiterated. “It offends the dignity of sexuality as He gave it to us. He wanted one woman to come together in Holy Matrimony and be open to new life. … I know it’s shocking to say it out loud, but it’s the truth that has been revealed to us. We need to do it. Because of these sins and others, too, the Lord wants all people to come to the knowledge of the Truth, but He won’t force anyone, Martin continued. He noted that it’s one thing to know what Jesus said, it’s another to take it to heart and choose to obey it.

Martin’s own journey to a convicted Catholic life, which he shared with attendees, may not be unlike many others — particularly in that it began despite his own best intentions and has continued to develop throughout his adult life. “I have nothing more profound to tell you than that Jesus is Lord,” he professed. “And that is everything. The only response to that is unconditional surrender.” Surrender, then, gives way to an obligation to share the Good News when the opportunity presents itself.

Highlighting a few aspects of Mary’s apparition to Jacinta, Lucia, and Francisco, Martin asserted that the Portuguese children themselves became one of the messages of Fatima. The angel that preceded Mary’s visit asked the children to pray inculpably and to make of everything they did a sacrifice for reparation and the conversion of sinners, which according to Lucia “was indelibly impressed upon our souls.” The children did as the angel, and then Mary, asked, “They were already being initiated into this two-fold dimension of prayer and sacrifice not just for themselves, but for others. We, too, should pay attention to what the Holy Spirit is making indelible in our souls. We need to ask the Holy Spirit what would be a meaningful sacrifice for us, not just during Lent but year-round.”

Even the life of the reportedly laid-back Francisco was transformed by the heavenly visitors. Lucia reported in her diary. When, as a child, she had asked the Holy Virgin if they would go to heaven, Mary affirmed that they would — “but first Francisco will have to pray many rosaries,” she said, as she looked with compassion and a little sadness at him.

“She effectively said, ‘Francisco, you’ve got to up your game,’” said Martin. “And that’s what she’s asking of us as well: We’ve got to up our game. That’s what the Holy Spirit is asking us to do.”

He added that the vision of hell Mary shared with the children frightened them deeply, and it should frighten people today as well. “In the darkness of the world we don’t see the evil of sin. We don’t see how truly horrible it is to offend the Lord.”

But since nothing happens in the world apart from the Lord’s providence, he posed a question: Why is sin permitted to happen? For the purification of the Church and the world, Martin suggested. “He has designs of mercy on you — every one of you — and on the whole world.”

“Nothing happens outside of God’s providence. No sin happens that He does not have a plan for, a plan to redeem us if we listen to Him.”
Audience members applaud during a “Share the Vision: School Choice for All” event on Thursday, March 16, at Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne.

‘School Choice for All’ Applauded

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

Principals and school choice advocates from in and around Fort Wayne gathered at Bishop Dwenger High School on Thursday, March 16, for one of a series of “Share the Vision: School Choice for All” events to learn about and push for pending school choice legislation being considered by the Indiana General Assembly.

Throughout the rally, attendees heard from education professionals, students, and parents not only about the aspects of different legal proposals, but also families’ experiences with school choice.

After a student led the singing of the National Anthem, and a prayer from Dr. Joe Brettnacher, Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, John Eckesser, Director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association, unpacked legislation and proposals that support school choice, and gave a positive outlook of the year ahead.

“We have the potential for this legislative session to be another historic legislative session. 2021 was the last budget, and it was truly historic in terms of the advances to school choice. We have that same opportunity in 2023, but it’s going to take all of us to get there.”

He continued, “This year, more than 53,000 kids are participating in the Choice Scholarship Program and are benefiting from that Choice Scholarship Program. And one thing that you’ll hear me say is that messaging is really important. When we talk about choice, we don’t talk about schools getting public funds. We talk about families getting the support and public funds to choose the private school of their choice.

“The Choice Scholarship Program was deemed constitutional by our state Supreme Court unanimously because they said that schools were indirect beneficiaries, and that the parents are the direct beneficiaries of those programs. Since its inception in 2011 — and this doesn’t even include this year — $1.5 billion has gone to families to choose the private school of their choice.”

Eckesser said that, earlier that day, he testified about the budget at the statehouse, where he said that he believes his tax dollars should support public schools as well as private schools.

“We need strong public schools. If you look at the total budget, less than 5 percent of my tax dollars are supporting the Choice Program, even with the proposed expansions.”

