

# TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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## After Years of Preparation, Synod on Synodality Begins in Rome

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis began the work of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops by asking members to meditate on ancient theological texts about the Holy Spirit, have the courage to be honest about their disagreements, and focus much more on listening than on sharing their opinions.

The synodal process “is not easy, but it’s beautiful, very beautiful,” Pope Francis told some 364 other synod members, including Bishop Rhoades (see sidebar on page 9), and 85 non-voting experts, ecumenical delegates, and facilitators the afternoon of Wednesday, October 4, as the synod work began in the Vatican audience hall.

“A certain asceticism” is needed for the synod, the pope said. He asked forgiveness from journalists trying to cover the monthlong meeting but insisted “a certain fasting from public words” would be needed to ensure the proper spiritual atmosphere for the synod members.

And, in fact, the synod rules distributed that evening said, “In order to guarantee the freedom of expression of each and



Vatican Media

Pope Francis greets Bishop Rhoades at the opening session of the general assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican on Wednesday, October 4.

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## Red Masses Offer Prayers for Legal Professionals

BY KASIA BALSBAUGH AND  
BETHANY BEEBE

During the first week of October, Father Mark Gurnter, Vicar General of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, celebrated two Red Masses – at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne on Monday, October 2, and at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at the University of Notre Dame on Thursday, October 5 – to ask for the Holy Spirit's intercession upon those in the legal profession or civil service.

Along with fellow canon lawyers Father Wimal Jayasuriya, Pastor of St. Mary Mother of God, and Father Jacob Runyon, Rector of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Father Gurnter celebrated this centuries-old tradition that, according to Father Gurnter, calls upon the Holy Spirit to help “all those who work in the legal profession.”

According to literature provided at the Masses, the historically European recognition began in the 13th century. The first Red Mass in the United States was held in the late 1920s at Old St. Andrew Church in New York City and has spread across the country since. The first Red Mass at Notre Dame was held in May of 1955. The Red Mass was customarily held around Michaelmas – the feast of St. Michael, September 29 – which marked the beginning of a new academic term. Today, most Red Masses around the world are still celebrated at the same time, roughly our modern midsemester.

Frequently, the life of St. Thomas More – patron saint of lawyers, politicians, and civil servants – is a common topic of reflection at the special Mass' celebration.

“The consequence of [St. Thomas'] refusal to go against his rightly formed conscience, which told him that King Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn was not legitimate, and that King Henry was not – indeed, could never be – Supreme Head of the Church of England” is often considered, Father Gurnter said.

Pondering weighty issues is par for the course in the profession, Father Gurnter said during his homily at both Masses, even when not leading to martyrdom, as in the case of St. Thomas More.

“The legal profession and a life of public service are fraught with moments of conscience, moments in which decisions must be made regarding the lives of individuals or regarding policy which can affect groups of people,” Father Gurnter said.

He continued, pointing



Photos by Kasia Balsbaugh

Father Mark Gurnter, a canon lawyer and the Vicar General of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, celebrates the annual Red Mass at Notre Dame on Thursday, October 5.



Lawyers, law students, and law professors fill the Basilica of the Sacred Heart for the annual Red Mass.



Bethany Beebe

The altar is prepared at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception for the annual Red Mass held in Fort Wayne on Monday, October 2.

out that those holding legal  
power have pressures coming

from many directions. Outside  
groups holding vested interest,

popular perception on morals, personal worries about one's own safety, or for the safety of one's family, are all legitimate earthly concerns. Father Gurnter also begged the question that may weigh most heavily: “What would God have me do?”

It was with great prudence of research and consideration of the many affected perspectives in the case of Henry's divorce that caused More's response, according to the homily. “Conscience,” after all, Father Gurnter said, “is not a matter of personal autonomy.” Being able to listen to one's conscience in this way, and to act unhesitatingly according to what one hears requires an inner freedom and courage. Father Gurnter said that, for More, this inner freedom and courage came from his love of God.

“In other words,” Father Gurnter said, “before he was a martyr, he was a saint.”

During the Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne and the one on the campus of Notre Dame, which was well-attended by law students and professors, Father Gurnter urged the current and future legal professionals and civil servants to mirror such saintly conduct.

“To follow in the path of St. Thomas More – indeed, to follow Jesus Christ – is to do the same, to seek constantly the means of grace God has provided, to immerse ourselves in the sources of Divine Revelation, [and] to cultivate, above all things, love of God,” Father Gurnter said. “As we, too, seek sanctity in our lives, immersing ourselves as St. Thomas did in the grace and revelation of God through the means God has provided to His Church, may God give us also the clearer vision of the truth and how it must be acted upon, as we fulfill our duties as legal professionals and civil servants.”





Photos provided by Dan Stockman

Father Mark Gurtner, Vicar General of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, celebrates a special jubilee Mass at St. Mary Mother of God Church in Fort Wayne along with Father Wimal Jayasuriya, at left, Pastor of St. Mary. The Mass coincided with the parish's 175th anniversary.

## St. Mary Celebrates 175th Jubilee with Renewed Commitment to Serve the Community

BY KATIE MURRAY

In a heartfelt celebration of St. Mary Mother of God Church's 175th jubilee in Fort Wayne, parishioners, clergy, and special guests came together to reflect on its remarkable history and unwavering commitment to both faith and service during a special Mass and luncheon on Sunday, October 1.

Throughout its 175 years, St. Mary has been known for its charitable outreach and deep-rooted commitment to serving Fort Wayne's downtown community. One of the most remarkable aspects of the outreach of St. Mary is its soup kitchen, which has been serving more than 250 meals daily for 48 years. Father Wimal Jayasuriya, Pastor of St. Mary, highlighted the interconnectedness of poverty, as he explained: "Somebody who is materially poor is also poor in health, education, manners, and morals. Our doors are

open, and we are never judgmental. Our doors are open for everyone."

Beyond the soup kitchen, St. Mary offers a daytime hospitality home for those in need of basic necessities, including mail receipt, showers, warm clothing, laundry facilities, nourishing meals, and access to the internet to search for employment. Visitors can pick up food from the soup kitchen and eat it there, cool off from the heat or warm up in the colder months, and enjoy social interaction with others in a warm and inviting environment.

"[Those we serve] not only have different faiths, sometimes they don't have any faith," Father Jayasuriya said. "We are totally devoted to serving all of humanity. We have such good-hearted people [here]."

In addition to its multitude of charitable giving, the parish has an established scholarship program to assist families whose children attend Catholic

schools. The parish's scholarship program has awarded approximately \$80,000 to date.

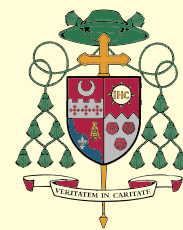
During the celebration, Father Jayasuriya emphasized that jubilees serve as reminders to recenter our lives around God and to unite with one another. St. Mary, with its 175-year history, stands as a testament to the enduring commitment of its congregation to both faith and service to their community.

"[A] jubilee is always important for us," Father Jayasuriya said. "It is there already in the Bible, with biblical backing. It is a time to get back to God, get back to ourselves, and get back to the people. It is a renewal of the covenant with God, with ourselves, and with one another. God is the center, and being united with Him, we [are] united with ourselves, our roots, and to others."

Looking ahead, St. Mary has several important events on the horizon, including a Thanksgiving meal served on-site for more than 1,250 people. This tradition has continued for 35 years and was adapted to continue to serve the community through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, the parish will launch the Christmas Box program this year, which provides food boxes for more than a thousand families in need, and the Angel Tree program, which ensures underprivileged children receive gifts during the holiday season.

Father Jayasuriya expressed gratitude for the support from generous donors and volunteers from diverse backgrounds who come together to serve humanity. He mentioned that



### Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Wednesday, October 4 to Sunday, October 29 – XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, Paul VI Hall, Vatican City



### Forty Hours Devotion



### Parishes are Listed in Order by Date

#### OCTOBER

St. Jude, Fort Wayne: October 15-17  
Holy Cross, South Bend: October 15-17  
St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel, Fort Wayne: October 15-17  
St. Paul of the Cross, Columbia City: October 22-24  
St. Mary Mother of God, Fort Wayne: October 27-29

#### NOVEMBER

St. Dominic, Bremen: November 5-7  
St. Aloysius, Yoder: November 5-7  
St. Stanislaus Kostka, New Carlisle: November 9-11  
St. Gaspar del Bufalo, Rome City: November 19-21  
St. Joseph, Bluffton: November 26-28  
Christ the King, South Bend: November 26-28

#### DECEMBER

Most Precious Blood, Fort Wayne: December 3-5  
St. Augustine, South Bend: December 3-5  
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception: December 3-5  
St. Mary of the Annunciation, Bristol: December 3-5  
Immaculate Conception, Ege: December 6-8

#### 2024

##### JANUARY

St. John Bosco, Churubusco: January 29-31

##### FEBRUARY

St. Joseph, Garrett: February 11-13  
Immaculate Conception, Auburn: February 18-20  
St. Charles Borromeo, Fort Wayne: February 25-27

##### MARCH

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Fort Wayne: March 3-5  
St. Casimir, South Bend: March 3-5  
St. Joseph, Garrett: March 3-5

For the complete schedule, visit [diocesefwsb.org/eucharist](http://diocesefwsb.org/eucharist).



