How the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend Plans to Participate in the National Eucharistic Congress

BY CLAIRE KENNEY

For the first time in almost a century, the Catholic Church in the United States will host a National Eucharistic Congress. Discerned and approved by the nation’s bishops and overseen by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, of which Bishop Rhoades is an active member, the event will take place next summer in Indianapolis.

At a time when many parishes have seen a decline in regular Mass attendance and active participation in the Catholic faith, the 2024 National Eucharistic Congress seeks to revive and rekindle a fervor for the faith.

As the movement’s official website, eucharisticrevival.org, states: “In an age marked by division and doubt, the Holy Spirit is inviting the United States to find unity and renewal through a grassroots National Eucharistic Revival. This movement—discerned and approved by the bishops of the U.S. is critical to rekindling a living faith in the hearts of Catholics across America, unleashing a new missionary chapter at this pivotal moment in Church history.”

A 2019 Pew Research study of self-described Catholics across the country found that approximately one-third believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Additionally, because of the pandemic, during which many became accustomed to watching Mass online, significant numbers of the faithful have not returned to Mass.

With a mission “to renew the Church by enkindling a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist” and a vision “to inspire a movement of Catholics across the United States who are healed, converted, formed, and unified by an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist,” as stated on the Congress website, the 2024 National Eucharistic Congress runs from July 17 to 21, 2024. Some 80,000 Catholics, adults and children alike, are expected to participate in the event’s speaker sessions, Mass, adoration opportunities, and other faith-based activities.

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is actively working with its parishes to make this opportunity possible for as many parishioners who hope to attend.

Chris Langford is coordinating the diocese’s overall effort to work with its individuals and families who would like to attend the National Eucharistic Congress. “The response and engagement of our pastors, parishes, and faithful has been truly gratifying,” he said of the effort to date.

He anticipates that the close proximity between the diocese and Indianapolis will generate a tremendous response from its members to attend. “And looking forward, there is a lot of excitement and anticipation for the National Eucharistic Congress, right in our own backyard, so to speak,” Langford said. “Yet a full year before the event, hundreds from our diocese have already purchased passes to the Congress.”

To facilitate as many local parish members to attend as possible, the diocese has reserved a block of 400 passes and 400 hotel rooms that can be purchased at a discounted rate. These discounted passes can be purchased from the diocese at diocesefwsb.org/eucharist.

For questions about the Congress, email info.revival@diocesefwsb.org.

“The National Eucharistic Revival has already been a tremendous blessing in our diocese,” said Langford. “We are eagerly looking forward to a really large participation from our faithful and to the life-changing impact the Congress will impart to the souls in our diocese and across the country.”

For a detailed schedule of National Eucharistic Congress events, visit eucharisticcongress.org/schedule#schedule.
Beauty Leads Students to Christ at University of Saint Francis Summer Camp

BY ERIC PEAT

While society continues to inundate the youth of today with its own interpretations of beauty, a group of high schoolers in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is embracing beauty as the Church promotes it: an opportunity to experience the presence of our Lord.

Beauty Will Save the World was a five-day summer camp hosted from July 9 to July 13 at the University of Saint Francis campus in Fort Wayne. Funded through a Lilly Grant seven years ago, the camp invited high school students to encounter Christ through five core themes: Beauty of Creation, Beauty of Art, Beauty of the Body and Sexuality, Beauty of Vocation, and Beauty of Worship. Each day revolved around a different one of these themes, with engaging talks and related activities, such as a nature hike or a concert. The camp provided students with breakfast, lunch, and dinner each day, while also allotting ample time for prayer, recreation, entertainment, and community.

Named after a line from Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s “The Idiot,” Beauty Will Save the World’s Catholic perspective on the concept of beauty left an impression on many students attending the camp for the first time.

“I really liked the talk on the beauty of the body because I think it’s such an important topic in our culture,” said Jose Loffelt, a first-time attendee from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Fort Wayne. “In the secular world, it’s such a big thing, and it’s really important to know the Church’s stance and position on it, that your body is a good thing and a gift given by God.”

For other campers, like William MacDonald of St. Peter Parish in Fort Wayne, the experience of last year’s camp prompted them to return with their friends. “This year was absolutely amazing,” said MacDonald, “because they had adoration almost daily, they had daily Mass, we prayed Liturgy of the Hours every morning, and it was just so beautiful how deep the talks were into theology and philosophy and how they connected everything so well to beauty itself.”

Campers were able to dive deeper into these connections amongst themselves through designed social opportunities throughout the week. Megan Quigley, Camp Coordinator and Assistant Director of the Assisi Program for Discipleship and Leadership, said that this time was consciously built into the schedule to help foster a sense of community among the camp attendees, many of whom were experiencing a college atmosphere for the first time.

“I think just being on campus, living in the dorms, eating in a dining hall, having time to discuss the things they’ve learned in informal ways – there’s a lot of learning that happens there,” said Quigley. “As we were kind of preparing the camp and getting our camp counselors ready, we told them to encourage those informal moments of community and conversation because there’s beauty in fellowship. That was kind of the hidden sixth theme of the camp in a way. There’s nothing that can replace just being here and entering into college life, and we hope it gives them a taste of how exciting and joyful academic study can be and what it’s like to be part of a community of learners.”

The camp concluded on Thursday, July 13, with a Mass celebrated by Bishop Rhoades at the St. Francis Chapel, and a picnic on the chapel lawn, both of which parents and families were invited to attend. Bishop Rhoades began by commenting on the theme of beauty and how it is reflected in Holy Mass itself.

“I’m happy to celebrate this liturgy of conclusion and this camp, in which you have reflected on the concept of beauty and how beauty will save the world,” Bishop Rhoades said to the camp attendees. “The beauty of God is witnessed in so many ways. We see the beauty of God in the holy liturgy that we celebrate, in the beauty of the sacraments, the beauty of the saints. He calls all of us in whatever state of life that we are in to experience His beauty and the beauty of holiness.”

During his homily, Bishop Rhoades spoke of the first reading’s story of Joseph, which Bishop Rhoades referred to as “my favorite story in the whole Old Testament, since I was a kid.” His excellency stated that among the many lessons to be learned from this story is the reality that God can bring good out of evil.

“We can ask, ‘Why do bad things happen?’ Look at Joseph – he was thrown into a pit, sold into slavery, put into prison, all these terrible things,” said Bishop Rhoades. “Yet, if it wasn’t for that, those hundreds of thousands of people wouldn’t have been saved [from famine]. This was all part of God’s plan. God allowed Joseph to be sold into slavery, but look at the good that resulted from it. Joseph became the number two man in Egypt. He was reunited with his brothers and his father. We can call this God’s providence.”

“So, what can we do?” asked Bishop Rhoades in conclusion. “Don’t give up. Don’t just stand there. Trust that this is all part of God’s plan, that good can come out of this. And when we do, our life – even if it entails bad things or sufferings or hardships – will always have hope.”

For Camp Director and Assistant Professor of Theology Dr. Robert Koerpel, his hope is that this five-day experience will help campers gain a new appreciation for the role that beauty plays in the Catholic Church.

“We live in a time, I suppose, where now more than ever, we need to kind of recover this part of our tradition,” said Dr. Koerpel. “We need to recover a sense of beauty. And so, I think, given the cultural context of the world we’re living in, beauty is a very apt theme, especially for high schoolers. They’re bombarded with images on a daily basis. And so, we try to give them a sense of what real beauty is and the depths of beauty.”
Pope Appoints Hundreds to Attend Synod of Bishops on Synodality

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has appointed more than 450 participants, including dozens of religious men and women and laypeople, to attend the first general assembly of the Synod of Bishops on Synodality in October.

And that list is not even complete, Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary-General of the Synod of Bishops, told reporters at a Vatican news conference Wednesday, July 7.

More names are going to be added to the list of nonvoting members, such as experts and representatives of non-Catholic Christian communities, he said.

For now, the list of voting members is complete, numbering 363 cardinals, bishops, priests, religious and lay men and women — a first in the history of the synod. Pope Francis made significant changes to who can be a voting member of the synod on synodality and he gave women the right to vote in the synod.

Out of the 364 members who can vote, which includes the pope, 54 are women — either lay or religious. The number of cardinals appointed as members also is 54.

More than a quarter of all the voting members, that is 26.4 percent, are not bishops, according to the 21-page list of the appointments released on Wednesday, July 7 by the Vatican.

Those the pope appointed to take part in the Oct. 4-20 synod include 169 cardinals or bishops representing national bishops’ conferences; 20 cardinals or bishops representing Eastern Catholic churches; five cardinals or bishops representing regional federations of bishops’ conferences; and 20 heads of Vatican dicasteries, which includes one layman, Paolo Ruffini, Prefect of the Dicastery for Communication.

The bishops appointed to attend from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops are: Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services and President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York; Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas; Bishop Robert E. Barron of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota; and Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana.

The pope also appointed five religious men and five religious women to represent the International Union of Superiors General and the Union of Superiors General.

There are an additional 50 papally appointed members, the majority of whom are cardinals and bishops, but they include 11 priests, religious and one layman and one laywoman. Those from the United States include: Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago; Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory of Washington; Cardinal Robert W. McElroy of San Diego; Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley of Boston; Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Seattle; and Jesuit Father James Martin.

Another novelty is a large group of non-bishop voting members who represent the “continental assemblies” and are named “witnesses of the synodal process.” There are 10 members in each group divided by continent: Africa; North America; Latin America; Asia; Eastern Churches and the Middle East; Europe; and Oceania, for a total of 70 individuals who are all priests, religious, or lay men and women.

The group for North America includes: Richard Coll, Executive Director of the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development at the USCCB in Washington; Cynthia Bailey Manners, the Adult Learning Director at St. Joan of Arc Catholic Community in Minnesota; Catherine Clifford, a Theology Professor and expert on the Second Vatican Council, Canadian Sister Chantal Desmarais, a Sister of Charity of St. Mary of the Incarnation from Montreal; Mexican Sister of St. Francis of Assisi; and Sister Leticia Salazar, Chancellor of the Diocese of San Bernardino, California.

Among the 16 who are part of the synod’s ordinary council include: U.S. Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey; Canadian Cardinal Gérard C. Lacroix of Québec, and Australian Archbishop Anthony C. Fisher of Sydney.

Nine members will serve as delegate presidents of the assembly and they include: Bishop Flores of Brownsville; Coptic Patriarch Pachomius Isaac Sedrak; one priest, Italian Father Giuseppe Bonfrate; one nun, Mexican Sister of St. Joseph Maria de los Dolores Palencia; and one consecrated laywoman, Momoko Nishimura of Japan. Pope Francis will serve as President and Cardinal Mario Grech as the synod’s Secretary-General.

The list of nonvoting members is not complete, Cardinal Grech said.

That list released on Wednesday, July 7, included two groups of “experts and facilitators” listed as “witnesses of the synodal process.” One of the groups includes: British Dominican Father Timothy Radcliffe and Italian Benedictine Mother Maria Ignazia Angelini. All synod participants will be expected to attend a three-day retreat before the synod begins in early October.

All of the 57 nonvoting “experts and facilitators” listed as of Wednesday, July 7, are priests and religious and lay men and women. They include: U.S. Sister Maria Cipmperman, who is a member of the Society of the Sacred Heart; Jesuit Father David McCallum; and Australian theologian Tracey Rowland.

The theme of the synod is: “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission,” and synod members will be called upon to continue to carry forward a “process of spiritual discernment” that was begun in 2021 and continue with a second synod assembly in 2024.
Mark Freund Appointed Principal of Marian High School

BY NICOLE HAHN

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has appointed Mark Freund as the new Principal of Marian High School in Mishawaka effective on Monday, July 17.