Speaking about several of the proposals in the legislation, he said that the “House is proposing an increase in the financial eligibility to 400 percent of free and reduced lunch. If you look at the numbers, that comes out to a family of four with $220,000. Around the country, one of the things that’s happening in states around us is they’re going to what’s called ‘universal choice.’ That means everybody can take their percentage of tax dollars in a backpack, and they can take it to a traditional public, they can take it to a charter, or they can take it to a non-public school. We’re not quite there, but if we get $220,000 for a family of four, we’re going to be very, very close.”

After Eckesser spoke, several students and their parents took turns sharing their experiences under Indiana’s current school choice legislation, how it benefited their families, and the importance of attending private schools.

One student from Bishop Luers High School said that she has been a beneficiary of school choice legislation since 5th grade, when her parents discovered the program. This allowed her to switch from a public to a private school.

“Now, like any student, I was nervous to switch from my school to a new school after attending there for so long,” she said. “I was afraid to leave behind my friends — to leave a place where I felt comfortable and knew where I fit in. I do believe that if it weren’t for my parents having me switch schools, I would not be the person nor in the place that I am today.”

She continued, “However, I cannot just thank my parents for this amazing opportunity. Because, if it were not for school choice, my parents and I would not have been able to make it all four years and stay financially stable. The Indiana School Choice Program has helped give me this chance to better myself. It gave my parents the freedom of not having to stress about financial strain. Being able to switch to my faith-based school was one of the best things God could have ever let happen to me and my family. Not only did it allow me to become stronger in my faith, but it also helped me strive to become the smartest and best parts of myself.”

Finishing, she said, “I strongly believe that it is school choice that has helped many students like me, and it’s still helping to give families this opportunity to choose the strong education that private schools provide.”

A 6th-grader at Redeemer Classical School, a Lutheran institution, said that the small class sizes have helped him foster close friendships.

“I daily interact with older and younger students,” he said, “giving me opportunities to learn from some and help others. This school community has been a positive influence in my life. I want other kids to be able to go to the school of their parents’ choice. I encourage all of you to support legislation that strengthens school choice for all”.

After the families spoke, Cesar Roman, Director of Communications at the Institute for Quality Education, said that “parents should be empowered in the conversation of education. And we should be right along partnering with our schools, with our educators, with our administrators, because our voice matters. ‘Who knows our baby best? Us. Parents … we should advocate for our children, we should empower them in the conversation, we should empower them to use this tool of education so they can realize their dreams.’ Because ultimately, that’s what we all want.”

Following the conclusion of the speakers, organizers encouraged each of the participants in the rally to call, email, and write their legislators at one of several available engagement booths so that they could turn their newfound knowledge of school choice into active advocacy.

To build additional public support for the legislation, a rally was held in South Bend this week, and more rallies are planned for across the state. The additional “Share the Vision: School Choice for All” events will be held in Evansville and Highland. The “Share the Vision: School Choice for All” rallies are scheduled as follows:

• April 3, Good Shepherd Catholic School, Evansville, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
• April 14, Wicker Park Community Center, Highland, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
CRS Rice Bowl 2023 — A Journey to Three Countries

By Catholic Relief Services

BALTIMORE — Since 1975, CRS Rice Bowl, the brightly colored cardboard almsgiving box that is a familiar annual Lenten sight in parishes across the country, has invited Catholics to pray, fast, and give in solidarity with the world’s poor.

This year, the CRS Rice Bowl Stories of Hope take us to Honduras, Kenya, and the Philippines, where we’ll learn how people are overcoming the causes of hunger and adapting to climate change. As you journey with us during Lent, remember that through prayer, God invites us to slow down in the silence and look for Him around us — in nature and in people who need us most. Our fasting is an act of solidarity with people who are hungry — and it helps us feel a small part of what they are living day by day. It is in this spirit that our almsgiving is an act of love for God and neighbor. Through giving, there is no limit to what we can achieve together to serve people impacted by climate.

A Story of Hope from Kenya

Turkana, Kenya is very hot and dry. Temperatures reach the mid-90s year-round. Most people in this area raise livestock such as goats and camels, and a few are farmers. But the climate makes this work difficult — and climate change is making it even harder.

Rebecca and her husband, Lotiang, have farmed and raised goats for years. They rely on rain and river water to irrigate their crops and feed their animals. But it is raining less and less in Turkana, and — when it does rain — it can be unpredictable and intense, leading to floods that wash away the seeds.