Members of the choir at St. Mary Mother of God sing during a jubilee Mass marking the parish's 175th anniversary on Sunday, October 1, in Fort Wayne.



## The Red Mass



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# Pontifical Mission Societies 'Fearlessly, Courageously' Propose the Gospel

BY GINA CHRISTIAN

(OSV News) – The Pontifical Mission Societies “fearlessly, courageously propose the Gospel” amid both hardships and hope, U.S. National Director Monsignor Kieran Harrington told OSV News.

“The truth is that I want to baptize everybody,” he said. “And I don’t make an apology for it. This is what Christ told us to do. So it’s not the soft sell of the Gospel. It’s that life in Christ is transformative to my experience. And if I believe that to be the case, then I want to share that.”

A profound relationship with Christ is at the heart of all four of the societies’ outreaches – something Monsignor Harrington hopes will be highlighted as the universal Catholic Church marks World Mission Sunday on October 22 this year.

Pope Francis’ theme for the 2023 observance is “hearts on fire, feet on the move,” which recalls the encounter between two disciples and the Risen Christ on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35).

The collection taken up that day is the primary financial support for the Pontifical Mission Societies, which have a presence in some 1,100 dioceses “mostly in Africa and Asia, (with) some in Latin America,” the Pacific Islands, and parts

of Europe, said Monsignor Harrington, a priest of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, who was appointed to his role in 2021.

In 2022, that collection in the United States totaled about \$30 million, he said, noting that “the United States is extraordinarily generous.”

The worldwide network, which operates at the service of the pope, consists of four organizations. The oldest three were designated “pontifical” by Pope Pius XI in 1922, with a fourth receiving the designation under Pius XII in 1956.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith (SPF) supports evangelization efforts of the local Church; the Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) educates children about their part in the Church’s missionary outreach; the Society of St. Peter the Apostle trains the next generation of missionary clergy and consecrated religious; and the Pontifical Missionary Union focuses on forming clergy, religious and pastoral leaders more deeply in their role as evangelizers.

“I’m always in awe of what is taking place in the missions and how innovative they can be and how responsive to the promptings of the Spirit,” said Monsignor Harrington, who visits “at least three” mission countries per year.

Missionaries are more

needed than ever, he said, and the call has taken on an even deeper meaning in the United States, where the National Eucharistic Revival is under-way.

“If you think about why we call it ‘the Mass,’ it’s because the very last words the priest would say in Latin are ‘Ite, missa est’ (‘Go, it has been sent’). It’s a sending,” said Monsignor Harrington. “Our Eucharistic celebration is not for our own personal piety, but it is really that Jesus is strengthening us so that we could ... proclaim His Gospel to the ends of the earth ... to go well beyond ourselves.”

Jesus is “the one who is pushing us beyond our own places, sending us out to totally rely only on Him,” said Monsignor Harrington.

The societies serve the Church in places where it is “too young, too poor, or too persecuted to sustain itself,” he said.

“It is the work of these priests and nuns every day that is changing these societies,” he said. “It’s providing the health care, the educational institutions ... completely pouring yourself out; that’s what they’re doing,” Monsignor Harrington said.

Monsignor Harrington said he hopes Catholics in the United States, particularly children and laypeople, will embrace the call to mission.

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Kasia Balsbaugh

Members of the St. Mary community gather for a luncheon to celebrate the parish's 175th anniversary on Sunday, October 1.

#### ST. MARY, from page 3

although the parish consists of approximately 160 families, they receive donations from across the United States. For more information about the parish's charitable contributions to the community, and to volunteer, visit [stmarysfw.org](http://stmarysfw.org).

The Mass to mark the parish's 175th anniversary was celebrated by Father Mark Gurtner, Vicar General of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Father Gurtner was the principal celebrant with Bishop Rhoades being unable to attend because of his participation in the Synod of Bishops in Rome. In a letter to Father Jayasuriya and St. Mary parishioners, Bishop Rhoades pledged to celebrate a special Mass for the community at St. Peter's Basilica during his trip to the Vatican.

"Throughout the past 175 years, St. Mary's, one of the oldest parishes of our diocese, has been a beacon of faith, hope, and love in the Fort Wayne community," Bishop Rhoades wrote in the letter to the parish.

He continued: "St. Mary's is well-known in Fort Wayne for its charitable outreach to the poor and needy, especially through the soup kitchen, which has been in operation for 48 years. The parish's commitment to feeding the hungry, and its tender care in doing so, is a beautiful example of Christian love. ... As you remember in your prayers all your ancestors in the faith at St. Mary's, I pray you are also inspired by their example as you move into the future. Together with your devoted pastor, Father Wimal, your excellent parish staff, and lay leaders, I hope that you will be renewed in your evangelizing mission, with special attention to the faith formation of the children and youth of the parish. I pray that you will continue to engage in the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, the works that flow from an ever-deepening faith and love for the Lord, nourished by prayer and the sacraments, especially the Most Holy Eucharist, and by a lively devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God."

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## St. Jude 75 ANNIVERSARY

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*Tickets for the Dinner Dance are \$75/Adult and \$15/Child.*

*To attend, RSVP to St. Jude Parish Office  
at 574-291-0570 by October 9.*



## U.S. Bishops, Pope React to Attack on Israel

WASHINGTON, D.C. (OSV News) – U.S. Catholic bishops, including Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Illinois, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, called for prayers for peace in the Holy Land following Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel and decried "continued tensions and violence that erupted into warfare between Gaza and Israel." "The world is once again shocked and horrified by the outbreak of ferocious violence in the Holy Land. Reports have surfaced indicating large numbers of wounded and dead, including many civilians," Bishop Malloy said on Sunday, October 8. Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington, Virginia, also called for prayers for peace and said, "It is my hope and prayer that the international community will work together to help ensure a peaceful and just resolution for the good of all." Speaking to thousands of people gathered in St. Peter's Square to pray the Angelus on October 8, Pope Francis said he is following events in Israel and Gaza "with apprehension and sorrow." He said: "The violence has exploded even more ferociously, causing hundreds of deaths and casualties. ... I express my closeness to the families and victims. I am praying for them and for all who are living hours of terror and anguish." Pope Francis added: "Let it be understood that terrorism and war do not lead to any resolutions but only to the death and suffering of so many innocent people. War is a defeat! Let us pray that there be peace in Israel and in Palestine."

## Dallas Cathedral Designated as National Shrine Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe

DALLAS (OSV News) – Bishop Edward J. Burns of Dallas announced on Tuesday, October 3, that the Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe in downtown Dallas has been granted the significant designation of a national shrine by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. A special Mass is planned for December 12 to celebrate the national shrine status of the cathedral, which will now be known as The National Shrine Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It's a designation Cathedral Rector Father Jesús Belmontes called befitting of the cathedral's impact on Catholics within the diocese, around the nation, and throughout Central and Latin America. For many Catholics, and especially those with roots in Latin America, the December 12 feast day of

# NEWS BRIEFS

## War Erupts in Holy Land



OSV News photo/Mohammed Salem, Reuters

Palestinians carry a woman in the aftermath of Israeli strikes, following a Hamas surprise attack at Beach refugee camp, in Gaza City, on Monday, October 9. The Hamas-Israel war has entered a new phase, with more than 1,100 dead as of October 9. "I would say this is a catastrophe that I would describe in biblical dimensions," Ambassador Raphael Schutz, Israeli ambassador to the Holy See, told OSV News. The number of men, women, and children who have died, he said, is on "a scale that we have not known, I would say, since the beginning of the establishment of Israel."

Our Lady of Guadalupe holds profound significance as it commemorates the miraculous appearance of the Virgin Mary to St. Juan Diego in Mexico in 1531, symbolizing her maternal love and care for all humanity. Tens of thousands of people make the pilgrimage to Dallas every year on December 11 and 12.

## Earthquake Kills Thousands in Afghanistan

HERAT, Afghanistan (OSV News) – The death toll in one of the deadliest earthquakes to strike Afghanistan in two decades has risen to more than 2,400 people, Taliban officials confirmed on Sunday, October 8. The 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck on Saturday, October 7, 25 miles west of Herat city in the western Herat province. "Once again, children and families in Afghanistan have been affected by a devastating earthquake, this time in western Herat province," UNICEF Afghanistan

said in a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, on October 7. "UNICEF Afghanistan is on the ground with our U.N. colleagues to assess the full impact. Our heartfelt condolences go out to all families affected," United Nations Children's Fund wrote. The presence of Church charity organizations is close to zero given the repression from the Taliban government, an official from one of the Catholic organizations told OSV News. Some try to work with local partners, however. "Our humanitarian partners have begun relief efforts, sending medical and trauma support to regional hospitals, as well as emergency shelter, food assistance, and other supplies to the affected area," Anne Bousquet, Catholic Relief Services' Country Representative for Afghanistan, told OSV News over email.