Freund, who served most recently as the Executive Director of the Office for Lasallian Education at the Christian Brothers Conference in Washington, D.C., will take over for Mark Kirzeder, who gave notice earlier this year that he wanted to return to teaching. He will return to the faculty at Marian as a Physics Teacher and Technology Director. A search committee for Kirzeder’s replacement was formed in February.

Mark Kirzeder said, “I am deeply grateful to the Marian Family and Bishop Rhoades for the opportunity to serve Marian High School as Principal these past nine years. Marian is blessed to have someone of Mark Freund’s caliber to lead Marian spiritually and academically. We pray in gratitude, through the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes, that the good Lord has sent the right person to lead Marian.”

Mark Freund has experience in teaching history, social studies, and computer science at a college prep school, where he was also the Administrative Technology Coordinator and Director of Speech and Debate. He has served as Principal in Catholic junior high schools and senior high schools in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Florida. He has a bachelor’s degree in Social Sciences, a master’s degree in Education, and completed courses in Catholic School Management, and Education Technology and Online Instruction, among other studies.

Bishop Rhoades shared, “I am very pleased that Mark has accepted the position of Principal at Marian High School. His extensive experience in several Catholic schools is a major benefit to Marian. He has also expressed his commitment to the Marian identity, mission, and strong academic program at Marian. I look forward to watching Mark use his Catholic faith and professionalism to help Marian continue to expand and thrive.”

Freund has also served in professional roles that include Regional Associate of the National Catholic Education Association, a member of the National Catholic Forensic League, and the National Speech and Debate Association.

“I am so honored that Bishop Rhoades has asked me to be the next principal at Marian High School,” Freund said. “I believe education can play a powerful role in forming young people and their preparation for a life of faith, service, and intellectual growth. I look forward to working with the team at Marian as we strive to continue to Learn, Serve, and Lead.”

Freund and his wife Dale have been married for 37 years. They are moving from Maryland to the South Bend side of the diocese.

86 Creative Founder Reaps Fruits of Vocation

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

Jacob Laskowski knew that he had a talent for effective communication and a passion for sharing the truth and beauty of the Church, and since his college years working as a missionary for the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS), he has seen the fruits of his vocational journey nourish his faith and the faith of others.

His brand agency 86 Creative recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of its 2013 founding, today boasting a laundry list of notable services to the various ministries, nonprofits, and apostolates within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and beyond.

Laskowski said that, ultimately, “it’s all about helping all of those groups and organizations know who they are better so that they can express and communicate their missions more effectively to the right audiences that they’re trying to reach.”

Before he founded the agency, Laskowski was a missionary for FOCUS, and he says that he has always had a passion for communications and marketing. “When I worked with FOCUS, it was kind of a new spark to do that for the Church specifically. I did that work for FOCUS at their headquarters in Denver, and then when I moved to Fort Wayne. That’s when I started 86 and realized there was a call there to do what I was doing for FOCUS, but for more ministries and apostolates in the Church.”

While at first the work he was doing at 86 Creative was more secular, he began to pursue more clients within the Church. “I really just took it to the Lord to find out, ‘Is this the right thing? Do I need to continue pursuing the work that I’m doing with 86? Or should I leave it and find a place for me in the Church?’”

Through ample prayer and discernment, he realized God’s call for him to work for the Church through 86 Creative. “It became like a true vocation — that I knew that I was doing exactly what God had wanted me to do in my own giftings and provide that to the Church. ‘Every project I’ve been able to do has been more than just work. It’s been a prayer and a discernment with each organization I work with, of revealing the true story that they have to share, and doing it in a creative way that they hadn’t been able to do before.”

Some of the agency’s more well-known clients include Exodus 90, the USCCB, and Our Sunday Visitor (OSV). “OSV, in particular, was great because they’re local, so I was able to go down there and have a lot of great strategic meetings with them. And the nice thing about that is that it was really exciting to be involved in their brand because they hadn’t really had a rebrand since the start of OSV. And so, as they were transitioning from Our Sunday Visitor to becoming more, you know, the acronym OSV, and knowing the tradition that they had with their 120-year-old brand, that was a challenge and an adventure to figure out, ‘How do I communicate this effectively in a visual identity that elevates the work and the mission that OSV has done for over a century, but also bring it into the 21st century in a way that says it’s still relevant today and helpful and all-encompassing?’”

He went on to say that building a symbolic logo for OSV to use that would build visual identity and brand unity across their platforms makes the organization’s offerings “fit together as a family: like everything belongs.”

But why is building a cohesive and clear brand important? Laskowski believes that ultimately, everyone is attracted to beauty. But, while Christians possess the “great est story in the whole world,” somewhere along the line, the Church forgot how to tell that story in a captivating and beautiful way.

“Part of the work that I get to do is bringing back that beauty in a way that our modern culture understands.”

After observing modern, popular brands and people’s response to these brands, Laskowski realized that not only should the Church brand itself in a similar way, but that the Church should be the best at doing so. “We love brands. There’s a lot of brand loyalty that people have to Apple or to Netflix. Those companies obviously value how they look and how they present themselves externally. So, if those organizations care so much about it, there must be something [there].”

Laskowski’s work for the Church extends beyond 86 Creative. He serves on the board of the Catholic Campus Ministry Association. He also helped Father Patrick Hake to brand the new St. Peter Parish in Fort Wayne in order to not only welcome new parishioners, but also to help them see themselves in the Church: in the liturgy, the architecture, and the truth that Catholics believe.

For many more stories to tell, and I really hope I get a chance to be a part of crafting as many of them as I can.”
Scott Kreiger Appointed Principal of Bishop Luers High School

BY NICOLE HAHN

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has appointed Scott Kreiger as the new Principal of Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne effective on Monday, July 17.

Kreiger, who served as Assistant Principal at Bishop Luers this past year, will take over for James Huth, who gave notice earlier this year that he will be moving into a new career opportunity. A search committee for Huth’s replacement was formed in February. Huth said of his time at Bishop Luers, “Although I have very much enjoyed my time as Principal of Bishop Luers, it is time for me to move on and take my career in a new direction. Please accept my deepest gratitude for all that everyone has done for me during my tenure here. I would also like to thank my team for everything we have accomplished. I will forever remember my time here in this position."

Scott Kreiger has experience in teaching science, computer science, business, and math at the middle, high school, and college levels, as well as coaching and leadership positions in education. He has a bachelor’s degree in Business Education, a master’s degree in School Administration, and completed an Educational Leadership Program in 2021.

Bishop Rhoades shared, “I am very grateful that Scott accepted the position of Principal at Bishop Luers High School. His experience in educational leadership and his commitment to the Catholic identity, mission, and strong academic program at Bishop Luers have impressed me greatly. Scott’s deep Catholic faith, his professionalism, and his love for education will help Bishop Luers continue to grow and flourish.”

Kreiger has also served in professional roles that include President of the Indiana Basketball Coaches Association, Chair of the Indiana Coaches of Girls Sports Association, and Committee Chair of ISACS Evaluation & Self-Study at Canterbury School. He has also volunteered his time at Habitat for Humanity, The Franciscan Center, Mustard Seed Furniture Bank, and Blessings in a Backpack.

“It is a great honor to be asked by Bishop Rhoades to be the next principal at Bishop Luers High School,” Kreiger said. “I am humbled and honored to accept the position. It is with great enthusiasm and dedication that I embark on this journey to serve the students, faculty, and the entire Bishop Luers community. Together, we will foster an environment of academic excellence, personal growth, and faith formation. We will continue to build upon the rich traditions and values that have shaped this institution for generations. Guided by our Catholic identity, we will foster a nurturing and inclusive environment where students feel supported and inspired to reach their fullest potential. I am excited and grateful for the opportunity to serve as the next leader of Bishop Luers High School."

Kreiger and his wife Stacie have been married for 34 years. She is the Director of Clinical Services for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. The couple has four children and five grandchildren. They live in Fort Wayne and are parishioners at St. Vincent de Paul Church.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We as Catholics have a duty to bring morality into the public forum. The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) works to bring morality into the public forum by educating policy makers and politicians on Catholic Social Teaching and the impact it can have on proposed laws. While the ICC had some successes during the most recent Indiana General Assembly session with expanding school choice and curbing predatory lending, we need assistance. Those who stay informed on local and national issues can help the ICC help the Church. Signing up to receive information matters of importance to the Church from the ICC is a small first step. After receiving information, you can prayerfully discern which matters you want to share with family and friends, or which matters move you to engage in some way with your local or national representatives or senators.

Sign up via email icc@archindy.org or by calling 317-236-1458. Thank you for your consideration.
Pence Pushes Back on False Claims about Ukraine’s Religious Freedom at GOP Forum

DES MOINES, Iowa (OSV News) – Former Vice President Mike Pence had a tense exchange with former Fox News host Tucker Carlson on Friday, July 14, at an Iowa candidate forum about the war in Ukraine, shedding light on both how Republican presidential candidates are navigating increasingly complex views on the subject among their base, but also an oft-repeated disinformation tactic by Russian propagandists. At a conference hosted by the Family Leadership Summit, a prominent and influential evangelical group in a state home to the first contest in the presidential nomination process, Carlson argued against providing U.S. support to Ukraine to fend off Russia’s invasion, sparring with Pence, who supports providing such aid. Carlson continued to push Pence on Ukraine, arguing that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is “persecuting Christians.” Zelensky’s government has taken steps to restrict Moscow-affiliated Orthodox churches under the influence of the Russian government as it seeks to fend off that country’s invasion. Pence said it was an important one. “I asked the Russian leader in Kyiv if that was happening, and he assured me it was not – people were not being persecuted for their religious beliefs,” Pence said, adding that “he assured me that the Zelensky government was protecting religious liberty” in Ukraine while combating “small elements” of a Russian Orthodox Church run by the Kremlin. OSV News in-person interviews with Orthodox and Catholic leaders in Ukraine confirmed Zelensky’s promises while repudiating Carlson’s characterization of Ukraine. The Ukraine’s Institute for Religious Freedom also notes that at least 494 religious buildings, theological institutions, and sacred places were “wholly destroyed, damaged, or looted” by the Russian military as of Jan. 31, 2023, thanks to its invasion.

Allegations Chicago Police Sexually Abused Migrants ‘Disturb’ Catholic Advocates

CHICAGO (OSV News) – A federal appeals court ruled on Thursday, July 13, that a Catholic high school and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis have a constitutional right to hire staff who will uphold core religious teachings. The case, Fitzgerald v. Roncalli High School and Archdiocese of Indianapolis, involved Shelly Fitzgerald, whose contract was not renewed because she entered a same-sex union in violation of her contract and Catholic teaching. School officials said her conduct was prohibited by the agreement she had signed with Roncalli. Fitzgerald filed a discrimination lawsuit in 2019 against the school and the archdiocese. In September of 2022, a district court threw out the lawsuit, noting that “Roncalli entrusts Fitzgerald to teach the Catholic faith and carry out” its religious mission. She appealed her case to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. In the July 13 ruling, the circuit court dismissed Fitzgerald’s case, saying that the district court properly granted the defendant’s summary judgment on the ministerial exception that protects a religious school’s hiring and firing practices from govern- ment intrusion. The ruling “is common-sense: decisions about who conveys the Catholic faith to Catholic school children are for the Church, not the government,” said Joseph Davis, Counsel at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, who represented the defendant. “Religious schools exist to pass on the faith to the next generation, and to do that, they need the freedom to choose leaders who are fully committed to their religious mission.”

Summer Camp Held for Children of Vatican Employees

Pope Francis poses for a photo with children in the Vatican’s Paul VI audience hall on Tuesday, July 18. About 250 children of Vatican employees are attending a summer program from July 3 through August 4.