“We struggled to water our farms,” Rebecca says. “We learned much in CRS’ program. It is a program that has changed my life. I am trying to show my community what I am able to do so that they can emulate it for a better future.”

— Rebecca

Lotiang learned to grow kale, which provides nutrition for his family and can be sold for a high price at the market. Rebecca is grateful that her children can eat healthy food every day. She is also happy that she can send them to school using money from the produce Lotiang sells at the market.

Rebecca and Lotiang have become leaders in their community and teach others what they learned so that everyone can benefit.

“I learned much in CRS’ program,” Rebecca says. “It is a program that has changed my life. I am trying to show my community what I am able to do so that they can emulate it for a better future. Through that I will change my community.”

For more information about the Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowl program and to donate, visit crsricebowl.org.
Catholic Charities Century Club Supporters Gather for Mass and Honored for Giving

BY NICOLE HAHN

As part of the celebration of 100-years in existence, officials with Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend asked donors to become members of the Century Club by donating a minimum of $1,000 to the nonprofit organization in 2022.

On Saturday, March 18, a special Mass, brunch, and presentation were held to honor those members of the Century Club and to highlight for them some of the programs their money supports.

The morning began with Mass celebrated by Bishop Rhoades in the Spiritual Center at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in Fort Wayne. Mass was followed by brunch and a presentation at the Life Center on campus.

Catholic Charities Chief Executive Officer Dan Florin thanked everyone in attendance for their generosity and asked them to know that their names will be engraved on a special memorial plaque that will soon be placed in the lobby of Catholic Charities in the Archbishop Noll Center in downtown Fort Wayne.

Florin then discussed the strategic framework of Catholic Charities that involves the four strategic pillars, which are Guided by Christ, Hope for All, Power of a Hand Up, and A Donation with Impact, and the four strategic priorities, which are Build a Strong Catholic Culture, Transform Lives with Justice, Transform Lives with Love, and Honored for Giving.

To explain the major areas where donations to Catholic Charities are used, Florin highlighted the four main categories of services offered and then broke them down.

Stability Services include financial and material support, food pantries, and homeless services. Immigration Services involve refugee settlement and immigration. Counseling services include mental health counseling, school counseling, and addiction outpatient therapy.

Pro-Life Services involve pregnancy services, parenting services, and adoption record services.

There are many more services offered by Catholic Charities, which can be found on their website at ccfwsb.org.

Florin closed the presentation by once again thanking those in attendance and asking for continued support as the number of people in need continues to grow.

Bishop Rhoades then also thanked everyone and prayed over the group.

The following homily was delivered by Bishop Rhoades during the Mass for Catholic Charities Donors at St. Vincent de Paul in Fort Wayne on Saturday, March 18:

We are midway through the Lenten season and I hope you are having a good Lent thus far. The readings today are perfect for us to reflect upon our Lenten journey. They really get to the heart of what this holy season is all about.

I invite you to reflect on God’s word to the prophet Hosea in our first reading today: “For it is love that I desire, not sacrifice, and knowledge of God and justice to their neighbors.” Perhaps you noticed that we recited these words in the Responsorial Psalm today: “It is mercy I desire, not sacrifice.” They are both quotes from Hosea, however, the quote from Hosea in the Responsorial Psalm says “It is mercy I desire,” whereas the quote from Hosea in the first reading says “it is love I desire.” You might wonder, as I did, why the one quote says “love” and the other says “mercy.” These are two different translations of the same Hebrew word “hesed.”

In the Scriptures, the word “hesed” is sometimes translated as love and sometimes translated as mercy. Why is this? It’s because the Hebrew word “hesed” is a very rich term — it’s hard to translate because it encompasses our English words mercy, love, compassion, and faithfulness. I like to translate “hesed” as “merciful love.” I bring this to your attention because, according to Saint Thomas Aquinas, we’re talking here about the greatest attribute of God with relation to all that exists in creation — His merciful, faithful, and tender love. Jesus is God’s love and mercy incarnate. He reveals to us the unfathomable richness of God’s mercy. Why is it that in all His words and works, especially in His suffering and death that we prepare to commemorate during Holy Week and that we remember at every Mass, indeed that becomes present on the altar at every Mass.