## Pope Names First Woman Secretary of Dicastery for Religious

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis has appointed a woman

for the first time to be the No. 2 official of the Roman Curia office that works with religious orders and their members. Consolata Missionary Sister Simona Brambilla will be Secretary of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Vatican officials announced on Saturday, October 7. According to Vatican statistics published in February, there are nearly 609,000 professed religious women in the world. There are a little less than 50,000 religious brothers and a little more than 128,000 religious-order priests. For decades, women religious and many bishops decried the lack of women in top leadership roles at the dicastery, which is called to promote religious life, including approving the statutes of religious congregations, when the vast majority of them are communities of women. Sister Brambilla, a 58-year-old Italian, has been an external member of the dicastery since 2019. She served two terms as Superior of the Consolata Missionary Sisters, leading the congregation from 2011 to May 2023.

## Reconstruction of Notre Dame in Paris Is 'Sign of Hope'

PARIS (OSV News) – By the end of the year, the Notre Dame Cathedral silhouette in Paris will be restored: Its entire 315-foot-high spire will once again crown the transept crossing, hidden beneath a 330-foot-high scaffolding. The biggest reconstruction in France's modern history is "a sign of hope for everyone," the Rector-Archpriest of Notre Dame Cathedral, Father Olivier Ribadeau Dumas, told OSV News. A statement from officials with the public institution Rebâtir Notre-Dame de Paris ("Rebuilding of Notre Dame") mentions "spectacular results" and that progress is on schedule for the cathedral's reopening on December 8, 2024, as initially announced. The spire collapsed dramatically during the fire that devastated France and the world on April 15, 2019, destroying part of the nave vaults and the transept crossing. The spire will be gradually unveiled through the first half of 2024, when it is covered with its roof to protect the wooden framework. In 2018, before the fire, there were close to 12 million visitors a year to Notre Dame. An estimated 14 million to 15 million a year are expected once the cathedral reopens.

## Chicago Auxiliary Bishop Dies at 51

CHICAGO (OSV News) – Auxiliary Bishop Kevin M. Birmingham of Chicago, former Secretary to Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, died unexpectedly on Monday, October 2, at age 51. He was just a few days shy of his 52nd birthday. "He passed away in his sleep," Archdiocesan Spokesperson Yasmin Quiroz told local media. The Chicago Sun-Times daily newspaper reported that the cause of death "was unclear, and Quiroz said foul play was not suspected." "The Church has lost a wonderful priest and bishop today, and I lost a dear friend and valued colleague," Cardinal Cupich said in a statement. "From the start of his ministry, Bishop Kevin Birmingham was a devoted and joyful priest. He felt called to serve Latino Catholics especially, and he learned Spanish in order to do so. He served in my office for six years as priest-secretary, always with dedication and attention to every detail, a role in which his reputation for kindness only grew. May we honor his memory by continuing to do as he did, and model the love God has for His children in all we do." Born Oct. 7, 1971, in Oak Lawn, Illinois, the late bishop was ordained a priest for the Chicago archdiocese on May 24, 1997, and was named an auxiliary bishop by Pope Francis on September 11, 2020.



# Holy Cross Brother Embracing His Call to Religious Life

BY CHRISTOPHER LUSHIS

The journey of Holy Cross Brother Jacob Eifrid has been shaped by community life.

Born in Fort Wayne, Brother Eifrid was immersed in religious practice and surrounded by loving family from the very beginning. The second oldest of six children, Eifrid was baptized at St. Vincent de Paul Parish and attended grade school there. When his family relocated during his high school years, they switched to St. Charles Borromeo Parish. Throughout these formative years, daily Mass and family prayer remained a constant in his life. He recalled that it was as early as three years old that he first felt an interior desire to serve the Lord with his life. He stated, "It was something that was on my mind from a very young age."

While a high school student at Bishop Dwenger and participant in the LifeTeen youth group at St. Vincent's, Father Andrew Budzinski personally invited him to seriously consider the possibility of a call to the priesthood. Eifrid continued to prayerfully ponder that vocational call as he began collegiate studies at Holy Cross College. At Holy Cross, he met religious brothers for the first time and saw the family spirit of the Congregation of Holy Cross, whose spirituality is modeled on the Holy Family.

"Between the Holy Cross priests and brothers I met, I was struck by their prayerfulness, joyful community, and strong spirit rooted in the constitutions of Holy Cross," Brother Eifrid said.

As an undergraduate, he learned about legendary Holy Cross figures, including St. Andre Bessette, Blessed Basil Moreau, and others. He also participated in a pilgrimage to the Oratory of St. Joseph in Montreal, the largest church in the world dedicated to St. Joseph, which was built through the efforts of St. Andre. As a sophomore, Eifrid lived in an on-campus men's discernment community run by Holy Cross Brothers, which further deepened his love for community life.

"Over time, I discerned that God was not calling me to the priesthood, but to the religious life in itself," Brother Eifrid said.

This vocational path continued as he entered Moreau Seminary in 2017 and then, following the completion of his novitiate, took temporary vows as a Holy Cross Brother in 2019.

Now, this calling has become permanent, as Brother Eifrid professed final vows in the Congregation of Holy



**Holy Cross Brother Jacob Eifrid makes his profession of final vows before Father William Lies, Provincial Superior of the Congregation of Holy Cross, U.S. Province of Priests and Brothers, at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on the campus of the University of Notre Dame on Saturday, August 26.**

Cross on Saturday, August 26, alongside nine other men – eight seminarians (who were ordained to the transitional diaconate the next day) and one other religious brother, Brother Matthew Rehagen.

While there have been fewer new religious brothers in the last several decades, there has been a resurgence in recent years. For Brother Eifrid, who is part of this renewal, the apparent lack of other religious brothers his age was not a deterrent to pursuing this call.

"That was a reality, but it did not affect my own call to it," Brother Eifrid said. "I looked to the role models I knew – the saints, the ones I became friends with through prayer. I saw this as something I could do too, and thought 'Why wouldn't I do it if they had done it?' And in the past six years, since I have joined, we've had six men profess final vows as Holy Cross Brothers."

While the identity and mission of a priest are well understood throughout the Catholic world, many often wonder what exactly the role of a religious brother is within the Church. Traditionally, the Holy Cross Brothers have been teachers at the high school or university levels. They have also served as laborers in various capacities, reflecting the spirit of their patron, St. Joseph, who embraced work as a pathway to deeper sanctity.

One of these laboring brothers was Brother Columba O'Neill, who spent his life serving the community around Notre Dame as a humble



**Holy Cross Brothers Jacob Eifrid, left, and Matthew Rehagen pose for a photo in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at the University of Notre Dame after professing final vows as religious brothers in the Congregation of Holy Cross.**

cobbler and promotor of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. One of Brother Eifrid's pastoral experiences included working in the Holy Cross archives, where he assisted and learned from Brother Philip Smith, the postulator for Brother Columba's beatification cause.

"Holy Cross emphasizes the importance of being modeled after the Holy Family," Brother Eifrid said. "In addition to St. Andre, who had such a profound love for St. Joseph, encountering Brother Columba, someone who lived closer to me in both time and geography, and seeing his love for Jesus and Mary, was something very important and personal to me."

These heroic examples of faith from years past, as well as those in the congregation

today, have confirmed Brother Eifrid in his call.

"I have come to see Holy Cross primarily as a family – the family that God has created me for," Brother Eifrid said. "In our diverse brotherhood, we find unity in sharing prayer, meals, and fellowship. We share the joys and sorrows of life with those engaged in the same mission. We are educators who seek to make God known, loved, and served. By living like and imitating the Holy Family in our community life, we aspire to model here on this earth what our lives in heaven will be. By our example of fraternal life, we hope to show a divided, individualistic world that authentic communion is a real possibility both here and in the kingdom to come." He added, "A joyful life in community, sustained by prayer, all for the mission, is

what Holy Cross is all about."

Brother Eifrid, who earned a bachelor's degree in theology and liberal studies from Holy Cross College and master's degrees from the University of Notre Dame in theology and French, is living a call to service in multiple ways as a brother. His primary ministry assignments for this academic year are at the University of Notre Dame as Assistant Rector of Stanford Hall and Visiting Teaching Professor of French.

"I studied French at Bishop Dwenger and developed a love for the language," Brother Eifrid said. "As part of my religious formation, I spent a summer in Montreal learning more about French literature and culture. Now, I have the blessing to teach French at the university as a member of a congregation based in France, which seems surreal!"

Brother Eifrid, who highly valued his time in formation, said he is excited to have the opportunity to again live in a dormitory and serve as a spiritual guide and support to the young men living in residence at Notre Dame.

"It is such a gift to share in their studies, in their extracurriculars, in their faith, in everything they do," he said. "The love Christ has for me is so great that my joy comes not only from receiving His love but also from sharing it with others in my ministry."

"Additionally, in a special way, I feel a certain closeness to those who are poor, both materially and spiritually," Brother Eifrid continued. "While I love my ministry in the residence hall and classroom, I hope to spend a considerable period of my religious life in direct service to the poor, to those whom Christ has special preference."