District (Ogden) had sexual relations with migrants temporarily being housed in the station. The admission followed a complaint received earlier that day by the city’s Civilian Office of Police Accountability. No details about the migrants – including their ages and genders – or the police officers allegedly involved in the matter have yet been released. For several weeks, migrants bused to Chicago from the U.S.-Mexico border have sought shelter in police stations, as the city has struggled to find housing for them. Anna Marie Gallagher, Executive Director of CLINIC (the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.) based in Silver Spring, Maryland, told OSV News in an email that “sadly, we know all too well the dangers that vulnerable individuals face when seeking refuge in the United States.” According to the United Nations International Organization for Migration, irregular migration – usually undertaken in response to violence, poverty, and natural disasters – places women, girls, and LGBTQ+ persons at disproportionately higher risk for gender-based violence, including human trafficking. “Catholic social teaching reminds us that every life is deserving of dignity and respect,” said Gallagher. “We will continue to advocate for conditions in which migrants and refugees are met with open arms, safety, and respect.”

Appeals Court Dismisses Former Guidance Counselor’s Case Against Catholic School

CHICAGO (OSV News) – Father Stephen Ugwu, a priest at the church’s campus in Melville, Louisiana, told local media reports, a man wielding a machete attacked the priest at the church’s campus after Father Ugwu declined the man’s request to perform work in exchange for food, leaving Father Ugwu with cuts on his head and body. Melville police arrested the attacker and assisted Father Ugwu, a priest from Nigeria serving the Diocese of Lafayette.

Abuse Allegations Down, but Challenges Remain, US Bishops Say in Report

WASHINGTON, D.C. (OSV News) – Abuse allegations against Catholic clergy and religious in the U.S. declined last year, but challenges remain with protecting vulnerable adults and ensuring online safety according to the U.S. Bishops. On Friday, July 14, the USCCB’s Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection released the 2022 Annual Report – Findings and Recommendations on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.” USCCB President Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio said in his preface the report was “a milestone accounting of the continued efforts in the ministry of protection, healing, and accom- paniment.” The document – covering the period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 – noted that 1,998 individuals came forward with 2,704 allegations of abuse, with claims down 399 from 2021 and 1,548 from 2020. The decrease was largely due to resolutions of allegations received through lawsuits, compensa- tion programs, and bankruptcies. Sixteen reports during the period involved current minors, with all other allegations made by adults citing abuse as minors. The secretariat said in its assessment “the year-over-year trends are encouraging the number of current minor allegations in the U.S. remains low.” However, while many dioceses and religious orders were acknowledging the specific requirements of the Dallas Charter, specific challenges remain in ensuring online safety, particularly in parishes, and in clarifying reporting procedures for abuse against “vulnerable adults,” which are not covered by the charter. “Vox Estis Lux Mundi” rather than the charter.

‘God Protected Him’: Louisiana Priest Stable After Machete Attack

MELVILLE, Louisiana (OSV News) – Father Stephen Ugwu, Pastor of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Melville, Louisiana, is recovering following a July 13 attack with a machete. The priest is at a hospital being treated for lacerations to his head and body. According to local media reports, a man wielding a machete attacked the priest at the church’s campus after Father Ugwu declined the man’s request to perform work in exchange for food, leaving Father Ugwu with cuts on his head and body. Melville police arrested the attacker and assisted Father Ugwu, a priest from Nigeria serving the Diocese of Lafayette.

Mediation Efforts in Abuse Allegations Case Against Catholic School

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Mediation Efforts in Abuse Allegations Case Against Catholic School

WASHINGTON, D.C. (OSV News) – Abuse allegations against Catholic clergy and religious in the U.S. declined last year, but challenges remain with protecting vulnerable adults and ensuring online safety according to the U.S. Bishops. On Friday, July 14, the USCCB’s Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection released the 2022 Annual Report – Findings and Recommendations on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.” USCCB President Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio said in his preface the report was “a milestone accounting of the continued efforts in the ministry of protection, healing, and accom- paniment.” The document – covering the period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 – noted that 1,998 individuals came forward with 2,704 allegations of abuse, with claims down 399 from 2021 and 1,548 from 2020. The decrease was largely due to resolutions of allegations received through lawsuits, compensa- tion programs, and bankruptcies. Sixteen reports during the period involved current minors, with all other allegations made by adults citing abuse as minors. The secretariat said in its assessment “the year-over-year trends are encouraging the number of current minor allegations in the U.S. remains low.” However, while many dioceses and religious orders were acknowledging the specific requirements of the Dallas Charter, specific challenges remain in ensuring online safety, particularly in parishes, and in clarifying reporting procedures for abuse against “vulnerable adults,” which are not covered by the charter. “Vox Estis Lux Mundi” rather than the charter.

‘God Protected Him’: Louisiana Priest Stable After Machete Attack

MELVILLE, Louisiana (OSV News) – Father Stephen Ugwu, Pastor of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Melville, Louisiana, is recovering following a July 13 attack with a machete. The priest is at a hospital being treated for lacerations to his head and body. According to local media reports, a man wielding a machete attacked the priest at the church’s campus after Father Ugwu declined the man’s request to perform work in exchange for food, leaving Father Ugwu with cuts on his head and body. Melville police arrested the attacker and assisted Father Ugwu, a priest from Nigeria serving the Diocese of Lafayette.
Catholic Charities 6th Immigration Conference Focuses on Economic Impact of Immigrants

BY NICOLE KURUT

On Thursday, June 29, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend hosted its 6th Immigration Conference. With federal immigration policies continuing to evolve, this year’s conference sought to bridge gaps between Catholic educators and attendees on these changes and the possible effects on the community.

Catholic Charities originally began the local conference to teach service providers about immigration policies that affect the local population and enhance community services. This year, employers were welcomed to learn about the economic impact immigrants bring to our community.

Kicking off the event to a packed room at the Mirro Center in Fort Wayne, Catholic Charities CEO Dan Florin shared the history of the immigration program, dating back to 2002 when the Fort Wayne office became recognized as an approved agency by the Department of Justice.

Luz Ostrognai, Director of Immigration Services at Catholic Charities, painted a picture of the work Catholic Charities does in welcoming the stranger to our community. “Our immigration department does not work for the pursuit of popularity, for glory, or fortune. There’s nothing glamorous about this kind of work. Representing clients who are going through difficult times in their lives and with people who feel scared or nervous about the prospect of being removed from the country, or frustrated with the long and complex immigration processes puts increased pressure on us.”

MayorTom Henry shared his appreciation for those who have answered this calling. “The call you all accepted to help those who want to call the U.S. home is a tremendous calling, the remarkableness of it...”

After years of research, economist and Director of the Center for Business and Economic Research at Ball State University, Michael Hicks debunked common myths surrounding the impact of immigration. “There is no economic study that I have seen that has shown a fiscal drain due to immigration,” said Hicks. “In the U.S., $12 billion a year in social spending and $65 million a year in state and local taxes comes from immigrant taxes. When you look at the contributions they will make to social security, though they will not be eligible to withdraw on later, and you look at their local taxes, they pretty much pay for themselves as soon as they arrive.”

The all-day training event also included speakers from the National Immigrant Justice Center, Barnes and Thornburg, and the Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC). The speakers shared an overview of the legal differences in status, work authorization, and border issues. “It is really important to have a conversation about new neighbors. We want to welcome and help rebuild their lives,” said Lisa Koop, a speaker for the National Immigrant Justice Center. “We as legal counselors have to tell people, ‘You qualify for immigration protection – it will be a decade before we can get it to you, but we can start the process today.’ That is little comfort for someone looking to put down roots and watch their children graduate from high school.”

The event brought professionals from across the state of Indiana. “This is the largest Immigration Conference we have held,” said Ostrognai. “We look forward to hosting another one next year.”

Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart Celebrate Jubilees

The Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart celebrated jubilees of their Sisters on Sunday, June 17, at St. Francis Woods, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The following Jubilarians have ministered in this diocese.

75th Jubilee
Sister Colleen Lohmer

Sister Colleen Lohmer was born in Shererville, Indiana. She professed her first vows in 1951 as a Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart whose Motherhouse is in Frankfort, Illinois. She earned a B.A. from the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois, and has spent nearly 50 years in the field of elementary education either as a teacher, a teacher aide, or a private tutor. In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, she taught at St. John – Hessen Cassel School in Fort Wayne from 1962 to 1966 and 1968 to 1969 and St. Joseph School in Joliet from 1967 to 1968. In addition, she taught in other schools in Indiana, Illinois, and California. In retirement, Sister keeps in touch with the many friends she made during her years in formal ministry. She also shares her artistic gifts and holds in prayer the special intentions of many. She said she is most grateful for her vocation, for being able to receive Jesus in Holy Communion each day, and for her caring and loving Sisters in community. She would tell anyone thinking of a religious vocation that it is a most wonderful and satisfying life for which Jesus promises a hundredfold in this life and life everlasting.

60th Jubilees
Sister Josephine Mulcahy

Sister Josephine Mulcahy was born in Rockford, Illinois. She professed her first vows in 1956 as a Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart whose Motherhouse is in Frankfort, Illinois. She earned a B.A. from the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois, and an M.A. in Religious Studies from the Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Studies in Religious Education in Indiana, Virginia, and a Certificate in Pastoral Care at St. Joseph Hospital in Chicago. The first part of her professional life was spent in the field of education for nearly 22 years. In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, she taught at St. Charles School in Fort Wayne from 1958 to 1962 and 1972 to 1975 and at St. Joseph School in Garrett from 1969 to 1970. She also taught at St. Michael School in Schererville, Indiana, and in a school system in Peru, Illinois. She then followed her heart and pursued the ministry of pastoral care in healthcare institutions where she has served for more than 37 years. Presently she ministers at Ascension Joseph in Joliet, Illinois. She said that what brings her the most joy is being able to minister to the people that she meets as a Spiritual Care Chaplain, to listen to their problems, to share with them God’s unfailing love for them, to pray with them and to support them on their journey. She lovingly brings them Jesus, the healer and beacon of hope.

50th Jubilees
Sister Marilyn Renninger

Sister Marilyn Renninger was born in Hammond, Indiana. She professed her first vows in 1966 as a Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart whose Motherhouse is in Joliet, Illinois. She earned a B.A. from the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois, and a Master’s in Science Education from Purdue University in West Lafayette. The first part of her professional life was spent in the field of education for nearly 22 years. In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, she ministered as a teacher in an Illinois parish as a Pastoral Associate and Director of Adult Education. She then moved to Belize, Central America, where she established a new parish. She now holds a weekly scripture class in preparation for the Sunday scripture readings, is the Spiritual Assistant for three Secular Franciscan Fraternities, and is on the Board of the SouthWest Inter-Faith Team. Sister has a great love for everything Franciscan and helps others to grow in faith. The relationship she has with Jesus and the spiritual relationships she has with people brings her much joy. She finds her vocation fulfilling and is learning a religious vocation she would say, “If you feel God’s call, jump in and give it everything you have.”

35th Jubilees
Sister Mary Segvich

Sister Mary Segvich was born in Chicago. She professed her first vows in 1966 as a Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart whose Motherhouse is in Frankfort, Illinois. She earned a B.A. from the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois, and a Master’s in Science Education from Purdue University in West Lafayette. The first part of her professional life was spent in the field of education for nearly 22 years. In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, she ministered as a teacher at St. Francis Woods in Hammond, Indiana. She was then elected to the congregation’s leadership team as a Councilor for two terms. Following that, she ministered in an Illinois parish as a Pastoral Associate and Director of Adult Education. She then moved to Belize, Central America, where she established a new parish. She now holds a weekly scripture class in preparation for the Sunday scripture readings, is the Spiritual Assistant for three Secular Franciscan Fraternities, and is on the Board of the SouthWest Inter-Faith Team. Sister has a great love for everything Franciscan and helps others to grow in faith. The relationship she has with Jesus and the spiritual relationships she has with people brings her much joy. She finds her vocation fulfilling and is learning a religious vocation she would say, “If you feel God’s call, jump in and give it everything you have.”