The Lord desires of us that we imitate and live His “hesed,” His merciful love. This is what is the Eucharist nourishes and strengthens us to do. Remember Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: “Be merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful.” This is what God desired of His people in our first reading today. The people were doing the required burnt offerings and following the ceremonial laws, but they were neglecting His greater commandments of love and justice to their neighbors. God desired that they show mercy and love for others, rather than merely offering sacrifices to Him in the temple. You can almost feel God’s frustration when He said to the people through Hosea: “What can I do with you, Ephraim? What can I do with you, Judah? Your piety is like a morning cloud, like the dew that early passes away.

For it is love that I desire, not sacrifice, and knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. In the Gospels, Jesus Himself quoted these words from the book of Hosea. Who did He quote? Who could He have quoted? Was He referring to His experience with the tax collector or others? He did not see the truth that he was a sinner in need of God’s mercy. His prayer, therefore, was not acceptable to God. Jesus says that the Pharisee did not go home justified, but the tax collector did.

Why did the tax collector go home justified? Because he prayed with deep humility, confessing his sinfulness. Now, what the Pharisee said about himself was probably sincere. And the tax collectors were greedy and dishonest, that’s why the people despised them. But this tax collector in the temple was repentant. He was humble. He didn’t even raise his eyes to heaven because he recognized his unworthiness. Yes, he trusted in God’s hesed, God’s merciful love, and he prayed: “O God, be merciful to me a sinner.” His humble prayer was acceptable to God. He knew the true God. God had said through Hosea: “For it is love that I desire, not sacrifice, and knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.” The tax collector had this knowledge of God. He knew that God was loving and merciful and that’s why he prayed as he did. We heard in the responsorial psalm, psalm 51: 5: King David praying: “My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit; a heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not spurn.” Like King David, the tax collector knew the true God and prayed to Him with sorrow for his sins and with trust in God’s merciful love.

The message for us today is crystal clear. Humility is necessary for true, righteous, and pure prayer. This is what opens us to communion with God. This is the prayer that is acceptable to God. We can do all kinds of acts of piety and external sacrifices, but they mean nothing if our hearts are not in it, if we lack love and mercy towards others, if we are proud and self-righteous. If we’re like that, we shut off the flow of God’s goodness and grace. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a contrite spirit. A humble, contrite heart, God will not spurn, psalm 51 teaches us. God spurned the meaningless prayer of the Pharisee. God did not spurn the prayer of the tax collector. I can’t think of a better prayer for the season of Lent than the humble and sincere prayer of the tax collector: “O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.” In His merciful love (Hesed), may the Lord have mercy on us, wash away our sins! And may Mary, our Mother of mercy, the refuge of sinners, intercede for us!
The entire calendar of the Church’s year — the structure of books and seasons that make up the year, from Advent to Christ the King, the way those who are baptized mark time — is structured around Easter and the week that precedes it, which we call Holy Week. The Church celebrates the Sacred Triduum — the great “Three Days” that celebrate the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of the Lord — as the center, heart, and engine of the entire liturgical year. But what is the significance of this week?

The week begins with Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion, during which we hear the Passion account recorded by St. Matthew (there is a three-year cycle of Sunday readings, and the Passion account each of those years is taken from one of the so-called synoptic gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke). This Mass can begin with a solemn procession with palm branches, as we recall Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem, hailed and greeted with joy by the crowds. These same crowds will change their tune by the week’s end, those hailing Him as King on Palm Sunday shouting for His execution on Friday afternoon.

Traditionally celebrated on the morning of Holy Thursday, but moved for the convenience of the faithful to an evening earlier in the week, the Chrism Mass is celebrated Holy Week (in our diocese Monday in South Bend, Tuesday in Fort Wayne). If you have never attended, this should be the year that you make the effort. This Mass — like ordination Masses — is the fullest expression of the Church fulfilling its vocation in the praise and worship of Almighty God: the bishop, surrounded by priests, deacons, religious women and men, and the lay faithful together in consecrated adoration to God. It is at this Mass that priests each year renew their priestly promises and also at this Mass, which includes the sacred oils — the Oil of Catechumens and the Oil of the Sick — to be used throughout the coming year, and he also consecrates the Sacred Chrism (olive oil mixed with balsam), signifying that it is a “Spirit-bearing” oil by breathing into it as he consecrates it. This oil will be used in the coming year at the anointing of those between the ages of twelve and confirmed, and ordained priests.