Brother Eifrid added: "The love of God is a concrete reality in this broken world. It is possible to live in this world in a way that reflects how all will experience the love of God in heaven. Heaven is real, and we get a foretaste of it on earth through our experiences of prayer, community, and authentic service to one another. The vocation to religious life comes with the responsibility to imitate and model God's love in a real, explicit way. It is certainly not easy, but the grace I have found through living the evangelical counsels helps me remain humbly and simply close to Christ, Who gives me the strength for a more perfect life."

Brother Eifrid also exclaimed to those who are pondering their own call from the Lord, "Do not be afraid!" and to approach the idea with "fearless prayer and community with others."





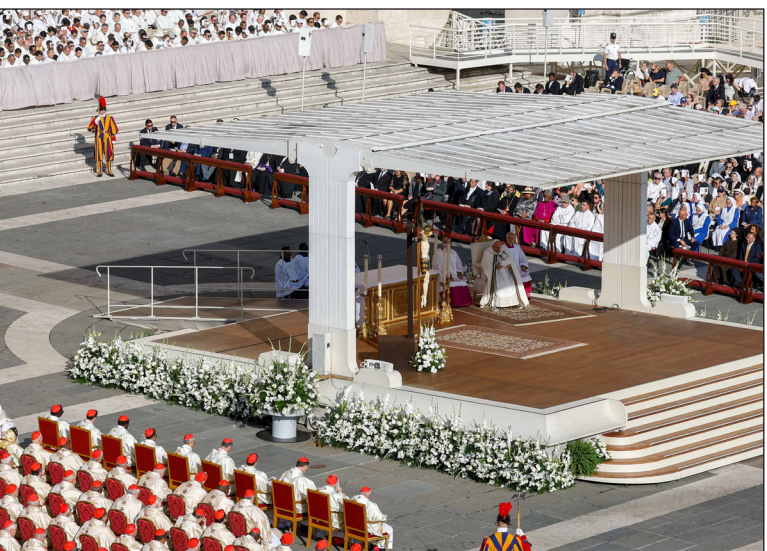
CNS photo/Lola Gomez

A Swiss Guard stand at the entrance of the Vatican's Paul VI Audience Hall during the assembly of the Synod of Bishops on Friday, October 6.



CNS photo/Lola Gomez

Members of the assembly begin their small-group discussions on Thursday, October 5, in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican.



CNS photo/Lola Gomez

Pope Francis gives his homily at the Mass opening the assembly of the Synod of Bishops in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Wednesday, October 4.

### SYNOD, from page 1

all regarding their thoughts and to ensure the serenity of the discernment in common, which is the main task entrusted to the assembly, each of the participants is bound to confidentiality and discretion regarding both their own interventions and the interventions of other participants."

Pope Francis also repeated what he has said many times: "The synod is not a parliament" where the ideas of opposing parties will be debated and voted up or down along party lines. Neither, he said, is it "a meeting of friends" getting together to exchange opinions and try to solve problems they see around them.

"The synod is a journey that the Holy Spirit makes," he said, so constant prayer and listening are necessary to follow the path the Spirit indicates.

"The Holy Spirit triggers a deep and varied dynamism in the Christian community, the confusion of Pentecost," when people from every nation heard the disciples speaking in their own languages, the pope said. From the experience, the Spirit creates not uniformity but harmony.

Differences of opinion will surface, he said. "If you don't agree with what that bishop or that nun or what that layperson says, say it to their face. That's what the synod is for. To tell the truth, not the chatter under the table."

Pope Francis also acknowledged how people outside the synod members are offering "hypotheses about this synod – 'But what will they do there?' 'The priesthood for women?' – these are the things that are being said outside."

But what is happening, he said, is that the universal Church has gathered in Rome to pause and to listen.

"The Church has stopped, as the apostles stopped after Good Friday, on that Holy Saturday," closed in the Upper Room, he said. "But they were afraid; we are not. ... It is a pause for the whole Church to listen."

Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary-General of the synod, told the members, "Today the Church is at a crossroads, and the urgent challenge, strictly speaking, is not of a theological or ecclesiological nature, but how at this moment in history the Church can become a sign and instrument of God's love for every man and woman."

"God's love is the medicine that can heal today's wounded humanity, and as the Church our mission is to be a sign of this love," he said.

In discerning the best ways to do that, Cardinal Grech said, participants should remember the assembly is not "an isolated act" but part of a process that began two years ago with local, diocesan, national, and continental

listening sessions.

The presence of members who are not bishops – some 70 priests, religious, lay men and women – is not meant to represent "the totality of the People of God," he said, but to "remind us with their presence" of the whole synod process and its invitation for all Catholics to participate, sharing their experiences of things that help or hinder their sense of communion, participation, and mission.

At the session on Monday, October 9, a theologian told the group that the Church is called to be an instrument of communion with God and unity among all people, but it requires grace and "learning to 'bear with' reality, gently, generously, lovingly, and courageously for the peace and salvation of the whole world."

"Communion is the beauty of diversity in unity. In a modern world that tends toward both homogenizing and fracturing, communion is a language of beauty, a harmony of unity and plurality," said Anna Rowlands, a professor of Catholic social thought and practice at Durham University in England.

As synod participants began work on the second section or module of the assembly's



Cardinals and bishops process to the altar to continue the assembly of the Synod of Bishops.



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Members of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops, organized into 35 groups based on language, begin their small-group discussions on Thursday, October 5, in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican.





CNS photo/Lola Gomez

celebrate with Pope Francis the opening Mass of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Wednesday, October 4.



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis shares a laugh with some of the women members of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops, including Spanish theologian Cristina Inogés Sanz, left, at the assembly's session on Friday, October 6, in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican.

working document, their discussions about promoting communion with God and with others were preceded by reflections offered by Rowlands and by Dominican Father Timothy Radcliffe, a theologian and former master of the Dominican order.

While still seated at round tables according to language, many of the 364 synod members were at different tables than the week before. The new groupings were organized by the themes members indicated they wanted to work on; the topics including promoting unity through works of charity and justice; ecumenism; being

more welcoming to people who feel excluded from the Church, such as members of the LGBTQ community; and valuing the cultural, linguistic, and racial diversity of the Church.

Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, Relator General of the synod, introduced the module by telling participants that a key question from the synod's preparatory process – which included listening sessions on the parish, diocesan, national, and continental levels – was, “How can we be more fully a sign and instrument of union with God and of the unity of all humanity?”

God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is “the basis of all communions,” he said, and “this God, who is love, loves the whole of creation, every single creature and every human being in a special way.”

“All are invited to be part of the Church,” the cardinal said. “In deep communion with His Father through the Holy Spirit, Jesus extended this communion to all the sinners. Are we ready to do the same? Are we ready to do this with groups which might irritate us because their way of being might seem to threaten our identity?”



## *Bishop Rhoades:* Pre-Synod Work is Spiritually 'Enriching'

(OSV News) – Bishop Rhoades, a delegate to the Synod of Bishops on synodality, said that going into a pre-synod retreat, he thought it was a “good idea,” but added that he was pleasantly surprised by the number of meaningful personal interactions he has had with other participants in the world Synod of Bishops.

“This is really a spiritual exercise that I’ve found very enriching,” he told OSV News on Monday, October 2. “This is really beginning with a strong spiritual focus.”

Speaking from Fraterna Domus retreat house 17 miles north of Rome in Sacrofano, Italy, Bishop Rhoades said the October 1-3 retreat did not include “the content” of the synod at the Vatican, but instead provided opportunities for “really, really good conversations” with people from around the world.

“I understand what the Holy Father is hoping for – that there will be spiritual conversations,” Bishop Rhoades said, “that we get to know each other, but that prayer is such an integral part of it.”

Bishop Rhoades is one of 14 U.S. bishops participating in the synod's October 4-29 general assembly meeting.



# National Eucharistic Pilgrimage Invites Young People to Join

The National Eucharistic Congress is inviting young people to step out in faith – literally – by walking hundreds of miles in a major national pilgrimage.

Organizers are inviting young adults ages 19 to 29 to apply as participants in the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, which will take place May 17 to July 21, 2024. The “Perpetual Pilgrims” will travel along four different routes throughout the country – a combined distance of 6,500 miles – to the 10th National Eucharistic Congress, set to take place July 21-24, 2024, in Indianapolis.

The (St. Junipero) Serra Route will depart from San Francisco; the (St. Elizabeth Ann) Seton Route from New Haven, Connecticut; the (St.) Juan Diego Route from Brownsville, Texas; and the Marian Route from Bemidji, Minnesota.

The experience of “coming from the four cardinal directions” to the congress promises to be “really wonderful,” Will Peterson, Founder and President of Modern Catholic Pilgrim and Director of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, told OSV News.

The heavenly patrons of each route will provide inspiration, he added.

“Serra is buried not too far away (from San Francisco) in Carmel, California,” he said. “And we’re recognizing those coming from the Southern border, with St. Juan Diego representing the deep roots of the Hispanic Catholic Church. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is just a wonderful Eucharistic saint who did such great work in the (nation’s) Eastern seaboard.

“And it’s wonderful that on the northern route, we’ll get to go to an apparition site of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” he added, referencing the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in New Franken, Wisconsin, where Mary appeared in 1859 to a Belgian immigrant named Adele Brise. The shrine commemorates the first and only approved Marian apparition in the United States.