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‘It’s Such a Privilege’: Bishop Rhoades Reflects on 40 Years of Priesthood

BY ERIC PEAT

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades can still vividly recall his own literal and figurative mountaintop experience as a student at Mount Saint Mary’s College, when the Holy Spirit and our Blessed Mother helped pave his path to the priesthood.

“The normal college life was not very fulfilling for me, and by my sophomore year, I was thinking, ‘I want something more here; I want to enter into a deeper relationship with Christ,’” remembered Bishop Rhoades. “But I wasn’t sure about the priestly vocation. I was struggling a lot about marriage and celibacy. I remember thinking about it at night, not being able to fall asleep, tossing and turning because I was just so torn between the two vocations. But it was one October day, when I went up and prayed on the mountain, which was Mount Saint Mary’s – it was at the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes – and I remember just handing it over to the Lord through Mary, asking, ‘Please help me; I’m not really happy at what I’m doing right now, and I’m confused about what I should do.’ And I continued to pray, and the thought of priesthood – there was just kind of this invasion of grace. It was the joy and the peace, which are fruits of the Holy Spirit.”

This joy and peace that a young Kevin Rhoades encountered on the mountaintop led him to pursue a priestly vocation – one that has blessed countless faithful in multiple dioceses over the past four decades. On Sunday, July 9, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrated the 40th anniversary of his priestly ordination. His excellency has spent 19 of those years as a bishop and 13 in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, where he has shepherded his flock by teaching the Gospel, celebrating the sacraments, and continually engaging with priests, laity, and religious alike.

“My grandmother – my mother’s mother – lived with us when I was a kid, and she was a very holy woman. She had arthritis, difficulty getting around, but she prayed the rosary, and she was just a beautiful person with a beautiful faith. So, I was raised in a very positive experience of the Catholic faith, in the home and then in school.

Bishop Rhoades loved his Catholic schooling, graduating from Lebanon Catholic High School in 1975. He was very active in school, serving as an altar boy among many other activities. “I think the seed was planted for a religious vocation, although I didn’t really discern it until college,” Bishop Rhoades said, when the aforementioned invasion of grace opened his eyes to the priesthood. After completing his second year at Mount Saint Mary’s College in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and realizing that this desire was more than a passing whim, he entered St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Overbrook, Pennsylvania. Two years later, he left for Rome, where he studied theology at the North American College and the Pontifical Gregorian University from 1979 to 1983.

In 1982, Bishop Rhoades was ordained to the diaconate at St. Peter’s Basilica in Vatican City by Cardinal Terence Cooke. He was part of the first class of the North American College to be ordained in the basilica – a
Kevin C. Rhoades was ordained a priest of the Harrisburg Diocese on July 9, 1985. He was assigned to St. Patrick Parish in York, Pennsylvania, where he would serve as Parochial Vicar for two years while also ministering part-time to a local Hispanic parish, Cristo Salvador. Six months later, his bishop asked him to also take care of the local migrants working in the orchard fields. It was during this time serving the Hispanic population that Bishop Rhoades “fell in love with the culture” that he still strives to celebrate through Hispanic Ministry in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

“The most important thing that I ended up being ordained a bishop on December 9, 2004, on the feast of St. Juan Diego. When I was Bishop of Harrisburg, I started a new mission for Mexican migrants in the diocese, and I called it St. Juan Diego Mission. When I was transferred to Fort Wayne, of course they were in tears, but they gave me as a parting gift this beautiful painting of Juan Diego, and it’s in my chapel in my house here in Fort Wayne. This has been a thread throughout my priestly and episcopal life.”

Another three years in Rome studying dogmatic theology and canon law were followed by a brief assignment as Assistant Chancellor in the Harrisburg diocesan office before he was appointed Pastor of St. Francis Assisi Parish in 1990. He served there for five years until accepting a teaching position at Mount Saint Mary’s Seminary. He was named Rector of the seminary in 1997, a position he held until Pope John Paul II appointed Kevin C. Rhoades as Bishop of the Diocese of Harrisburg at the age of 46.

“I received the call in October of 2004, I was really dumbfounded; I was kind of speechless,” Bishop Rhoades said of his appointment. “Other than the leadership required in his rector role and his limited work in the diocesan office, Bishop Rhoades said he had no real training to be a bishop and was instead expecting to return to parish life. Despite the inevitable learning curve, he couldn’t say no to his hero.”

“I was one of the last bishops appointed by Pope John Paul II before he died, and he was kind of my hero, the one who I would listen to,” Bishop Rhoades said, referencing his time in Rome. “I would go over to St. Peter’s, go over to audiences and his Angelus talks. He really helped to form me to be a priest, because I learned so much from listening to his talks and reading his writings, that it was kind of unbelievable for me that he was the one who appointed me to be a bishop. And I was very emotional about that. When I was back in Rome the first time after being a bishop, walking down the aisle past his tomb, there were tears, because I was like, ‘I served Mass in this chapel as a seminarian, and now I’m a bishop.’ I would have never imagined that. So, he was a great influence on my theological and philosophical thinking.”

Other priestly models for Bishop Rhoades included Father Tony Manochio, his college priest who he asked to be his spiritual director; Monsignor Thomas Brenner, Pastor of his first priestly assignment at St. Patrick; and Father Bernie Pistone, Pastor of Cristo Salvador in York. Bishop Rhoades asked the latter two to be chaplains at his ordination, and they were at his side when Cardinal Justin Rigali ordained him a bishop in 2004.

While being a bishop in one’s home diocese is not common, Bishop Rhoades found that all his previously-established connections made it easier, although the transition took some getting used to. “Some of the priests, like my high school principal or priests who I had served Mass for when I was in grade school, I’m now their bishop and their superior — that was very weird,” Bishop Rhoades said. He admitted that he thought he’d be in Harrisburg for the rest of his life, but once again, change that Bishop Rhoades “fell in love with the culture” that he still strives to celebrate through Hispanic Ministry in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend five years later.

“I knew nothing about the diocese — I knew no one here,” said Bishop Rhoades. “It was difficult leaving family, it was difficult leaving my close friends, but I felt so welcomed by the priests pretty quickly, and I’ve been very happy here.”

Since his installation on January 13, 2010, Bishop Rhoades has indeed made himself at home in the diocese and accessible to its people. Many hear his voice on Redeemer Radio via his weekly show, Truth in Charity. Others hear him answering questions at conferences or preaching at Mass. “I think that that’s part of evangelization, helping people to grow in the knowledge of the faith, and hopefully that knowledge leads to love of God and a love for the Church,” Bishop Rhoades said. “I kind of find that life-giving. Even now, when I visit the high schools and teach or give a lecture at Notre Dame, I love doing that. That’s part of my personality, but also, I’m learning when I’m preparing.”

Bishop Rhoades continues learning and sharing knowledge on a plethora of committees and advisory boards across the country. Most notably, he currently serves as Chair of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Doctrine, where he has helped lead the charge on the National Eucharistic Revival, an effort he refers to as “the center of my intention in shepherding the diocese at this time.” In fact, the themes of the Eucharist and Mary — both of which appear prominently on one side of...
Dear Bishop Rhoades,

The faithful of Immaculate Conception Parish, Auburn would like to wish you a happy 40 years of priestly ministry. May God strengthen you as you continue to shepherd His people. Amen.

St. Patrick, Pray for Bishop Rhoades.

Congratulations and Blessings to Bishop Rhoades ON YOUR 40TH PRIESTLY ANNIVERSARY.

Father John Eze and St. Patrick, Arcola parishioners

Bishop’s coat of arms – are the two themes that he said have defined his priesthood. “Those are the images of my priestly life, but also my life as bishop,” said Bishop Rhoades. “The highlight of my time as Bishop of Harrisburg was a diocesan Marian year that I had, and I think that was the most significant thing that happened in those five years. When I was ordained a bishop, it was during the year of the Eucharist. John Paul had just issued his encyclical on the Eucharist, so my first homilies throughout the diocese were all on the theme of the Eucharist. So here we are again, almost 20 years later, and we’re in a national Eucharistic Revival.”

As Bishop Rhoades reflected on the past four decades, he recalled particular events that stood out. In addition to priestly ordinations, parish and school visits, and World Youth Day pilgrimages – of which he is days away from embarking on his fourth as shepherd of our diocese – he referenced the renewal of Fort Wayne-South Bend’s Marian consecration in 2014, when he was “blown away” by the level of participation, and last year’s Corpus Christi procession in Warsaw to kick off the Eucharistic Revival, which “really was very moving.” It’s the faithful of the diocese who Bishop Rhoades said have not only left a mark, but who have also sustained him through the valleys after the mountaintop experiences fade. “It’s such a privilege to be a priest and a bishop,” said His Excellency. “And hopefully, despite my own personal weaknesses, I hope that my service to the Lord and the Church has borne fruit and will continue to bear fruit. I really rely on the prayers of the faithful, the people. I really think that’s what keeps me going: the graces that come from the prayers of the people, and I am so grateful for all of the support and prayers of the people of our diocese and the Diocese of Harrisburg, because for me, they’re like the salt of the earth, and that’s what encourages me as well – the strong faith that I see in the people who are really living the faith, going to church, serving the poor, and practicing works of mercy. There are a lot of saintly people who I’ve had the privilege to meet here in our diocese.”

The privilege has truly been ours, Bishop Rhoades. Congratulations on 40 years as a priest and bishop, and may God bless you on your jubilee!
Father Daniel Durkin Celebrates 50 Years of Priesthood

BY DENISE FEDOROW

Father Daniel Durkin celebrated his 50th jubilee with a big party on Tuesday, June 27, at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Fort Wayne. He said he enjoyed a special program and party with approximately 150 people in attendance.

Father Durkin said big influences in his vocation to the priesthood were family members who were priests, like his uncle, Monsignor Thomas Durkin, and he said, “a number of my cousins were Precious Blood priests.”

Even though he’s retired, he continues to serve in a number of ways as he is able. Longtime friend and health care representative Pam Allmandinger, said he sometimes concelebrates Mass at St. Elizabeth, hears confessions, takes communion to the nursing homes, and offers counseling to those who need to talk.

According to a previous article in Today’s Catholic by Jodi Marlin, Father Durkin’s formation began at what was once Our Lady of the Lake seminary on Lake Wawasee in Syracuse when he was in high school. He went on to attend St. Gregory’s Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio, and finished his formal education at Mount St. Mary’s in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Father Durkin was ordained on May 26, 1973.

After his ordination, he was first assigned to Holy Family Parish in South Bend and then to St. Jude Parish in South Bend. The first church he pastored was at St. Joseph and St. Catherine in Roanoke.

According to Marlin’s story, Father Durkin was quoted as saying, “It was during my time in Roanoke that I worked with Monsignor Robert Schulte to create the training program for the permanent diaconate ministry in the diocese.”

He also brought the Christ Renews His Parish program to St. Joseph, according to Allmandinger, who said she thought it was the second parish in the diocese to have the program. Allmandinger shared that a participant in that program gave a testimonial to Father Durkin saying he was on the wrong road and when he went to the Christ Renews retreat, “It completely turned his life around and he was so grateful to Father Dan,” she said.