The Sacred Triduum begins — and Lent technically ends — with the celebrant of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday evening. In fact, there is no other Mass permitted on Holy Thursday evening. In the Church, the Lord’s Supper is always the Mass of the Lord’s Supper. This Mass is transferred to our diocese in earlier in the week). While Lent technically ends, the Paschal mystery begins on the Holy Thursday of the Lord’s passion. The Church will invite us to enter into the Triduum as Lent progresses, as Lent accumulates to the Triduum. The Triduum has come to us as Lent has been extended from Holy Thursday evening to the Solemn Easter Vigil.

Ezekiel built upon this theme of hope and expectation. As did all the prophets, he saw a release from Babylonian bondage not as an accident or a happy turn of events. He saw it as a result of God’s mercy and of fidelity to God. Thus, in this reading, the Lord speaks, promising to breathe new life into the defeated, defeated people.

St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans furnishes the second reading. Rome was the absolute center for everything in the 1st century AD Mediterranean world, as it is today in economic, and cultural heart of the vast, powerful empire. It was a sophisticated city.

Ezekiel’s experiences came from everywhere, having brought with them a great variety of customs and beliefs. Paul, to the Christian Romans, among whom eventually he would die as a martyr. Many of them would also be martyrs.

This reading stresses two spiritual realities. The Christian is linked with God in Christ, so the Christian possesses the very life of the Holy Spirit, a life that will never die.

For its third reading, the Church this weekend presents the Gospel of John. Jesus went to Bethany, then a separate community, now a part of greater Jerusalem, summoned by Martha and Mary who were anxious about their brother Lazarus, the Lord’s friend. When Jesus arrived, Lazarus was dead. In fact, he had been dead for several days. Putrefaction had begun. Responding to the sisters’ faith, the Lord restored Lazarus to life. For several important reasons occur in the passage. First, of course, is the active, life-giving love of Jesus. In the mystery of the Incarnation, Jesus felt and expressed human love. Secondly, the faith of Martha and Mary is unqualified. Thirdly, the parallel between the Resurrection of Jesus and the restoration of earthly life to Lazarus. In each account, narration, description, and analysis are essential parts of the story. A stone closed the tomb. The body was dressed, and a face cloth, customary in Jewish burials of the time, covered the face. Finally, in each story, faith and human limitation had important roles.

Reflection:

Next week, on Palm Sunday, the Church will invite us to learn, and to worship, in the most intense liturgical days of its year. Calling us to Christ, and with ancient drama and cultural heart of the vast, powerful empire. It was a sophisticated city.

Seeking Jesus with Uncompromising Faith Leads to Eternal Life

MSGR. MICHAEL HEINTZ

Eucharist and the priesthood. On that first Holy Thursday evening, the Lord Jesus met with His closest apostles in the upper room (sometimes called the “Upper Room Mass”), in a meal that quite possibly was a Passover meal — at least it was shared in days around Passover. He established the sacrament of Holy Body and Blood, the living sign of the free and willing sacrifice of His own life that He was to make on the cross Friday afternoon. Within the celebration of every Mass, the bread and wine are consecrated separately, signifying that it is a sacrifice of life. His body broken and His blood poured out in love for and for the world. Unlike any other Mass during the year, the Mass does not end with a blessing. In fact, the Church envisions the Mass as the completion of the Mass of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper. In the Triduum, the Church and the world. Then there is always the passion according to St. John. After a brief homily (the rubric explicitly states the Mass is “brief”), the priest pronounced the Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday to be one ongoing liturgical act. This is one of the compelling reasons for us to participate as the Adoration of the Cross, when all are invited to express their reverence and love for the Cross of Christ, by which we have been crucified or cross, flanked by candles, is presented to the faithful at the entrance to the sanctuary for them to approach and adore. Often during this procession of veneration, an ancient hymn (dating from at least the 9th century) called the Improperia or “Reproaches” is chanted, in which Christ, as it were, speaks to each of us, inviting us to deep repentance. Once the veneration of the Cross is complete, the altar is prepared in stark, sparing fashion, and the Blessed Sacrament, consecrated the evening before, is vested in an altar of repose, is carried in procession with candles to the altar. In the Eastern Churches, this is referred to as the Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified (previously consecrated Eucharistic elements). Following the Lord’s Prayer (the sign of peace is omitted), those so disposed are invited to communion. The liturgy ends with a prayer over the Blessed Sacrament and a blessing or dismissal (remember: the Triduum is like one continuous liturgy).