Mary figures prominently in the pilgrimage, said Peterson, noting “Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patroness of the entire National Eucharistic Revival” and that it “seemed fitting to have the northern route dedicated to (her).”

Accompanied by priest chap-



Photo by Joshua Schipper

**Pilgrims participating in a cross-diocesan Eucharistic pilgrimage in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend walk on the final day of the June 4-11 journey that served as test run for next summer’s National Eucharistic Pilgrimage.**

lains, the pilgrims will cover 10-15 miles per day, passing through several major U.S. cities and stopping at a number of holy sites, while attending daily Mass and participating in Eucharistic processions. Parishes along the routes will welcome the pilgrims, providing meals, fellowship, and Holy Hours. Pilgrims will be housed by parishes, religious orders, schools, shrines, retreat

centers, and host families. Peterson admitted to OSV News that while the 65-day commitment isn’t exactly “perpetual,” participants will be “giving of themselves for two months, (which) is a long period of time, to be prayerfully journeying with the Lord.”

Applicants must be baptized, actively practicing Catholics in good physical condition, capa-

ble of walking long distances, and committed to upholding Catholic teaching during their time as pilgrims – especially since they will take on pastoral ministry roles and managing logistics along the routes. The National Eucharistic Congress will provide housing, meals, and a weekly stipend for basic expenses, with pilgrims helping to raise funds prior to their journey.

Full details are available on the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage website at [eucharisticpilgrimage.org](http://eucharisticpilgrimage.org). The deadline to apply is November 28, with final selections to be announced in January of 2024. Pilgrims will enter a period of formation from February to May with weekly virtual meetings and a retreat to be held from February 16-18, 2024.

That preparation will enable them to “steward that public experience of the pilgrimage,” said Peterson. “We want to make sure that they’re in a good place spiritually, physically, mentally. ... This is something that we invite all Catholic young adults to consider as a way to deepen their own spiritual lives.”

## Unique Beginning Inspires Principal’s Journey in Education

BY LISA KOCHANOWSKI

Time working as a detention officer in a juvenile detention center in Lake County, Indiana, inspired Lindsay Jeffress’ journey that would cause young people to feel known, loved, and served by the academic world.

“Through my interactions with at-risk youth, I decided that I wanted to move forward with a career in education in

hopes that I could be a positive role model for students,” said Jeffress, who is in her first year as principal at Christ the King School in South Bend. “All of my experiences in the education world have solidified that this is my true calling.”

Before moving into administration, Jeffress spent 11 years as a classroom teacher. She earned her master’s degree from Ball State in 2020, the year in which she was hired as the assistant principal at



LINDSAY JEFFRESS

Christ the King. Jeffress told Today’s Catholic that she wants to continue building on the school’s strong foundation, led by dedicated and caring families and a staff that always puts their students first. She wants to create a truly outstanding, faith-filled, and academic community that gives students the opportunity to thrive.

“I want my team to know that I am 100 percent committed to them, and their role is even more essential than mine,” Jeffress said. “I hope to help my team grow at all levels. I want our love for our students and school to be apparent to anyone that enters Christ the King.”

Jeffress said she wants each student to realize their value to each other and the school community.

“Every single student has a God-given purpose, and I want students to know their true potential,” she said. “I hope that they remember me 20 years from now for driving them to simply be good humans, and for the genuine relationships I built with them through their years here at Christ the King.”

Christ the King is considered a one-of-a-kind community where you feel welcomed the moment you walk through the

door, Jeffress said.

“The students make us what we are. They are enthusiastic about learning and are driven by their faith. We have families that have been with us for generations. Even though I came in as an outsider, I was welcomed with open arms and have felt nothing but support since my first day, and that is what anyone who comes to us feels. That truly makes us unique.”

Jeffress said that every day for an educator is an opportunity to leave a lasting impression on the students.

“As an educator, you have little moments every day, which ultimately drive your passion for your job on a daily basis,” she said. “I absolutely love the fact that I am in a building where I can share my faith with my students. It is the most powerful tool to guide students in their decision-making. It is so impactful to watch students develop their own faith.”

With the school year underway, Jeffress hopes for continued success for the school community.

“I pray that all of our students benefit from all aspects of their school life,” Jeffress said. “I also pray that students and teachers feel inspired in our school to live out their faith and act as loving and bold ambassadors of the Gospel.”

Speak up for those who can’t speak for themselves.

Speak up for the rights of all those who are poor.

– Proverbs 31:8

Parishioners of

St. John the Evangelist  
GOSHEN

**Christ the King is overflowing with excitement as Lindsay Jeffress leads our school for 2023-2024.**

**Lindsay has a passion for education and unwavering dedication. The future of Christ the King shines brighter than ever. We are ready for a remarkable journey of learning and growth under her guidance.**



# Annual Walk for the Poor a Rousing Success

BY BETHANY BEEBE

Those living on the bottom of society's economic spectrum in the Fort Wayne area will soon benefit from donor generosity to an organization at the top of its game.

The Fort Wayne District of the St. Vincent de Paul Society set an ambitious goal to raise \$70,000 during its Friends of the Poor Walk and Run on Sunday, October 1. It surpassed that amount, bringing in more than \$72,000, which made Fort Wayne's walk the highest grossing in the United States among more than 120 similar events across the country that involved thousands of Vincentian volunteers.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society and its walks may be national, but any money raised locally benefits the Fort Wayne community's impoverished brothers and sisters. The basics – food, rent, utilities, transportation, furniture, and clothing – can be offered to those needing assistance. The numbers speak for themselves where impact is concerned. The most recent data from the local St. Vincent de Paul Society offers that 24,160 people were assisted with food and almost 2,200 found help in paying their rent or housing expenses, just two categories of care that the organization offers.

"This support is critical to those living in poverty in our area," said Lara Schreck, Executive Director of the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Fort Wayne. "High rent and utility costs have made it difficult for local families to make ends meet, and our financial support helps prevent evictions, puts food on the table, and keeps the heat and lights on. Through person-to-person service, SVdP volunteer members share the love of Christ with their neighbors and give them hope for a better future."

This year's walk – the seventh in Fort Wayne – was held at Parkview Field, the same spot as the previous six. Schreck described the facility as the "perfect location." This year, a tailgate celebration with live music and an ice cream truck was held in the parking lot before walkers or runners covered their selected routes: 3 miles, 1.25 miles, or a third of a mile. Schreck said most participants do the longest option, a route going past the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store, and St. Patrick's Catholic Church. Schreck said 225 people signed up in advance this year and estimated another 50 joined on the day of the event.

Students from Bishop Dwenger High School and the University of St. Francis volunteered to help the event run



Participants in the annual St. Vincent de Paul Society's Friends of the Poor Walk and Run carry the event's banner outside of Parkview Field in Fort Wayne on Sunday, October 1. The event raised more than \$72,000 for the Fort Wayne Chapter of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Photos by Bethany Beebe



Members of St. Joseph Parish in Fort Wayne walk past the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne during the annual Friends of the Poor Walk and Run on Sunday, October 1.

Hope Parish in Fort Wayne, learned he had received a prize for being the most-sponsored priest in the 24 parishes of Fort Wayne's SVdP chapter. Bishop Rhoades also made an appearance on the big screen, sending his blessings from Rome while acting as a delegate at the Synod of Bishops.

The event accomplishes more good than bolstering the bottom line.

"The goal of the Friends of the Poor Walk is to raise awareness of the poverty that exists in our community, to educate the community about our programs, and to give our volunteer members, called 'Vincentians,' an opportunity to gather together with family and friends," Schreck said. "We schedule this event every year close to the feast day of St. Vincent de Paul to commemorate our patron saint's service to the poor."

The unifying nature of the event is another beneficial outcome. Joellen Lauer, a member at St. Charles Borromeo in Fort Wayne, walked on the team of St. Gaspar Parish in Rome City. "St. Vincent de Paul is a good cause for so many people," she said.

St. Gaspar is the newest to join the chapter, whose leader, George Vandermeir, was asked by his parish priest to head up the parish's chapter of St. Vincent de Paul Society. As the team enjoyed its well-organized, bountifully supplied tailgate party, Deacon Ray Krouse of St. Gaspar complimented Vandermeir's skills. "He's making it all work," Krouse said.

Working at the finish line, Mary Rorick, a parishioner at St. Louis Besancon, echoed much of the event's ideology: "God's been good to me, and I just wanted to share His blessings."

smoothly. Participation was free, with donations accepted, and T-shirts and special gifts were offered to anyone signing up in advance. This year, before his blessing of the walkers, Father Mark Gurtner, Vicar General of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and Pastor of Our Lady of Good

## Respect Life

God, give us the courage  
to protect every unborn life.  
For the child is God's greatest gift  
for the family, for a nation,  
and for the world.