His next assignment was St. Mary of the Assumption in Avila where he oversaw the construction of a necessary school expansion. He was then assigned to St. Henry and Sacred Heart, Fort Wayne, until Sacred Heart was designated as a personal parish where the Latin Mass is celebrated.

Father Durkin said it pleased him to serve at Sacred Heart because his uncle, Monsignor Durkin, started the parish.

Allmandinger shared that Father Durkin once told her that bringing the Lord to people in the Eucharist and helping people enter the Church were so rewarding to him as a priest. She also shared another program that Father Durkin brought to St. Joseph that made a big impact – he started a Day of Recollection or Renewal for seniors.

She shared that her mother was a senior who would cry, wishing she could participate in the Christ Renews His Parish retreats. When Allmandinger told Father Durkin this, he came up with the idea for the Day of Recollection for the seniors in nursing homes. He would celebrate Mass, offer the Anointing of the Sick, they’d have dinner, and a speaker was brought in – someone who’d traveled to the Holy Land, for example.

“He did that every year for 10 years,” Allmandinger said. “He’d bring the seniors in for a Christmas party too. Seeing those seniors participating in the Day of Renewal was just phenomenal.”

Allmandinger also shared that for his jubilee celebration, Father Durkin received several letters from parishioners at St. Joseph, including one from a young girl sharing how much it meant to her that he administered her First Holy Communion and Confirmation and that he was always there as a friend. She said his response after reading the letters was, “We need to have another party! “We are all very fond of him,” Allmandinger said.
Father Robert D’Souza Celebrates 50 Years of Priesthood

BY BETHANY BEEBE

Father Robert D’Souza let Jesus engineer his life, and it made all the difference in the world.

The oldest of Joseph Benjamin and Marcelin D’Souza’s nine children, Father D’Souza thought he would become an engineer after high school. His plans changed when he accepted an invitation from his parish priest in Kirem, India. The priest took Father D’Souza to a local home where a man lay dying. After administration of Sacraments and prayer, the pair left, but the spiritual impact of that visit remained with Father D’Souza. Shortly after, a retreat helped Father D’Souza make a decision about his vocation, and on March 19, 1973, after much training and schooling, he was ordained by the late Archbishop Albert V. D’Souza.

As a newly-ordained priest, Father D’Souza spent two years at his first appointment about 50 miles outside of Calcutta. An area where only Bengali was spoken, Father D’Souza practiced and taught the faith. “My first appointment to the priesthood was tough, where everything was new to me,” he said. Despite the challenges, he liked his work. “I liked going to the villages, celebrating Mass, and teaching Catechism to the people.”

New challenges awaited Father D’Souza at his next appointment. Transferred to Calcutta and a parish where 60 percent of the population lived in the slums, Father D’Souza soon found himself the leader of a facility of 300 orphan boys ages five to 20 who were either just from prison, found on the streets by Mother Teresa, or similarly delivered from destitution. After six months of running the institution, he saw the difficulty of caring for the basic needs, like food and education, for the large group of boys. Father D’Souza sought assistance from St. Mother Teresa, who co-founded the Missionaries of Charity. She told him to pray each day in front of the Blessed Sacrament and ask Mary for guidance in his struggles. “I still follow her advice strictly and I am happy to tell that her advice helped me to live happily,” he said. With the large losses and then recovery from a motorcycle accident, Father D’Souza found himself ready for a change, and in 1985 spent a year working at The Herald as the Assistant Editor and Circulation Manager of that Indian Diocesan publication.

Missing the life of a parish priest, Father D’Souza requested a return to such a role and soon found himself at Sacred Heart (India) Parish in 1986. As priest and dean of the Asansol region, he held many responsibilities. Father D’Souza said his “main trust was to educate the poor children and pastorally reach out.” Alongside the multiple schools and convents of St. Mother Teresa’s in the area was a leper colony in which 800 men, women, and children lived. “Every Sunday,” he said, “I used to say Mass to these lepers, the most enriching days of my ministry.”

While enriching, it was not permanent. Five years later, St. Antony’s School became his home. With 1500 students, he said, “It was very strenuous and demanding. After five years in the school, I asked for a sabbatical year.” That bishop’s refusal of time for rest touched the lives of people. Describing her as “my good friend,” Father D’Souza was offered a role in the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese by Bishop D’Arcy at St. Mother Teresa’s recommendation. As an Associate Pastor at St. Jude, Fort Wayne, and Chaplain for Parkview and St. Joseph Hospitals, he said, “I did only the pastoral ministry celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, and visiting the hospitals and nursing homes every day. Here I was spiritually enriched and touched the lives of people. These were the best days of my priesthood.”

After retiring, Father D’Souza took a 2020 trip home to India. Covid kept him from returning to the United States. Now at home in India with his family, Father D’Souza lives with 15 members of his family. “There is [a] lot of fun, frolic, and joy. Every evening at 8:30, we pray together, say the Rosary, read the Scripture, and sing the hymn to Our Lady,” he said. “That keeps us together. I am glad to be back with my own people and my family here in India.”

Their unmediated communication models solid advice Father D’Souza offers. “The world is changing every day and we are bombarded with new culture and technologies. Use them in a more positive way than for the pleasures of your life. Today, cell phones are the killer of persons and families. Parents, advise your children to use them for the good. Media can make your life and destroy life, too. It all depends, so use it for the goodness.”

Using that life that he handed over to Jesus continues to engineer goodness in the hearts of countless others.

St Jude Parish, Fort Wayne sends Congratulations to Father Bob D’Souza

ON YOUR GOLDEN JUBILEE.
Congratulations, Bishop Rhoades.

Cathedral of Saint Matthew

Ad Multos Annos!
Father Wilson Corzo Celebrates 25 Years of Priesthood

BY DENISE FEDOROW

Father Wilson Corzo, Pastor of Our Lady of Hungary, South Bend, said his vocation to the priesthood began as a young teen. He recalled that he was about 14 years old when a priest came to his school – the Director of Vocations – and he spoke to each class. That was when Father Corzo first felt he was called to the priesthood. The priest invited the young men if they were interested in entering the seminary to speak to him afterward. Father Corzo did speak to him after school, stayed in touch, and after completing 9th grade, he entered the minor seminary. He lived at the minor seminary in Colombia, his native country, for the rest of his high school years and then entered the seminary. He was ordained on December 12, 1993, and served a year and a half as a parish priest and also as chaplain at Albion Parochial School. He recalled that he was forming Christian communities and people. He said there weren’t any plans yet to celebrate his 25th jubilee, but said maybe he’d like to celebrate Mass and have a meal with the community at Our Lady of Hungary. He said he would also wish to go back and do the same with the community at St. Patrick, where he served the longest.

Father Corzo encourages young men to “think about the vocation of priesthood. It’s very nice, the ministry of priest, to be able to celebrate the sacraments and it’s amazing to help so many people and the community.” “We need more priests, so I invite young men to think about it and come to the priesthood,” said Father Corzo.

Deacon Kevin Ranaghan: 50 Years of Being a Bridge

TODAY’S CATHOLIC
July 23, 2023

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the diaconate, Kevin Ranaghan and his wife Dorothy moved to South Bend in September. They decided to remain there for 5 years before retiring four years ago. There will be another celebration of jubilarians this fall when all the deacons in the diocese get together on retreat in Donaldson. When there were only a handful of deacons, they used to gather with the diocesan priests, but the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend now has 40 deacons thanks to Bishop Kevin Rhoades. Deacon Ranaghan, who long served on the Diocesan Deacons’ Council, is grateful to Bishop Rhoades for this revival.

He still misses St. Bavo, which he calls “a lovely, wonderful part of my life and the life of my family,” but his age, health, and lack of stamina made 2019 the right time to step down. The Ranaghans had long maintained their membership at Sacred Heart, Notre Dame, and now find St. Joseph, South Bend, more accessible. Two of their daughters and their families are also St. Joe members, and the Ranaghans enjoy experiencing life in such a vibrant parish.

Deacon Ranaghan remains available to “pinch hit” as requested, especially in any way that fosters ecumenism and evangelism. A recent highlight was assisting in the Mass of Thanksgiving for newly-ordained Father Zane Langenbrunner, a son of St. Bavo. Father Langenbrunner noted that the deacon had known him since before he was born.

Deacon Ranaghan, who holds a Ph.D. in Theology from the University of Notre Dame, was trained by the Apostolic Institute, formed in the late 1960s to explore two big ideas: forming Christian communities and developing new forms of ministry in the Catholic Church. Its founders were very interested in base communities formed among the poor in Latin America, as well as in the re-emergence of the diaconate around the time of Vatican II. Before long, they were designing a course of studies to prepare men for this new form of Church leadership. Monsignor John Szabo, Pastor of Our Lady of Hungary, South Bend, had been instrumental in bringing the Cursillo movement to Notre Dame and South Bend. He became “our champion,” according to Deacon Ranaghan. Encouraged by Monsignor Szabo, Bishop Leo Pursley was willing to give it a try; he wound up ordaining three classes of deacons in three years. Most were sent to serve in diocesan parishes.

Deacon Kevin Ranaghan

For up-to-date information about Eucharistic Revival events and resources in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, visit diocesefwsb.org/eucharist or diocesefwsb.org/eucartia. For information at the national level, go to eucharisterevival.org.
TODAY’S CATHOLIC

Nudged by the Holy Spirit to Become a Deacon

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

At 91, macular degeneration makes it difficult for Deacon Eugene Egendoerfer to see, but he still prays morning and evening prayer even though he has to hold his breviary up from an LED light. He clearly remembers the moment when the Holy Spirit nudged him to explore becoming a deacon. He and his wife Winnie were leaving a midweek Cursillo gathering in Houston, Texas, where a priest had mentioned that their diocese planned to begin training men for this new role recently reopened by Vatican II. “You should look into that,” she told him, and he nodded. “That’s exactly what I was thinking.”

Gene and 32 other men began their studies at St. Mary’s Seminary in Houston, but after a year, he lost his electrical engineering job and decided to move back to Mishawaka, where the Egendoerfers joined Queen of Peace Parish. He figured that move probably meant he wasn’t called to the diaconate after all. But before long he learned that the Apostolic Institute was about to begin a program in our diocese for the same purpose. Bishop Leo Pursley ordained that first class of five men on June 29, 1973, which was also the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul, Apostles, but that year was also the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Two of those first deacons, Deacon Andrew Plodowski and Deacon Theodore Krizman, have died. Deacon Egendoerfer currently lives with his daughter in South Carolina. Retired Deacons Paul DeCelles and Kevin Ranaghan are still in South Bend.

Both Deacon Egendoerfer and Deacon Krizman were initially assigned to Queen of Peace in Mishawaka. When the pastor asked how they wanted to serve, Krizman’s first response was, “Put us on the preaching schedule.” A job transfer eventually took Krizman to North Carolina, but for the next 25 years, Egendoerfer preached a homily every other week at every one of four weekend Masses. Prayerfully preparing those homilies was a priority despite the demands of work and family. When he was working weekdays in Morris, Illinois, he prepared some of those sermons in the bathroom so he wouldn’t bother his roommate.

Pat Feehly, active at Queen of Peace for many years, stays in contact with Deacon Egendoerfer. She remembers the two deacons coming to her home to ask her husband Jim’s permission for his wife to attend charismatic prayer meetings in the parish. Jim assented but insisted he wouldn’t be joining her. However, it wasn’t long before he was dropping off their children for Pat to babysit along with others so he could attend a Life in the Spirit seminar. That may have had something to do with the fact that Pat sprinkled holy water in Jim’s coffee, but she attributes it to the main influence of the deacons. The Frehlys and the Egendoerfers became close friends. Pat remembers Gene as an excellent cook who kept the table for dinner every morning.