For the Christian Church remains at prayer, waiting at the tomb, watching for the manifestation of the Lord in His glory, it is impossible to resist. There were no eye-witnesses to the resurrection itself, but there were many who encountered the Risen Lord in His glory and we hope to do the same.

There is no Mass celebrated from Holy Thursday evening until the Solemn Easter Vigil.

HEINTZ, page 13

The Book of Ezekiel provides the first reading for this weekend. Even if you’ve never attended, you should make the effort. Often during this process of veneration, an ancient hymn (dating from at least the 9th century) called the Improperia or “Reproaches” is chanted, in which Christ, as it were, speaks to each of us, inviting us to deep repentance. Once the veneration of the Cross is complete, the altar is prepared in stark, sparing fashion, and the Blessed Sacrament, consecrated the evening before, is vested in an altar of repose, is carried in procession with candles to the altar. In the Eastern Churches, this is referred to as the Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified (previously consecrated Eucharistic elements). Following the Lord’s Prayer (the sign of peace is omitted), those so disposed are invited to communion. The liturgy ends with a prayer over the Blessed Sacrament and a blessing or dismissal (remember: the Triduum is like one continuous liturgy).

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There is no Mass celebrated from Holy Thursday evening until the Solemn Easter Vigil.


HEINTZ, from page 12

Seeking Jesus with Uncompromising Faith Leads to Eternal Life

March 26, 2023

Liturgy of the Eucharist takes place. The Liturgy of the Eucharist then is celebrated as it always is, with few changes (other than a prayer for the newly baptized incorporated into the Eucharistic Prayer). At this Mass, all those newly baptized and confirmed were the first time at Communion. The Solemn Vigil ends with the dismissal, “Go in peace, Alleluia, Alleluia,” and the response is given, “Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia.” This greeting to the Church may be used daily during the Easter Octave and again on Pentecost Sunday, the final day of the Easter Season.

What the Church does each Holy Week is not merely to recall with affection the love with which the Lord gave His life for us and for the life of the world. It certainly does this. But it also experiences something more: we hold in faith that — by the grace of the sacraments — we actually participate in those saving acts, in the mysteries of Christ: His rejection, His trial, passion, death, burial, and resurrection. For by the power of the Holy Spirit, these are not merely events of the past, conjured up by our imagination, but living acts of Christ into which He desires to draw us by grace, and, associating us with Him in His saving acts, to communicate to us His risen life in all its power. It is an experience, as Paul said of Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

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

MAGDALEN CANOSSA

c. 1774-1835

FEAST APRIL 10

This foundress, born to a noble family in Verona, Italy, lost her father at age 10. She was abandoned by her mother when she remarried. Choosing religious life over an advantageous marriage, Magdalen first joined the Carmelites, but left when she saw that their strict rules of enclosure would prohibit her charitable works. She began a new community, the Canossian Daughters of Charity, in 1799 by bringing two poor girls into her own home. The institute spread throughout Italy, and Magdalen helped found an order of priests and a third order for laypeople. Canossians minister today in Italy, Latin America and the Philippines. Magdalen, who was canonized in 1988, famously said, “Those who love are never tired, since love knows no burden.”

GUEST COMMENTARY

OSV EDITORIAL BOARD

Magdalen Canossa, Maryland

March 26, 2023

C O M M E N T A R Y

SCRIPTY SEARCH®

Gospel for March 26, 2023

John 11: 1-45

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Fifth Sunday of Lent, Cycle A: The death of Lazarus. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

SISTERS

ILLAZARUS

LAUDARE

JUDEA

LORD

BELIEVE

STONE

LAZARUS OF BETHANY


What to Make of the Great Synodal Debate

The Catholic Church today can, in an important sense, be described as a Church in upheaval. A significant part of that reality arises from the fact that the Church does not exist in isolation from our broader culture. At some points in history, that culture has both been influenced by, and has deeply animated and served, the Church’s work of worship and evangelization. But when the culture and the Church increasingly diverge, tensions foment, and furors erupt. We are in one such moment today.