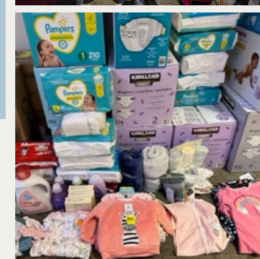
- Saint Teresa of Calcutta

Please pray for our 15 parish  
ministries working together  
to build a culture of life



SAINT PIUS X  
CATHOLIC CHURCH  
TO RENEW ALL THINGS IN CHRIST

[StPius.net/RespectLife](http://StPius.net/RespectLife)





# Synod and Family, the Communication Skills are the Same

For almost two years, the Church has been actively engaged in a process of listening and discernment. Maybe you participated in synod conversations at your parish, maybe you didn't. Maybe you chatted about topics with friends or colleagues, maybe you didn't. Either way, this Synod of Bishops on synodality, which opened back in October of 2021, has entered its next phase: a gathering at the Vatican that uniquely brings together clergy and laity to continue, well, being synodal.

"The synod is about dialogue: among the baptized, among members of the Church, on the life of the Church, on dialogue with the world, on the problems that affect humanity today," Pope Francis said in September.

In preparation for this dialogue, which began on Wednesday, October 4, and will continue until Sunday, October 29, an instrumentum laboris (IL), or working document, was released this past summer as a starting point for the conversation, as is customary before synod gatherings.

"The IL is not a document of the Holy See, but of the whole Church," Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary General of the General Secretariat of the Synod, said when the document was first released. "It is not a document written at a desk. It is a document in which

all are co-authors, each for the part he or she is called to play in the Church, in docility to the Spirit. ... You will not find in the text a theoretical systematic explanation of synodality but the fruit of a Church experience, of a journey in which we have all learned more by walking together and questioning ourselves on the meaning of this experience."

Worksheets within the IL will serve as discussion prompts for synod delegates, with the invocation of the Holy Spirit, on all manner of topics affecting the life of the Church today. Even with limited media access, it is sure to be an interesting few weeks.

What's especially interesting to me as a communicator is that, at its core, this synod demands good communications skills of its participants. They must know when to speak and when not to speak. They must understand how to make a point or observation effectively and concisely. They must listen with empathy and respect. They must be polite, yet truthful. They must be in the moment completely, not planning one's response in the midst of another's intervention. These are the skills needed for fruitful conversations and communication – for synodality to fulfill its potential.

It's very similar to how we ought to function in a family, isn't it? Love demands will-



NO  
GREATER  
JOY

GRETCHEN CROWE

ing the good of the other, not of one's self – and that means we must be more interested in what the other person has to say than in that excellent point that we, ourselves, must get across.

"In the family, we learn to embrace and support one another, to discern the meaning of facial expressions and moments of silence, to laugh and cry together with people who did not choose one another yet are so important to each other," said Pope Francis in his message for the 49th World Communications Day in 2015, one of my favorites of his. "This greatly helps us to understand the meaning of communication as recognizing and creating closeness. When we lessen distances by growing closer and accepting one another, we experience gratitude and joy."

Of course, we are not always great at good communication – in our homes, in our society, in our Church. We

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# Why Is the St. Michael Prayer So Powerful?

Catholics of a certain age will remember reciting a set of prayers after Mass called the Leonine Prayers. Introduced by Pope Pius IX in 1859, the prayers were offered in the Papal States for the protection of the Holy See's temporal independence. The prayers included, among other things, three Hail Marys and the Hail Holy Queen.

A few decades later, facing an extreme anti-clericalism in Italy, Leo XIII added the Prayer to St. Michael to the Leonine Prayers and asked that they be recited by Catholics throughout the world. Following the Lateran Treaty in 1929, Pius XI ordered that they be said for the conversion of Russia. The practice was suppressed in 1965 as part of the reform of the liturgy following the Second Vatican Council.

In some places, the custom of praying the St. Michael Prayer after Mass has seen a resurgence. The St. Michael Prayer holds a special place in the hearts of many Catholics, not just for its historical significance but for the profound spiritual shield it provides. It is a reminder that, as we continue our pilgrimage on this side of eternity, we are not alone. The Archangel Michael stands ready to assist us in our battles against the forces of hell that seek to undermine our faith and virtue.

The prayer itself is a simple yet profound expression of reliance on God's protection:



GUEST  
COMMENTARY

FATHER PATRICK BRISCOE

"St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen."

In 1994, Pope St. John Paul II said, "Although this prayer is no longer recited at the end of Mass, I ask everyone not to forget it and to recite it to obtain help in the battle against the forces of darkness and against the spirit of this world." We might ask, what makes the St. Michael Prayer so powerful?

First, the prayer invokes St. Michael, the "Prince of the heavenly hosts," who commands the legions of angels. Pope Francis has explained the archangel's work, saying, "Michael fights to reestablish divine justice. He defends the people of God from their enemies, especially the

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# God Never Fails to Guide Us to Everlasting Life



THE  
SUNDAY  
GOSPEL

MONSIGNOR OWEN F. CAMPION

## Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The first part of the Book of Isaiah provides this weekend's first reading at Mass. Understanding the cultural, social, political, and economic context surrounding the composition of biblical texts always helps to capture their meaning.

As a general rule, times were not good for the Chosen People. Aside from bursts of prosperity and peace under David and Solomon, they usually had to cope with war, invasion, want, or worse.

Also, usually, the prophets saw little in which they could truly rejoice. Invariably, the prophets wrote that human sin,

not divine revenge, or divine indifference to human distress, was the cause of trouble in the world.

So, frequently, the prophets counseled the people always to be true to God.

This writing actually was written when times were not all that bad, but dark clouds lay on the horizon. The people, generally speaking, were lukewarm in honoring God. Isaiah loudly protested that the sluggishness in religious devotion would be their downfall.

Isaiah also insists that if the people are faithful to God, all will be right. Peace and security will reign. Prosperity will prevail. The holy city of Jerusalem, God's city, and the royal capital, will be seen throughout the world as the center of a great nation.

The second reading is from the Epistle to the Philippians. On several occasions recorded in Acts or in the Pauline epistles, Paul was imprisoned, having been arrested for preaching against the establishment or simply for disturbing the peace. This passage from Philippians

was written while Paul was in prison.

Being jailed, humiliated, and abused were Paul's plight. Nevertheless, he says that his faith in God never wavers. His commitment to proclaiming the Gospel always leads him. Nothing else matters to him, not even his comfort or personal well-being. God gave Christ to the world. Paul must extend this gift far and wide.

St. Matthew's Gospel furnishes the last reading – a parable, with three parts.

In the first part, a "king," who represents God, invites guests, familiar and even privileged, to a wedding banquet for his son. These people reject the invitation. The king invites other guests. Again, the invitation is ignored. Then, in the second part, the king invites outcasts and strangers to the feast. They come.

However, in the third part, the king sees a guest at the banquet improperly dressed. He orders this guest to be removed.

The king's servants represent the prophets. The prospective

guests who spurn the invitation represent the people of Israel. The outcasts and strangers represent the aliens and the sinful.

The message is that that God's mercy extends to everyone. Even so, God drags no one into the kingdom of heaven. Sinners must reform to be worthy of heaven.

## Reflection

These readings recall several basic facts. The first is that God never fails in mercy. He does not disown the promise, spoken long ago through the prophets, and then finally by Christ, to guide people to everlasting life by revealing to them the laws of righteousness and by strengthening their resolve to be righteous.

The second fact is simple and constant throughout history. Humans just cannot accept it. The fact is that humans sin. The sin of Adam and Eve always weakens humans. Their nature is distorted. They are myopic. They exaggerate their own powers, therefore discounting their

need for God.

Conversion requires a frank realization of who and what humans are. We are sinful, but God loves us.

In this realization, humans come to the same conviction that drove St. Paul to proclaim the Lord in spite of all. Nothing matters other than to be in union with God. Everything other than living in union with God is fickle, impermanent, and foolhardy.

## READINGS

**Sunday:** Isaiah 25:6-10a; Psalms 23:1-6; Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20; Matthew 22:1-14 or 22:1-10

**Monday:** Romans 1:1-7; Psalms 98:1-4; Luke 11:29-32

**Tuesday:** Romans 1:16-25; Psalms 19:2-5; Luke 11:37-41

**Wednesday:** 2 Timothy 4:10-17b; Psalms 145:10-13, 17-18; Luke 10:1-9

**Thursday:** Romans 3:21-30; Psalms 130:1-6; Luke 11:47-54

**Friday:** Romans 4:1-8; Psalms 32:1-2, 5, 11; Luke 12:1-7

**Saturday:** Romans 4:13, 16-18; Psalms 105:6-9, 42-43; Luke 12:8-12



# So Much of Evangelization Depends on How We Sow

A writer and I were going back and forth about how the best devotional article won't get as many readers as a political article by the same writer. Publish a wild rant claiming that God hates Biden or that God hates Trump and the numbers shoot up. Publish a deep meditation on God's infinite love and they drop through the floor.

"It's not about the numbers, is it?" she said. "We plant seeds as faithfully as we can. The growth and the harvest is up to Him." She was right, but with a wise qualification Christians don't always seem to see.

It is true that we can only plant the seed and must leave the germination and the harvest to God. People offer that as wisdom, and it mostly is. The message liberates us from the fear that we must accomplish what we can't on our own.

But it also misses something important. People who say that we must plant and leave the harvest to God too often assume that planting is simple. Whatever you do, God will fix it. It's His job.