Besides preaching, Deacon Egendoerfer did a lot of visiting, including consoling and praying with families who had suffered tragic losses. In 1999, the Egendoerfers moved to Parrish, Florida, where Deacon Egendoerfer began serving at St. Francis Xavier Cabrini Church. The pastor told him deacons in that diocese weren’t allowed to preach, so he wound up baptizing more than 100 babies and working in prison ministry along with his wife Winnie. Every week, they spent a whole day in the prison getting to know people there for everything from murder to traffic violations. Winnie quickly established rapport with the female prisoners by admiring one’s “jewelry” (handcuffs and leg irons).

In 2011, he moved to Easley, South Carolina, with his daughter for part of the year, retiring for the other half and alternating his ministry for several years between Parrish and the Catholic Church of St. Luke in Easley, a mission of Holy Cross Church in Pickens, South Carolina. Although the bishop said deacons were supposed to retire at age 80, the pastor ignored that mandate, since Deacon Egendoerfer was still technically a deacon of the diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. At age 82, he finally retired from active ministry.

To observe the 50th anniversary of Deacon Egendoerfer’s ordination, his parish in Easley held a special Mass at which the pastor spoke about the responsibilities of a deacon and presented him with a framed commemoration from Pope Francis. A reception followed. Since Egendoerfer is hard of hearing, his daughter made sure the ceremony was recorded for him to listen to later. Besides his seven years in prison ministry, a highlight Deacon Egendoerfer recalls from his ministry was serving at the closing Mass of a charismatic conference in the University of Notre Dame stadium, vesting and then coming through the tunnel to the platform on the 50-yard line.

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New Altar at Oratory of the Holy Family Dedicated

BY CHRISTOPHER LUSHIS

Last summer, Bishop Rhoades visited the "Our Lady, Patroness of America Center in Rome City, with the hope to dedicate a new altar for the celebration of Holy Mass. While he was able to formally rename the chapel “Oratory of the Holy Family” and permanently reserve the Blessed Sacrament there, during installation of the altar stone, it became seriously damaged and needed to be completely replaced.

While this was an unfortunate delay, President Al Langsenkamp remained hopeful and saw God’s providence at work even in the tragedy. He said then, “We are excited that Bishop Rhoades will be coming back to do another Mass!” A year later, these expectations have been fulfilled as Bishop Rhoades returned to the Oratory on Saturday, July 15, and successfully dedicated the new altar and blessed a new ambo. Designed by local liturgical architect Phillip Breckler and constructed by Larry Campbell of Te Deum LLC, the altar depicts iconic symbols of the Holy Family and now holds relics of St. Agnes and St. Gallicanus.

The Mass for the Dedication of an Altar had special readings reflecting the sacred character of an Altar had special readings. In the first reading from the Book of the event, in his homily, Bishop Rhoades reflected the sacred character of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass fulfills the meaning of the sacrifices that were offered prior to the altar. While the Jews celebrated the dedication of the Jerusalem temple, how much greater must our joy in knowing that every altar I will dedicate an infinitely greater sacrifice will be offered; not burnt offerings of animals or crops, but the sacrifice of the Eucharist, the sacrifice of Christ and the Church. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass fulfills the meaning of the sacrifices that were offered prior to the altar in Jerusalem. On this altar and on the altars of Catholic churches and oratories throughout the world, Christ’s sacrifice is made present for our salvation and for that of the whole world.

Emphasizing the similar jubilation felt on this day, Bishop Rhoades continued, “What we began last summer here at the Our Lady, Patroness of America City on Saturday, July 15. The stone covers the first-class relics of St. Agnes and St. Gallicanus.

The Mass was the Dedication of an Altar had special readings reflecting the sacred character of the event. In his homily, Bishop Rhoades exhorted, “In the first reading from the book of the Mass, we heard the account of the dedication of the new altar in the temple of Jerusalem after it had been attacked, pillaged, and turned into a pagan shrine. The books of the law had been torn up and burned and any Jews found practicing their religion were tortured and executed. Faithful Jews revolted and fought back, as Judas Maccabeus formed and led a Jewish army. Even though they were greatly outnumbered, they defeated Antiochus Epiphanes and his forces, recapture Jerusalem, rebuild the city, and purify the temple. For eight days, the faithful Jewish people celebrated the dedication of the altar and joyfully offered burnt offerings and sacrifices of deliverance and praise.”

Emphasizing the similar jubilation felt on this day, Bishop Rhoades continued, “What we began last summer here at the Our Lady, Patroness of America Center with the rededication of this Oratory and its dedication to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph is completed today with this celebration of the dedication of this beautiful new altar. While the Jews celebrated the dedication of the Jerusalem temple, how much greater must our joy in knowing that every altar I will dedicate an infinitely greater sacrifice will be offered; not burnt offerings of animals or crops, but the sacrifice of the Eucharist, the sacrifice of Christ and the Church. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass fulfills the meaning of the sacrifices that were offered prior to the altar in Jerusalem. On this altar and on the altars of Catholic churches and oratories throughout the world, Christ’s sacrifice is made present for our salvation and for that of the whole world.

He emphasized that “Pope Benedict once said, ‘Christ’s presence is a dynamic presence that takes hold of us to make us His, to liken us to Him. He invites us with the force of His love, bringing us out of ourselves to be united with Him, making us one with Him.’ This is what happens at every Mass. The real presence of Christ makes us His temple, His house, and all together we form His Church.”

Bishop spoke further about the uniqueness of this particular liturgy, saying, “I will consecrate the altar with sacred chrism. This is quite unusual because chrism is usually used at the consecration of persons, not things. We were anointed with sacred chrism when baptized and confirmed. Priests and bishops are anointed with chrism at their ordination. When I consecrate this altar, I invite you to think about your own consecration. What does it mean to be consecrated? It means to be ‘set apart.’ This altar will be set apart for divine worship, nothing else will be done on it, it cannot be used for any other purpose other than for the offering of the Lord’s sacrifice. When we were consecrated, we were set apart for the service of God and the building up of His Kingdom. This demands our continual conversion, a sacrificial dying to ourselves so that we belong more and more to God. This is the path of holiness, the journey of our Christian life: living our baptismal consecration.”

The true Christian life is the life of discipleship. It’s the life that the Blessed Virgin Mary teaches and shows us. Her life and St. Joseph’s life mirrored their divine Son’s own loving self-oblation in obedience to the will of the Father. In inviting the Holy Family, we discover true freedom and joy, which draws others to the Lord and the saints. We find that the pilgrims who come here to this Oratory and who worship at this altar will experience the love and joy of the Lord!”

At the conclusion of Mass, Bishop Rhoades blessed hundreds of lilies for visitors to take with them. At its origin, the Rome City property served as a sanitarium to treat infectious diseases and was operated by Sisters of the Precious Blood, who sought to bring healing to the bodies and souls of their patients. The inclusion of relics in the new altar from St. Agnes, known for her purity as a virgin martyr, and St. Gallicanus, who founded a hospital and cared for the sick, seem particularly appropriate for this chapel.

Remarking on the day, Al Langsenkamp exclaimed, “Pilgrims at The Our Lady, Patroness of America Center have once again been given a great gift by Bishop Rhoades! Dedicating this proper and permanent Altar of Sacrifice will bring even greater reverence to celebrating the Holy Eucharist in the Oratory of the Holy Family.”

Following Mass, a reception was held to celebrate the special day with the more than 400 visitors in attendance. Of the many in attendance was Parker Zurbuch, accompanied by his wife Maria and young son Kolbe. Zurbuch had previously lived on the property as a novice with the former Franciscan Friars Minor. At that time, much of the property required extensive repairs and rehabilitation due to damage, misuse, and neglect from those who ran the property decades earlier. The renovations, which have since been completed by Langsenkamp, Property Manager Larry Young, and many others, have been tremendous improvements. Zurbuch shared, “I thought today was a wonderful example of how God uses His people to restore what has been broken. He restored humanity through Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross, and He has restored the Oratory in Rome City for His glory and the glory of the Immaculate!”
Agencies, Parishes, Schools Awarded St. Mary’s Heritage Fund Grants

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has awarded grants totaling $231,330 from the St. Mary’s Heritage Fund to parishes, schools, and agencies across the diocese. The $3 million endowment fund was established in 1997 for St. Mary Mother of God Parish to help provide financial assistance to the poor and needy throughout the diocese. It was created through the collaboration and planning of the late St. Mary Pastor, Father Tom O’Connor, and St. Mary Mother of God parishioners, using money received from fire insurance on the historic downtown Fort Wayne church. The church burned in 1992 and a new church was erected on the same site.

Upon the approval of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, the following entities were awarded grants for 2023.

**Agencies**

- **Women’s Care Center** — $3,360 for Family Focus: Moms and Babies 2023
- **A Mother’s Hope** — $10,000 for Maternity Housing Program for pregnant women experiencing homelessness
- **The Rose Home**, Inc. — $6,200 for Resident Assistance Fund
- **Clinica Madre de Dios** — $10,000 for free medical care
- **Care Services of FWSB**, Inc. — $10,000 for Hope to Healing Mental Health Counseling
- **St. Bernard Parish in Wabash** to Bring Backpacks to Local Youth Center

St. Bernard Parish in Wabash is helping to enhance learning opportunities for area youth by teaming up with The Access Youth Center, a center that facilitates a safe, family-friendly environment for the community’s youth between the ages of eight and 18 through programming and activities, to collect backpacks and other school supplies for children in need as part of Project Backpack.

St. Bernard Business Administrator, Ann Unger, who has participated as a parish staff member in Project Backpack for many years said, “We are a small community, but very much a community that still has need.”

These supplies facilitate an enhanced ability to learn and grow by empowering area youth with the tools needed. “Learning becomes harder without the correct supplies, so to facilitate educational success we must equip our kids with the tools needed to succeed,” said Executive Director of The Access, Brad Bishop. “That is the tangible need Project Backpack addresses.”

The partnership between St. Bernard and The Access for this school drive is an example of Christ’s love and friendship. “The Access and St. Bernard partner locally through our own efforts, as well as through campus life in local schools,” said Brad Bishop. “Together, our organizations can, and do, help students take the first steps into a relationship with Jesus. Project Backpack is one of our efforts to show people the love of Christ by taking care of material needs.”

Last year, Project Backpack collected 500 backpacks. This year, the goal is to collect even more. Anyone interested in donating to Project Backpack can simply drop off new backpacks and other school supplies in the large box labeled Project Backpack located in the back of St. Bernard Church. The address is 207 North Cass Street, Wabash, Indiana 46992. All supplies will be distributed on Saturday, July 29, to youth in need.

**Schools**

- **Marian High School** — $10,000 for financial aid for minority students
- **Marian High School** — $20,000 for new school bus
- **Marian High School** — $10,000 for Hard as Nails ministry for sophomore retreat
- **Holy Family, South Bend** — $10,000 for tuition assistance
- **A John the Baptist, South Bend** — $7,500 for pre-K tuition assistance
- **Bishop Luers High School, Fort Wayne** — $10,000 for tuition assistance/bus transportation fees
- **St. Joseph, Fort Wayne** — $10,000 for transportation
- **St. Joseph, Fort Wayne** — $20,000 for English Language Learner Program

**Parishes**

- **St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel** — $3,500 for the parish food bank
- **St. Therese, Fort Wayne** — $8,500 for Faith and Organization
- **St. Henry** — $12,000 for gym lighting
- **St. Patrick, Fort Wayne** — $5,000 for school subsidy
- **St. Vincent de Paul, Elkhart** — $2,500 for Totus Tuus

**Mass for the Sick and Troubled**

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will be celebrating the Mass for the Sick and Troubled on Saturday, Aug. 19.