That rupture between Church and culture sparks debate among even the highest-ranking prelates of the Church. Some Church leaders are more open to embracing current cultural trends in hopes of putting them to use in the service of the Gospel. Others are more wary and long for clear warnings of potential danger to protect the flock. Experiencing this kind of turbulence, we may be tempted to paint a picture of the earliest age of the Church in which the disciples always agreed. After all, Scripture attests to such harmonious moments, like the harmonious moments, like the

LAZARUS OF BETHANY

The disciples had received the Holy Spirit, and yet there were fiercely opposing views on how the followers of Jesus would resolve the dispute concerning whether it was necessary to continue to observe Mosaic law. Since those early days of Christian history, it has always been so. Consider that Arianism, the view that Jesus was not co-eternal but created by the Father, was at one point held by a majority of the Christian world. It took centuries for orthodox teaching to be widely accepted, even after the matter was settled formally at the Council of Nicea in 325.

The language we are now seeing used by some of the Church’s most prominent shepherds signals the urgency of these debates. Take, for example, Cardinal Walter Kasper’s recent caution concerning synodal efforts in Germany. “The Synodal Path repeatedly emphasizes that it doesn’t want any schism, and I believe that,” Cardinal Kasper said. “But one can also stumble into a schism,” he continued. “Sort of like how the great powers stumbled into World War I, although nobody really wanted it.”

In the United States, Bishop Thomas J. Paprocki of Springfield, Illinois, recently wrote in First Things magazine, “Unfortunately, it is not uncommon today to hear Catholic leaders affirm unorthodox views that, not too long ago, would have been espoused only by heretics.” Bishop Paprocki’s article resonated with many because it acknowledged the destructive nature of sexual sin. Words like “schism” and “heresy” are not to be bandied about lightly. When used seriously, by reflective men, they are heavy terms, and the fact that they have been deployed should be the cause of serious reflection by bishops, clergy, and laity alike. And while we lament the conditions that have led to their use, appearance on the scene should hardly be distasteful. They are welcome words to see in public discourse, because at least the discourse has become public.

Debates that have long simmered behind closed rectory doors have now entered the common life of the Church. As hard as it may be to believe, this is the first step toward healing and progress. Unity can only be achieved and charity can only be lived when opposing views are enounced clearly and boldly. Then those divergent views can be examined and accepted or rejected on their merits and conformity with Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium.

Rather than discouraged, we should be encouraged by these public exchanges among Catholic leaders. Only when division is brought to light can resolution be found.

The Our Sunday Visitor Editorial Board is comprised of Father Patrick Briscoe, Gretchen R. Crowe, Scott P. Bichert, Scott Warden, and York Young.

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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. For additional listings of that event, please call the advertising sales staff at 260-399-1449 to purchase space.

Fish Fry in New Haven

NEW HAVEN — The Holy Name Society of St. John the Baptist Parish, 943 Powers St., is sponsoring a Lenten drive-through fish fry on Friday, March 24, from 4-7 p.m. The price is $12 for adults and $7 for children.

St. Gaspar del Bufalo Fish Fry

ROME CITY — St. Gaspar Parish, 10871 N St Rd 9, will have a Lenten Fish Fry on Friday, March 24, from 4-7 p.m.

Fish Fry Drive-Thru Only

FORT WAYNE — A drive-thru only fish fry will be held at St. Patrick, Arcola, 12305 Arcola Rd., on Friday, March 24, from 4-7 p.m. Fish only meals will be $16 and dinners are $13.

St. Bavo Parish Original Jonah Fish Fry

MISHAWAKA — St. Bavo Parish, 524 W. 8th St., will be hosting an Original Jonah Fish Fry in the school gym on Friday, March 24, from 4-7 p.m. Indoor dining includes all-you-can-eat fish, coleslaw, applesauce, rolls, and dessert for $15 per person. Drive-thru carryout box dinners are $12 each. Cash or checks only.

St. Pius X Knights of Columbus Fish Fry

GRANGER — The St. Pius X Knights will have a fish fry on Friday, March 24, from 4:30-7 p.m. at the cafeteria, 4910 Trier Rd. Fish in meal includes fish, wedge potatoes, cole slaw, tartar sauce, applesauce, roll, and a dessert. Carry-out is the same with exception of no dessert. Kids meal will have option of fish or grilled cheese. Tickets are $13 for adult meal and $6 for children’s meal. Contact Sean Digan at 260-417-0216 for information.

Fish Fry at St. Joseph Church, Roanoke

ROANOKE — St. Joseph Church is having a Fish Fry at the American Legion, 1122 North Main St., on Friday, March 24, from 4:30-7 p.m. Fried fish, baked potato, fries, applesauce, coleslaw, and cookies will be served. Adults are $15 and children 12 and younger are $7. Carry-outs are available. Contact 260-672-2838 or ssctherianneandjoseph@comcast.net.