That's not true, though. As my friend said, we must plant faithfully, and that means with thought, care, and effort. God doing the hard work of growing and harvesting doesn't free us from the responsibility of doing our part as well as we can.

In the parable, the seed lands on the hard path, in the rocks, and in the thorn bushes, as well as landing in the good soil. Jesus explains that we are the seeds and the ground we've fallen onto are different ways of responding to Him and His message about the kingdom. The seed that falls on rocky ground, for example, represents people who love the

message when they hear it but drop it when the world threatens them because they haven't grown roots.

The metaphor has another aspect, though. We are also a sower – an apprentice or assistant to the Sower, if you want. We can sow badly or well. The parable's sower threw seed on the path, the rocks, and the thorn bushes, and none of it grew. It couldn't.

The lesson this reading of the parable gives us is: Aim more carefully when you throw the seed. Learn the craft of sowing. Put in the work to plant better.

Here's a practical example. In my work as an editor, I encounter Christians who want to sow, that is to say write, who don't know – and sometimes don't want to know – how to write for their readers.

Where we write and when, how we open our articles, what language we use – how complicated the vocabulary, how long and complex the sentences – and what kind of arguments we employ, whether or not we tell stories, how many words we write, what voice we use, personal or impersonal, and a lot of other things go into the work of writing to be read and understood well enough to affect readers' lives.

You have to think about these things and work at writing – unless you're the rare genius, and even geniuses can learn to do it better. Planting may be very difficult, indeed. It looks simple – throw the seed! write the words! – but it isn't.

In most of the writing a Catholic writer does, the writer must stay rigorously on target. Writers have only so much space to use, and their readers have only so much attention



DAVID MILLS

## LIFE IN THE WORLD

to give. They can't take any detours and can't throw extra things at their readers. The ideal article is almost always like a simple subway map, not a "Where's Waldo?" cartoon.

Some won't write that way. They want to say more than they can, about more subjects than they should take up, often in more complicated language than they need to use. They often want to jam a pet idea into the article, like a father who pulls out pictures of his children when everyone's talking about the war in Ukraine.

They're like a sower who tosses seed on rocky ground because he wants to, maybe because he likes the feeling of slinging his arm round and watching the seed fly. At best, he can't be bothered to learn how to sow properly.

As people like to say, paraphrasing St. Paul in I Corinthians, "We plant, but God gives the increase." He does, of course. He makes up for our failings. But for His own mysterious reasons, He gives us a big part in His work, and He works with what we've done. What God has to grow and harvest depends, as far as we know, on how well we plant. So plant well.

David Mills is columnist for OSV News. He writes from Pennsylvania.

### BRISCOE, from page 12

enemy par excellence, the devil." The prayer is a call for divine reinforcement in our spiritual battles, providing us with the armor we need to withstand temptation and evil.

Second, by praying the St. Michael Prayer, we acknowledge the reality of spiritual warfare. It reminds us that the devil and evil spirits are active in the world, seeking to lead us away from God. Our plea for St. Michael's defense is a declaration of our commitment to resist these forces.

### CROWE, from page 12

are not always good at assuming the best of those who are speaking to us, or of being truly open to what another has to say. But this is how bridges are built, and this is how communion is achieved.

Third, we submit ourselves humbly to God's protection and St. Michael's intercession in this prayer. This act of surrender reflects our dependence on divine grace. It is a prayer of trust, declaring our hope in God's plan for our lives.

Finally, the St. Michael Prayer is a unifying force for Catholics. It transcends cultural boundaries, uniting believers in a shared understanding of the spiritual battles we face. Accordingly, it fosters a sense of community among Catholics worldwide.

While the world around us grapples with spiritual challenges

and the relentless forces of darkness, the St. Michael Prayer shines. It is a timeless beacon of hope and strength for Catholics everywhere. Pope St. John Paul II's plea for its continued recitation echoes in our ears. As we navigate the complexities of this world, let us not forget the power of the St. Michael Prayer – a call to arms, a declaration of faith, and a reminder of the protective strength that the Archangel Michael offers.

Father Patrick Briscoe is Editor of Our Sunday Visitor.

not only for the effective discernment of the will of God for the Church, but for truly excellent communication among all who represent her this month.

Gretchen R. Crowe is Editor-In-Chief of OSV News.

## SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for October 15, 2023

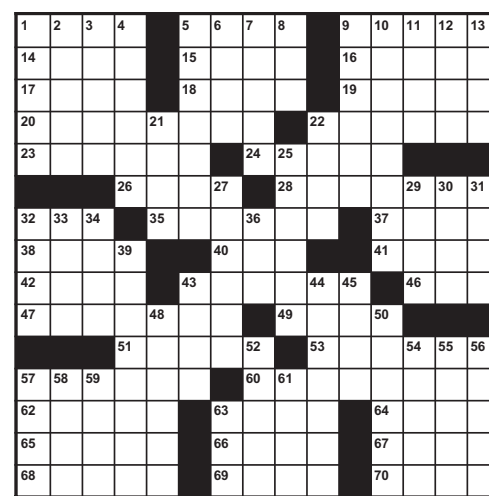
Matthew 22:1-14

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A: The story of the king's banquet. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

JESUS	KINGDOM	A KING
HIS SON	INVITED	MISTREATED
KILLED	ENRAGED	DESTROYED
MURDERERS	BURNED	CITY
WORTHY	STREETS	GATHERED
FOUND	A MAN	FRIEND
BIND	DARKNESS	TEETH

### DARKNESS

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



### ACROSS

- 1 God's description of creation in Genesis
- 5 651, to Nero
- 9 There are seven mentioned in Revelation
- 14 Hick
- 15 He's the Red
- 16 Cop
- 17 Smallest component
- 18 in arms
- 19 "You are the of the world" (Mt 5:14)
- 20 Body of doctrine
- 22 Seaport in France
- 23 Pater
- 24 Originally known as Misión San Antonio de Valero
- 26 Brother of Jacob
- 28 Witty saying
- 32 Summit
- 35 Any place used in the veneration of a saint
- 37 Meat-inspecting org.
- 38 Catholic actor Guinness
- 40 US Job app ID
- 41 "... is now, and shall be..."

### DOWN

- 42 Former monetary unit of Italy
- 43 Gossip
- 46 Abbr. for two NT epistles
- 47 Gift of the Holy Spirit
- 49 occasion of sin
- 51 Fundamental
- 53 Pertaining to life
- 57 Although
- 60 This archdiocese is found in South Australia
- 62 Blessed are those who do this, in Matthew 5
- 63 Migrate
- 64 Principal
- 65 Fail at a premature stage
- 66 Water, to Pedro
- 67 Greek god of love
- 68 DC Catholic university team
- 69 20th letter of the Hebrew alphabet
- 70 Notre
- 27 Patron saint of orphans
- 29 Confirm, in a way
- 30 Chick's tail?
- 31 Trading center
- 32 Baby powder
- 33 Potpourri
- 34 Homeland of the first American-born saint
- 36 Catholic ending
- 39 Capital of Australia
- 43 "Eternal grant unto them"
- 44 Wife of Isaac
- 45 Mizzon or moonraker
- 48 Canonized ones
- 50 Wandered
- 52 Big
- 54 Papal crown
- 55 "Piece of cake," for example
- 56 Perfume the altar
- 57 Indian nursemaid
- 58 Timber wolf
- 59 Anchored float
- 61 God, in ancient Rome
- 63 Sailor

Answer key can be found on page 15



# Hundreds Flock to Annual Kingdom Builders Conference

BY CATHI KENNEDY

On Saturday, October 7, the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, nearly 600 women attended Magnify – the fourth annual Kingdom Builders conference at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne.

"There is a place for you here. You are the beloved daughter of the King. He wants to transform all of us today," said Mary Jo Parrish, the Founder of Kingdom Builders, in her opening remarks.

The day was anchored by the celebration of the Mass, presided over Father Mark Gurtner, Vicar General of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Father Gurtner explained how the Rosary is the heart of his daily Holy Hour and reminded the women in attendance that it is the perfect prayer for families.

Conference speakers Sister Maria Francesco Nagel, Kristin Reilly, and Lisa Cotter used examples from their lives to show how praying to Mary and looking to the examples of the saints can help us with our daily struggles – big and small.

Sister Maria Francesco, a Fort Wayne native who is a member of the Community of the Handmaids of Mary Immaculate, shared how prayer can change the hardest of hearts. Reilly, who leads thousands in the Rosary each day



Cathi Kennedy

Catholic author Lisa Cotter speaks to the crowd at the Kingdom Builders conference on Saturday, October 7, at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne. Cotter's talk focused on the writings of Pope St. John Paul II to women.

on the Many Hail Marys at a Time Instagram page, shared how the daily Rosary has changed her life and the lives of others. Author Lisa Cotter spoke about finding clarity in the writings of Pope St. John Paul II to women.

Throughout the day, many priests from the area were available for confession, and many Kingdom Builder volunteers were praying for the intentions of the conference attendees. The conference ended with praise and worship of Our Lord in Eucharistic adoration.