The Rosary will be said at 12:30 p.m. with Mass following at 1 p.m. There will be a blessing with a first class relic of Blessed Father Solanus Casey after Mass. Hospitality gathering afterwards.

All are welcome. We have handicapped accessibility.

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Try a Do-It-Yourself God Retreat This Summer

BY BETHANY BEEBE

This time of year, many people have the chance to enjoy a little extra vacation time. Using some of that time in retreat can create a closer relationship with God is an important part of the summer bucket list for many Catholics. With one’s own needs, tastes, and preferences in mind, retreats can be the spiritual version of DIY house projects. These tune ups for the soul need not cost a great deal or be overly complex. With a bit of planning, a do-it-yourself retreat can render meaningful results.

Resources

Ruth Chronister, who works at Good Shepherd Books and Gifts in Fort Wayne, said little, if any money, needs to be spent to create a meaningful retreat experience. She suggested that with the Holy Spirit as retreat guide, simply reading Scripture can be a daily retreat. Should one wish to contemplate a certain topic of theology, a concordance might help, she said.

Lectio Divina is another way to let Scripture recharge one’s soul. Each day, the Irish Jesuits guide users through patterned prayer. The first section helps users find the presence of God. Next, words highlighting freedom in Him are offered. Finding an increase in consciousness of Him follows, with a Scripture reading about the beauty of nature. Being in the right spot might happen in one’s own home or “secular” space like a park. Writer and speaker Alicia Hernon of The Messy Catholic Moms, “recalling that one could contemplate the life of a saint and how that might be mimicked in one’s own existence. She also suggested finding an author of choice and delving into other options he or she has written. Using a Bible study guide might be another option, perhaps even focusing on one book. Those new to Bible study might look at a text from the series “Six Weeks in the Bible,” she said. One of the nice parts about taking the time to get away with God on your own terms is that you define the time spent; a book written to take six weeks to enjoy might be condensed to one day for someone’s one-week vacation, for example.

Family

The joy of letting one’s soul get away can be expanded to the whole family. Mike and Alicia Hernon of The Messy Family Project offer free resources with information on how a family can create a meaningful retreat. They argue four elements are essential: fun, family bonding, prayer, and teaching. An enjoyable experience might look like joy memories, family, and faith. The authors encourage parents to respond to the current issues of one’s family, recalling that no parent is perfect and God only asks us to try. From parent-modeled behavior, kids learn more about faith and how to pray, creating special times of faith-building that will reap benefits for the rest of the child’s life. The activity is an annual tradition for the Hernons, who encourage readers to invest in age-appropriate fun; they promise great yield on the work that goes into it. In their free resource, they write, “Many times, we parents don’t know how to share the faith with our children. This retreat is a time for you to be intentional with your kids. You are showing them that you prioritize your relationship with them and with God. The amazing thing about family life is that it is a natural means for a relationship with God. Children’s experience with the family provides a foundation, strong or weak, for their life of faith. When you strengthen family life and those bonds, you will be strengthening the faith of your children. This retreat is a combination of prayer and works. Both are important aspects of sharing faith (1).

The Hernons have fun with their kids, but always tie in structured times of prayer and teaching about faith (1). They emphasize the importance of making everything age-appropriate. During times that one parent is with the youngest children, more serious discussions are had with the older, but kids are included in talks as soon as possible. Screens and phones are limited, a rule they only break once in a great while with a Christian movie for younger children to make possible a specific activity for other children in the family. The Hernons write that financial investment can be as small as a new box of crayons and some paper. The important part is that a spirit of camaraderie, family bonding, and love of God be expressed in these times of joy. While the actual amount of time spent may be more fun on or “secular” activities, the takeaway is one of prayerful devotion and love of God. Tami Kiser, on Catholic Moms, gives basic directions on how to create a simple family altar (2). Such a display is a visible anchor to the fun going on during the time spent together.

Location, Location, Location

Being in the right spot might be necessary for real estate, and it is nice to get away, but a retreat of one day or many could happen in one’s own home or “secular” space like a park. Writer and speaker Deanna Bartalini describes a retreat for one, a run from one parent is with the youngest children, more serious discussions are had with the older, but kids are included in talks as soon as possible. Screens and phones are limited, a rule they only break once in a great while with a Christian movie for younger children to make possible a specific activity for other children in the family. The Hernons write that financial investment can be as small as a new box of crayons and some paper. The important part is that a spirit of camaraderie, family bonding, and love of God be expressed in these times of joy. While the actual amount of time spent may be more fun on or “secular” activities, the takeaway is one of prayerful devotion and love of God. Tami Kiser, on Catholic Moms, gives basic directions on how to create a simple family altar (2). Such a display is a visible anchor to the fun going on during the time spent together.

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2. catholicmom.com/articles/2013/06/11/creating-a-vacation-home-altar-for-your-summer-family-trip
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Susan Richter Retires after 38 Years in Catholic Education

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

“I can’t imagine my life if I hadn’t spent 38 years in Catholic education,” said Susan Richter. “I’ve enjoyed every minute.”

After 23 years at Saint Joseph High School in Mishawaka, most as Principal, Richter taught middle school social studies at St. Matthew Cathedral School for five years before retiring at the end of this past semester.

Originally from Fort Wayne, Richter earned her B.S. in 1980 and her M.A. in 1981 from Purdue, with a double major that qualified her to teach middle and high school social studies and physical education. For 10 years, she was at Montini Catholic High School in Lombard, Illinois, not only teaching social studies at every grade level but also serving as Assistant Athletic Director for girls’ sports, coaching basketball and track. Although she was raised Presbyterian and her husband Patric was raised Lutheran, they often attended Mass together in solidarity with the Montini school “family.”

Patric grew up in LaPorte, so the Richters were eager to return to Indiana when a sales job opened up for Patric. Susan tried staying home with her two sons, but she missed teaching young people so much that she began subbing in both Catholic and public high schools in the South Bend area, including a semester at Clay High School. In 1995, she accepted a position at Saint Joseph High School as Director of Student Life, responsible for attendance and discipline. Those were the duties of an assistant principal but she didn’t have the academic qualifications for that title, so she enrolled in Notre Dame’s ACE Program, which she described as “the best two years of education I ever had.” Older than most of her fellow students, Richter loved learning so much more about the Catholic faith. In many conversations, theology teachers at Saint Joseph urged her to follow where her heart was leading. So, she was already enrolled in RGA by the time Bishop D’Arcy tapped her to be Principal at Saint Joseph High School. The whole family eventually joined the Church and became active at St. Joseph, South Bend.

During her tenure as Principal, Saint Joseph moved into its brand-new building, a major accomplishment. Richter calls those years the best part of her educational career, but giving her all often involved 20-hour days, until the very end of athletic contests or co-curricular activities. In fairness to her family, she decided to resign as Principal in 2018. However, she wasn’t ready to retire from teaching. When a friend told her St. Matthew Cathedral School was looking for a middle school social studies teacher, she met with the Principal, Sister Gianna Marie Webber. Richter learned that religious life, Sister Gianna had also been a coach and teacher, so the two hit it off right away. “At High School, the school of my dreams,” Richter smiled about Richter, “Susan has been a Blazer for the last five years following her retirement from administration. She is passionate about education and puts all her into her work. Susan is service-oriented and desires the best for everyone she meets and serves. She is a friend, colleague, and a beautiful daughter of God.”

Richter had never before taught middle school, reputedly the most challenging level, but “I like challenges,” she said. She taught geography (eastern and western hemisphere, respectively) to 6th and 7th grade students and U.S. history, her specialty, to 8th-graders as well as being their home-room teacher. “My students kept me young and made me laugh every day,” culminating with teaching her the Griddy dance and serving. She’s grateful to Sister Gianna Marie and her students and their parents for the opportunity to teach at St. Matthew.

And now it’s time to retire and spend quality time with her husband during their “golden years,” however long or short. The Richters have no major travel plans but look forward to spending more time in Rome, Georgia, where their son Matthew is Assistant Basketball Coach at Berry College, which has the largest campus in the United States in square miles.

Richter hopes she’s been able to instill a few concepts, every educator’s job. By staying in the area, she should continue to run into former students. Some have already told her they’re living by “Richterisms,” the life lessons she considers more important than the content of her classes. “I’ve always taught faith first and my subject second.”

For example, “I’m a big advocate of civic responsibility,” she said, voting in every election. One of the lessons she learned from her own mother: “Work hard, so hard that you’re tired at the end of each day.” She could honestly tell her students she verified that at the end of every day. Another Richterism is to do your very best, since “you get out of life what you put into it.”

Richter has long made a practice of writing a letter of advice to each graduating high school senior or 8th-grader. The most important piece of advice? “Follow your passion!” For Susan Richter, that passion has been Catholic secondary education, to the benefit of her students and colleagues and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

JUBILEES, from page 7

and moved to healthcare where she ministered as a Pastoral Care Chaplain. For 28 years, she provided a spiritual and comforting presence to patients at United Samaritan Medical Center in Danville, Illinois, who were often dealing with life-changing illnesses. After being such a blessing to others, she is now a blessing to her companion Sisters in their retirement years. She is grateful for the Sisters who help her to live the Franciscan value of simplicity, and she finds joy when others trust her enough to let her help them.

Sister Sandra Duma was born in Chicago. She professed her first vows in 1966 as a Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart whose Motherhouse is in Frankfort, Illinois. She earned a B.A. from the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois, and a Master’s in Science Education from Purdue University in West Lafayette. The first part of her professional life was spent in the field of education for nearly 14 years. In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, she ministered as a teacher at St. Charles School in Fort Wayne from 1967 to 1970. In addition, she taught in schools in Illinois. Following that, she was asked to be the Secretary General for the congregation, a position she held for 10 years. After that, she provided secretarial services in a healthcare institution for a number of years until she returned to the Motherhouse. Sister appreciates beauty and enjoys a peaceful environment that reflects God’s abundant goodness. Every day, she prays for each of our Sisters and for the needs of the congregation. To any woman interested in religious life she said, “Keep your eyes fixed on God and follow God’s lead.”

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World Youth Day Is About Christ or It Is About Nothing at All

World Youth Day (WYD) brings together young people from every corner of the globe to celebrate their Catholic faith. Away from home and buoyed by the witness of their peers, it becomes possible for many to have a transforming encounter with Jesus Christ. But it is not friends, travel, or universal embrace of the human spirit that make WYD a life-changing, transcendent experience. Only Jesus Christ is capable of that.

In fact, ultimately, WYD cannot be about anything other than Christ the Lord. Even noble aims like service or expressions of diversity are insufficient organizational principles. And that is because, as Pope Francis has reminded us many times, the Church is not a mere bureaucracy. The Church is the People of God, the very body of Christ! And WYD, a visible and vibrant display of that unity, must be seen as its center and focus. Otherwise, it’s not worth hosting.

I’ll never forget the evening of worship that I was privileged to participate in as a newly ordained priest in Krakow. Hosted by the Knights of Columbus at Tauron Arena, more than 20,000 young people gathered for catechesis, music, and Eucharistic adoration. The evening included a Eucharistic procession, which passed several times around the arena. Leading the procession, I recalled the delight for the life expressed by one pilgrim as we turned and began to head in her direction. Seeing the monstrance draw near, the young girl whispered just loud enough for me to hear, “He is coming to me.”

WYD serves as a catalyst for a more profound relationship with Jesus Christ. As young Catholics gather to worship, learn, and pray together, the joy and energy present helps us to go beyond the reality of Christ’s presence. Engaging in spiritual exercises that might not be a regular part of parish life for many young Catholics, pilgrims are invited to experience the living presence of Jesus in a tangible way. They meet Jesus in a privileged way, in the confessional, in the Eucharist, and in catechesis. This encounter fosters a deep sense of intimacy and love for Christ, even igniting a desire to seek him with passion and commitment.