Fish Fry at Queen of Peace

MISHAWAKA — Queen of Peace Parish, 4508 Vistula Rd., will have a fish dinner on Friday, March 24, from 5-7 p.m. Fried fish, potato salad, macaroni and cheese, bread and butter, and dessert. Tickets are $15 per meal. Contact Craig Anthony at 574-255-9674 or parishoffice@queenofpeace.cc.

St. Cecilia Honor Band

FORT WAYNE — The St. Cecilia Honor Band is a combined effort from both Bishop Dwenger and Bishop Luers High Schools. The band will perform a free concert together on Friday, March 24, at 6:30 p.m. at Bishop Dwenger High School, 1500 E. Washington Ctr. Rd. Partner schools that have band programs are invited to participate. There could be approximately 200 students participating in the effort to bring together a shared joy of instrumental music.

Lenten Taize Adoration

SOUTH BEND — Commemorate and celebrate Christ’s passion, death and Resurrection through Adoration augmented by the prayer style developed by the Taize community in France on Monday, March 27, at 7 p.m. at Holy Cross Church, 1050 Wilber St. Contact Father Jim Fenstermaker, CSC, at 574-233-2179 or jfenstermaker@holycrossusa.org.

Immaculate Conception Rummage Sale

KENDALLVILLE — Immaculate Conception Parish, 312 E Diamond St., is having a rummage sale on Friday, March 31, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and on Saturday, April 1, from 9-11:30 a.m. The Saturday sale is $3 per paper grocery bag full.

St. Adalbert Sisters’ Auxiliary Bake Sale

SOUTH BEND — St. Adalbert Sisters’ Auxiliary Annual Bake Sale will be held on Saturday, April 1, from 8 a.m. to noon in the Heritage Center, 519 S Olive St. Lamb Cakes will be on a pre-paid, pre-order basis only. No lamb cakes will be available for sale at the Bake Sale. The deadline for the pre-orders is Friday, March 24. Cost is $24 each. Sweet-sour cabbage, Polish noodles, and all kinds of baked goods for Easter will be available. Lunch will be available. The Easter Bunny will be visiting from 11-1 and 5-6 p.m. Bring your cameras! Contact Ann Marie or Sophia at 574-288-5708, ext. 203 during the day. Contact Linda Shaw at 574-250-3896 or llashaw2002@yahoo.com.

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St. Adalbert
David Czarnecki, 71,
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Dear Clergy, Religious, Administrators, Faculty, Staff, Parents, and Community,

I am honored to announce that The Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades has appointed Mr. David Maugel as the next Superintendent of Schools, effective July 1, 2023. David has spent the last two years as one of our two outstanding Associate Superintendents; Mr. Jeff Kieffer is the other. Mr. Maugel will do an excellent job overseeing our 43 schools to ensure our students excel spiritually, academically, socially, and physically. David is a devout Catholic and active St. John the Evangelist Church member in Goshen, Indiana. His faith and experience in Catholic and secondary education will serve the diocese well.

For the Catholic Schools Office, David Maugel heads the High School Principals Curriculum Committee, Aspiring Catholic Leaders Program, New Principals Committee and Special Education Committee, and has numerous other duties. He has experience with Leadership Development and Action (Inquiry) Research. He has provided teacher development through Professional Learning Community Philosophies and is experienced in strategic planning.

Mr. Maugel graduated from Edgerton High School in Ohio. He then attended Goshen College and IPFW. His degrees in Math Education and an M.S. in Education. Mr. Maugel graduated in April of 2006 from the Indiana Principals Leadership Academy. He was honored with the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (2002). He was awarded IASP District 2 Principal of the Year in 2010, 2013, and 2016. In 2016, Mr. Maugel was named the Indiana High School Principal of the Year. In 2011, Mr. Maugel was selected to serve for the National Science Foundation to review Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching candidates. He was selected as an expert evaluator to serve the United States Department of Education in 2012, reviewing TIF 4 grants. He has also served on the Indiana State School Improvement Plans with Excellence in Mathematics.

I am so grateful to have had everyone and miss you and the family during retirement. My greatest gratitude is for the many blessings I have received from God. All that one can hope for in any role is to advance the great work of those who preceded us. I pray that I have done so. Know that I will pray for everyone and miss you and the work of Catholic education. Dr. Joe Brettnacher

Superintendent of Schools