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

## Fall Craft Market

FORT WAYNE – Queen of Angels Catholic School, 1600 W. State Blvd., will host a fall craft market on Saturday, October 14, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Shop local vendors with a variety of crafts, concessions, and much more. Bring your family and friends and support the school. All proceeds will be put toward a new playground. Contact Karen Gillett at 260-483-8214 for information.

## White Mass and Banquet

FORT WAYNE – A White Mass will be celebrated by Vicar General Father Mark Gurtner on Wednesday, October 18, at the St. Mother Theodore Guerin Chapel, 1122 S Clinton St., at 6:30 p.m., for all in health care and their families. A dinner arranged by the Catholic Medical Guild of Northeast Indiana will follow at nearby Cathedral Center, Lower Level. Dinner cost is \$15. You can RSVP for dinner at [fortwayne.cathmed.org](http://fortwayne.cathmed.org) or call 222-6978 for RSVP or details.

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

FORT WAYNE — The every 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](mailto:asturm@diocesefwsb.org) or 260-414-5960.

## Most Precious Blood Rummage Sale

FORT WAYNE – A rummage sale will be held on Friday, October 27, and Saturday, October 28, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the school gym, 1529 Barthold St. This fundraiser helps support the confirmation students attend a Damascus Confirmation Retreat in Centerburg, Ohio. All money raised will go towards the charter bus and part of the students' camp fee. Contact Angela Gernhardt at 260-424-4832 or [office2@preciousblood.org](mailto:office2@preciousblood.org) for information.

## St. Gaspar's 39th Annual Fancy Fair Craft Bazaar and Famous Cookie Bar

ROME CITY – St. Gaspar Parish, 10871 N. St. Rd. 9, will host the 39th annual Fancy Fair Craft Bazaar and Famous Cookie Bar on Saturday, October 28, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This event is a major annual fundraiser for the Altar

and Rosary Sodality to support charities. Crafters in the church hall and classrooms sell quality homemade fare such as jewelry, fall and Christmas decorations, clothing, religious items, etc. St. Gaspar's is famous for their homemade cookies donated by parishioners (12 doz. each). Patrons pay for either a large box \$10 or small box \$8 and are given food service gloves to pick and choose the kinds of cookies to fill up their box. Lunch is also available offering homemade soups and sandwiches and a variety of pies. Contact Karen Edwards at 260-854-3100 or [info@stgaspar.org](mailto:info@stgaspar.org) for information.

## 'Acclaim' Praise Night

FORT WAYNE – Join the "Acclaim" praise band on Saturday, October 14, at St. Vincent's Parish Life Center, 1502 E. Wallen Rd., from 7-9 p.m. for an evening of praise and spiritual refreshment for all ages.

## America Needs Fatima, Holy Hour of Prayer

SOUTH BEND – America Needs Fatima, Holy Hour of Prayer will take place on Saturday, October 14, at noon in the Christ the King parking lot, 52473 State Road 933. This is an outdoor event.

## REST IN PEACE

### Auburn

Carla Allison, 80,  
Immaculate  
Conception

### Fort Wayne

Denny Beuchel, 86,  
St. Jude

John Kruk, 83,  
St. Vincent de Paul

Jerry Poiry, 81,  
St. Vincent de Paul

### Granger

Bernard Randall, 90,  
St. Pius X

### Huntington

Stuart E. Kaylor, 69, SS.  
Peter & Paul

### Mishawaka

Paul Pignone, 83,  
St. Monica

### Notre Dame

Sister Mary Ada, CSC,  
93, Church of Our  
Lady of Loretto

### South Bend

Leona Singleton, 84,  
Sacred Heart of Jesus

Ken Kowalski, 70,  
St. Adalbert

Juana Palomo, 77,  
St. Adalbert

Steve Kingsberry, 59,  
St. Augustine

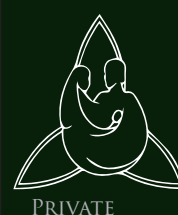
### Wabash

Marjorie Weaver, 85,  
St. Bernard Wabash



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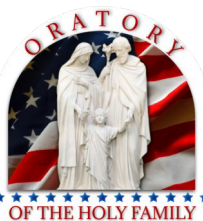


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CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis listens during an ecumenical prayer vigil before the assembly of the Synod of Bishops in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Saturday, September 30. On Wednesday, October 4, Pope Francis released *Laudate Deum*, a new apostolic exhortation on human ecology – a follow-up to his 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

# Pope Francis Releases 'Laudate Deum,' a New Exhortation on Human Ecology

BY GINA CHRISTIAN

*"Climate change is one of the principal challenges facing society and the global community."*

– Pope Francis

(OSV News) – Pope Francis warns the clock is ticking on the dangers of climate change – and both a paradigm shift and practical action are critically needed to avert looming disasters in nature and human society.

The pope released his new apostolic exhortation, *Laudate Deum* ("Praise God"), on Wednesday, October 4, as a follow-up to his 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'* (On Care for Our Common Home). The exhortation's publication coincided with the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, patron of ecology, whose famous canticle inspired the title of *Laudato Si'*.

Though only about one-fifth the length of *Laudato Si'* (which it references extensively), the exhortation's message is even more urgent, Pope Francis said, since "the world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point," the pope wrote. "Climate change is one of the principal challenges facing society and the global community."

The text reiterates key messages that have resonated throughout Pope Francis' papacy – among them, concern for the marginalized, care for creation, human ecology, and a "synodal" approach to resolving global problems.

With "the effects ... borne by the most vulnerable people," the issue of climate change is "one intimately related to the dignity of human life," he said.

Addressed to "all people

of goodwill," the exhortation declares that "it is no longer possible to doubt the human ... origin of climate change," citing data from sources such as the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

While noting that "not every concrete catastrophe" is due to global climate change, humans bear responsibility for specific changes that have led to "extreme phenomena" – such as storms, heat waves, and flooding – that are "increasingly frequent and intense," said the pope.

He pointed to rapid, human-driven upticks in greenhouse gas emissions, which trap radiation from the sun in earth's atmosphere and warm the planet. The global average temperature – a metric that tracks changes in the earth's surface temperature against long-term averages for a given location and date – has risen throughout the past 50 years in particular, at a rate that could approach the recommended ceiling of 1.5 degrees Celsius in just 10 years, said the pope.

That acceleration has a profound impact, causing dangerous shifts in climate and weather with effects ultimately felt "in the areas of health

care, sources of employment, access to resources, housing, (and) forced migrations," Pope Francis said.

He challenged "resistance and confusion" regarding climate change, "even within the Catholic Church," stressing that "the overwhelming majority of scientists specializing in the climate" support the correlation between global climate phenomena and spikes in greenhouse gas emissions.

Pope Francis said the planet itself has become a mirror of a deeply flawed view of human life and activity. Such a "technocratic paradigm" (as the pope described it in *Laudato Si'*) exalts technological and economic power as sources of reality, goodness, and truth, promising unlimited potential if methodically developed.

In recent years, that paradigm has advanced still further, with a goal of "(increasing) human power beyond anything imaginable, before which nonhuman reality is a mere resource at its disposal," he said.

Yet "not every increase in power represents progress for humanity," said the pope, especially since (as he wrote in *Laudato Si'*) "we cannot claim to have a sound ethics, a culture, and spirituality genuinely capable of setting limits and teaching clear-minded self-restraint."

The poor pay the highest price while inflicting the least damage on the planet, said Pope Francis, citing the United Nations Environment Programme's 2022 Emissions Gap Report, which found that per capita greenhouse gas emissions of richer countries far exceed those of poorer ones.

The question of human power itself must be reexamined, and "human beings must be recognized as a part of nature," the pope said, stressing that "everything is connected" and "no one is saved alone."

Lamenting the "weakness of international politics" in addressing climate change, Pope Francis drew on his 2020 encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* to call for a "reconfigured multilateralism" – one "not dependent on changing political conditions or the interests of a few," but possessing a "stable efficacy" that can resolve "the real problems of humanity" by placing "the dignity of persons" before all.

International climate conferences held over the past several decades have had mixed results, said Pope Francis, labeling some as "failures" and others, such as the U.N.'s 1997 COP3 (Conference of the Parties 3) in Kyoto, Japan – which sought to reduce green-

house gas emissions 5 percent by 2012 – as noteworthy. While the Kyoto goal was not met, the 2015 COP21 in Paris marked "a new beginning," said the pope, as it aimed to hold the increase of average global temperatures to less than 2 and, eventually, 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war in Ukraine both hindered progress in tackling global warming, said Pope Francis.

He said COP28, set to take place November 30–December 12 in Dubai, will either prove to be a turning point for decisive action or "a great disappointment" that imperils any progress made so far.

"Binding forms of energy transition" that are "efficient, obligatory, and readily monitored" are essential, said Pope Francis, as "the necessary transition toward clean energy sources such as wind and solar energy, and the abandonment of fossil fuels, is not progressing at the necessary speed."

The pope invited Catholics and those of other faiths to recall their "spiritual motivations" for addressing the climate crisis, asking "everyone to accompany this pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home and to help make it more beautiful, because that commitment has to do with our personal dignity and highest values."

Humility is essential in this journey, he said, "for when human beings claim to take God's place, they become their own worst enemies."