For many young people, World Youth Day offers an opportunity to nourish their faith. That means, first and foremost, discovering their identity in Christ. In Krakow, Pope Francis pointed to the encounter Jesus had with Zacchaeus, urging young people to remember their identity as God’s beloved sons and daughters. The pope told us, “Jesus has taken upon Himself our humanity and His heart will never be separated from ours.”

The encounter with Jesus Christ, especially through the witness of the pope and other inspiring leaders, is the call to live a life centered on Christ. Through catechesis sessions, pilgrims receive guidance and support to help them face the challenges of the modern world with unwavering faith. I have seen over and over again how this encounter often leaves young people with the intention to be witnesses of Christ’s love in their communities and empower them to live the Faith confidently.

When the focus is unabashedly on Christ, young people can hear the Lord’s voice more clearly and begin to know the plans of love he has for them. How many young people have discovered their vocation at WYD? How many have given their first “yes” to Christ to pursue His invitation to priesthood, religious life, or marriage?

World Youth Day, if WYD is understood as a global gathering to demonstrate diversity or human fraternity, it’s not worth the time or the money. But an event that proposes Jesus Christ to hundreds of thousands of young people who are dying from not knowing Him? Now, that’s worth everything.

Father Patrick Briscoe, OP, is Editor of Our Sunday Visitor.
‘Bluey’ Is Teaching Me to Be a Better Catholic Parent

During the COVID pandemic, my husband and I took turns watching “Cocomelon” with our then two-year-old. A brightly colored show with apparently animatronic humans singing not quite catchy (nor entirely forgettable) songs, “Cocomelon” was standard viewing in the first few weeks of the lockdown. Neither of us could stand it. The colors. The music. The weird looking people who didn’t move in quite the right way, even for cartoon characters. While working from home, we let our toddler watch too much of a show that we absolutely abhorred.

And then one morning I walked into the living room and my husband was pressing play on Episode One of an Australian kid’s show featuring talking dogs. Three episodes in, we were hooked.

More than two years later, this “Bluey” has become a fixture in our house – so much so that we’ve got matching family T-shirts and have “Bluey”-themed birthday parties.

The show is the invention of Joe Brumm, an Australian dad raising two little girls who wanted to create something that was equally enjoyable for parents and kids. He’s certainly succeeded; these quick little episodes – only seven-minutes long, with more than 125 currently available on Netflix – are funny, heartwarming, and entertaining. It is utterly captivating to watch Bandit Heeler and his wife, Chilli, and their two-year-old. A brightly colored show with adorable cartoon challenges me to find goodness in even the most ordinary of circumstances to make the best memories.

As a Catholic parent, this is exactly the show we’ve been looking for. It helps us teach the Catholic material, stay committed to our devotional prayers, and figure out liturgical living in a way that teach our kids the rhythms of the Church. You won’t see that in “Bluey,” but it won’t show us the life of the Church in terms of the sacraments or attending Mass. Yet it gives us a beautiful snapshot of a domestic church – a family filled with moments of sorrow and joy, moments of choosing to give and sacrifice; moments that remind me to give of myself, completely, for the joy and delight of my family. This cartoon challenges me to find grace in the ordinary, to notice goodness in even the hard moments, and to say “yes” to loving and serving the most important people in my life.

If you’re looking for endearing stories about family and the enduring truth that being present to one another is the best way we can love one another (and is also a remarkable expression of our Catholic faith), do check out “Bluey,” and give us McGradys a call.

We’ll be there, with magic asparagus, balloons for keepy-uppy, a good song for Pass the Parcel, and the desire to go into full-blown dance mode.

KATIE PREJEAN MCGRADY

Katie Prejean McGrady is an international Catholic speaker and author.
Director of Youth Faith Formation
Principal Duties and Responsibilities:
- Foster the faith formation of young parishioners, serving as a consultant in areas of catechesis and faith formation of children and adolescents.
- Support the pastor in developing his mission and cultural goals of the parish to include long-range planning related to the mission of the parish.
- Assist with the pastoral care of young parishioners under the direction of the pastor.
- Act as a resource to foster the faith life of young parishioners through renewal and appropriate evangelization initiatives.
- Work directly with team coordinators to help their respective teams transmit faith formation to young parishioners according to the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Recruit, train, and form current and future youth faith formators.
- Help young parishioners integrate their faith with their ordinary lives by being present in their extracurricular activities throughout the year personally or by delegation of team coordinators.
- Coordinate Formation Days for all volunteers of the Youth Faith Formation Program which are academic or spiritual in nature, respectively.
- Ensure that all volunteers within the Youth Faith Formation Program are up-to-date with their Safe Environment training, as per diocesan requirements.
- Follow all canonical and diocesan requirements in sacramental preparations.
- Register all required data regarding the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) of young parishioners.
- Other duties as assigned by pastor.

This position will require 10-12 hours weekly working on campus with additional hours as needed and approved by pastor. Apply online at diocesefwsb.org/careers.

Director of Sacred Music
The Director of Sacred Music works to continue developing a sacred music program at the service of Roman Catholic liturgical worship in a parish setting. This includes, but is not limited to, playing at Masses, directing the choir(s), training cantors, planning sacred music for all liturgical celebrations in the parish, and providing/arranging for music at “non-scheduled” liturgies (funerals, weddings, etc.).

Principal Duties and Responsibilities:
- Plans and executes music for all sung Masses (4 per weekend, Holy Days, and as scheduled for Holy Week) as well as special Masses, such as Confirmation.
- Provides accompaniment for all sung Masses.
- Rehearses and conducts the adult and youth choirs which will sing at Masses on a schedule determined with the pastor.
- Provides music for all weddings and funerals, including all relevant planning with involved parties.
- Maintains close working relationship with the pastor.
- Any additional responsibilities at the discretion of the pastor.

The standard work schedule is 12-15 hours weekly with additional hours as needed. Interested Candidates may apply at diocesefwsb.org/careers. Visit saintpaulucc.org for more information about the parish.
**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.

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**Blessed Solanus Feast Day Celebration**

**Huntington** — Join the celebration for Blessed Solanus’ Feast Day on Sunday, July 30, from 2-4 p.m. at St. Felix Catholic Center. There will be a blessing by Father Tony Steinacker, portrait by Artist Mary Hilger, and a table display of prints available. A free gift is available for EVERYONE at the Solanus Guild Bookstore. Contact Jan Scher at 260-356-1917 or jan-scher@gmail.com for information.

**Golfing Fore The Seminarian Education Fund Charity Golf Outing**

**Fort Wayne** — Join the St. Jude Knights of Columbus #16065 in the Golfing “Fore” the Seminarian Education charity golf outing on Friday, August 26, from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Foster Park Golf Course. $300 per foursome includes golf, lunch, beverages, and awards. Advanced registration required. Sponsorship opportunities available. Proceeds from the event will go toward the Seminarian Education Fund for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. For questions and registration help, contact Chris Mettler at 260-609-5413 or chrismarkmettler@gmail.com or Jeff Weldon at 260-417-6135 or weldon623@outlook.com.

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**1958 Central Catholic Class Reunion**

**Fort Wayne** — Enjoy a day with the 1958 Central Catholic High School class on Saturday, Aug. 26, from noon to 6 p.m. at the Pine Valley Country Club, 10900 Pine Mills Rd. Remember the time at Central Catholic and make new memories. Dinner Buffet begins at 2 p.m. $40 per person. Contact Robert Schlenkser at 260-341-7462 to RSVP.

**Sensory Friendly Masses Held at St. Vincent de Paul**

**Fort Wayne** — The Sunday, 1:30 p.m. Sensory-Friendly Masses held at St. Vincent de Paul, 1502 E. Wallen Rd., provide a safe, comfortable, and stigma-free setting for children and adults with sensory challenges, mental illness, or any kind of disability to feel engaged and experience Mass in a meaningful way. To find out more information about this Mass or if you are interested in offering a sensory-friendly Mass at your parish, contact Allison Sturm at asturm@diocesefwsb.org or 260-414-5960.

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**First Saturday Devotion**

*Our Lady, Patroness of America Center*

Mass the First Saturday of each month at 11 a.m.

**PatronessOfAmerica.org**

2780 E. Northport Rd., Rome City, IN 46784 260-404-4990

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**Looking for Family Time - Grow Together?**

Join the celebration for Blessed Solanus’ Feast Day on Sunday, July 30, from 2-4 p.m. at St. Felix Center, Home of the Father Solanus Guild Huntington Extension. There will be a blessing by Father Tony Steinacker, portrait by Artist Mary Hilger, and a table of prints available. A free gift for EVERYONE at the Solanus Guild Bookstore.

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**Transfigured History**

*The Lincoln Chamber Orchestra*

Saturday, Aug. 5 7-8 p.m.

Forks of the Wabash
3011 W. Park Dr. - Huntington
779-216-0521

$15 $10 before Aug. 5

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Corpus Christi Student Wins National Handwriting Award

By Jill A. Boughton

Andrew Clevenger, a rising 3rd-grader at Corpus Christi School in South Bend, has earned the Nicholas Maxim Award in the 2023 Zaner-Bloser National Handwriting Contest. This makes him a national champion in a competition that has drawn entries from about 2.5 million students since it began in 1991. Only two Nicholas Maxim Awards are given each year, one in cursive and one in manuscript writing. They are reserved for students with special needs and named in honor of a 5th-grader from Maine born without hands and lower arms. He won the 2011 contest by holding a pencil between his upper arms.

At around age 3, Clevenger was diagnosed with speech and developmental delays, specified as Autism Spectrum Disorder. He has received four years of intensive A.B.A. (Applied Behavior Analysis) therapy in preparation for being main-streamed in school. About a year later as Autism Spectrum Disorder. He has received four years of intensive A.B.A. (Applied Behavior Analysis) therapy in preparation for being main-streamed in school.

Because Andrew dislikes having attention drawn to him, the school was very deliberate in honoring his achievement in small settings.

The award was well-timed, since it provided a cause for celebration after his beloved grandfather unexpectedly passed away. He and Andrew were buddies, snuggling to watch Andy Griffith reruns together every night. The Clevengers have been sharing a home with these grandparents since they returned from living in Maui. At home, Andrew is eager to help out. He enjoys vacuuming, doing dishes, and cleaning windows.

Besides caregiving at home, Andrew’s mom Ella, originally from Venezuela, works for the Sisters of the Holy Cross, where she loves learning about the elderly sisters’ travels and sacrifices. Four-year-old Alex rounds out the family; thrilled to become a big brother, Andrew has become his best friend.

Although many schools regard handwriting as outdated, about half of the national Zaner-Bloser winners attend Catholic elementary schools.

Mrs. Willerton says, “Corpus Christi has a decades-long history of teaching students the importance of good handwriting.” Every year, each class selects a classroom winner whose rendition of “The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog” is submitted for the annual contest. Among those winners, four received state-level recognition this year.

Zaner-Bloser “develops curriculum resources to teach foundational literacy and math skills to students in prekindergarten through 6th grade. Our resources help teachers engage and empower students and inspire more ‘aha’ moments to harness the creative power of learning.” Each entry is judged on four keys to legibility: shape, size, spacing, and slant of the letters. Our beautiful retirement community offers a variety of living options, amenities, activities, excursions and more.

Call 260-544-0255 to schedule a visit and envision your new lifestyle with us.

ascensionliving.org/sacredheartvillage

515 North Main Street | Avilla, IN 46710

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