

# TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 96 No. 37

TODAYSCATHOLIC.org

## South Bend Area Schools Celebrate Annual All-Schools Mass

BY KASIA BALSBAUGH

**"A**ll of us are little 'S' saints," Father Mark Gurtner told the stadium full of elementary school students. He added that the saints in heaven, whom he called the "capital 'S' saints," can be great help for us aspiring "little 'S' saints" in both their prayer and their example.

South Bend's annual All-Schools Mass was celebrated on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at the Joyce Center at the University of Notre Dame. Thousands of elementary school students from the Catholic schools in the South Bend area attended the annual Mass along with teachers, administrators, staff, parents, grandparents, and many priests.

A beloved tradition at the All-Schools Mass is that the fourth-grade students dress up as saints. With Bishop Rhoades in Rome participating in the Synod of Bishops, Father Gurtner, Vicar General of the diocese, celebrated this year's All-Schools Mass, and he asked the fourth graders some questions during his homily.

After speaking with a fourth grader dressed up as St. John



Kasia Balsbaugh

Thousands of students, teachers, and family members gather for the All-Schools Mass at the Joyce Center at the University of Notre Dame on Tuesday, October 24.

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## TODAY'S CATHOLIC

(ISSN 0891-1533)  
(USPS 403630)

Official newspaper of the  
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend  
P.O. Box 11169  
Fort Wayne, IN 46856

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260-456-2824

Published weekly, except for the last Sunday in December and every other week from the fourth Sunday in May through the last Sunday in August by the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, 915 S. Clinton St., P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, IN 46802. Periodicals postage paid at Fort Wayne, IN, and additional mailing office.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to: Today's Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN 46856-1169 or email: [circulation@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:circulation@diocesefwsb.org)

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News deadline is 10 days prior to publication date. Advertising deadline is nine days before publication date.

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CNS photos/Lola Gomez

**Cardinals and bishops join Pope Francis as he presides over Mass at St. Peter's Basilica on Sunday, October 29. The Mass marked the end of the first session of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops on synodality.**

## Pope at Synod: Wanting to 'Control' God Is Idolatry

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – To reform the Church is to put God first and adore Him, and to love and serve others, Pope Francis said at the Mass marking the conclusion of the first session of the Synod of Bishops on synodality.

"This is the Church we are called to 'dream': a Church that is the servant of all, the servant of the least of our brothers and sisters; a Church that never demands an attestation of 'good behavior' but welcomes, serves, loves, forgives; a Church with open doors that is a haven of mercy," he said.

"We may have plenty of good ideas on how to reform the Church, but let's remember: To adore God and to love our brothers and sisters with His love, that is the great and perennial reform," the pope said in his homily at Mass in St. Peter's Basilica on Sunday, October 29.

Thousands of faithful stood at the beginning of Mass as synod members and participants processed into the basilica. The procession was led by non-ordained members followed by bishops and then cardinals. The synod on synodality marked the first time laypeople and women religious could take part as voting members. Of the total 364 members, close to 25 percent were "non-bishop members," and 54 of them were women.

"Dear friends, the general assembly of the synod has now concluded," the pope said in his homily. "Today we do not see the full fruit of this process, but with farsightedness we look to the horizon opening up before us."

"The Lord will guide us and help us to be a more synodal and missionary Church,



a Church that adores God and serves the women and men of our time, going forth to bring to everyone the consoling joy of the Gospel," he said.

As the Church concludes this stage of its journey, he said, "it is important to look at the 'principle and foundation' from which everything begins ever anew: love.

"Loving God with our whole life and loving our neighbors as ourselves," he said, is "the heart of everything."

The way to channel this love is to adore God and serve one another, he said.

"We have lost the habit of adoration," the pope said, calling on all priests, dioceses, parishes, and communities to "return to worship" and adore the Lord. "Only in His presence will we be purified, transformed, and renewed by the fire of His Spirit."

To adore God means "to acknowledge in faith that He alone is Lord and that our

individual lives, the Church's pilgrim way, and the ultimate outcome of history all depend on the tenderness of His love. He gives meaning to our lives," he said.

"We are always at risk of thinking that we can 'control God,' that we can confine His love to our own agenda. Instead, the way He acts is always unpredictable and consequently demands amazement and adoration," Pope Francis said. The path of idolatry is "wanting the Lord to act according to the image we have of Him."

He said the Church needs to be "a worshiping Church and a Church of service, washing the feet of wounded humanity, accompanying those who are frail, weak, and cast aside, going out lovingly to encounter the poor," as God commanded.

"It is a grave sin to exploit the vulnerable, a grave sin that corrodes fraternity and devastates society," he said, and, "as disciples of Jesus, we desire to bring to the world a different type of heaven, that of the Gospel."

### Synod's Synthesis Report

A report summarizing discussions at the assembly of the Synod of Bishops said the Church may need more welcoming pastoral approaches, especially to people who feel excluded, but also acknowledged fears of betraying traditional Church teachings and practices.

Among the topics addressed in the report were clerical sexual abuse, women's roles in the Church, outreach to poor, and the concept of "synodality" itself.



The assembly, with 364 voting members, including Bishop Rhoades, met in working sessions six days a week from Wednesday, October 4 to Saturday, October 28, after a three-day retreat outside of Rome before the synod began.

The assembly's discussions set the stage for a yearlong period of reflection that will culminate in the second and final synod assembly in October of 2024 on the same topic.

The 41-page synthesis report, voted on paragraph-by-paragraph on October 28, described its purpose as presenting "convergences, matters for consideration, and proposals that emerged from the dialogue" on issues discussed under the headings of synodality, communion, mission, and participation.

Every item in the report was approved by at least two-thirds of the members present and voting, synod officials said. They published a complete list of the votes.

Within the synod topics, members looked at the role of women in the Church, including in decision making, and at the possibility of ordaining women deacons. The report asked for more "theological and pastoral research on the access of women to the diaconate," including a review of the conclusions of commissions Pope Francis set up in 2016 and 2020.

The paragraph was approved 279-67, which was more than the needed two-thirds support but still garnered among the highest negative votes.

Assembly members also discussed pastoral approaches to welcoming and including in the life of parishes people who have felt excluded, including the poor, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ Catholics, and Catholics whose marriages are not recognized by the Church.

The synthesis said that "to develop authentic ecclesial discernment in these and other areas, it is necessary to approach these questions in the light of the word of God and Church teaching, properly informed and reflected upon."

The divergences in the assembly, it said, reflected opposing concerns: that "if we use doctrine harshly and with a judgmental attitude, we betray the Gospel; if we practice mercy 'on the cheap,' we do not convey God's love."

## Letter to the People of God

Participants in the Synod of Bishops closed their first session by writing a letter addressed to the People of God that stated the Church must continue discerning its future by listening to everyone, starting with the poorest and excluded.

The two-and-a-half-page letter, published on Wednesday,



CNS photo/Vatican Media

**Pope Francis gives his blessing at the conclusion of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops' last working session on Saturday, October 28, in Paul VI Hall at the Vatican.**

October 25, recounted the spirit and activities of the assembly's first session and looked ahead to the assembly's second session, expressing hope that the months leading up to October of 2024 "will allow everyone to concretely participate in the dynamism of missionary communion indicated by the word 'synod.'"

"This is not about ideology, but about an experience rooted in the apostolic tradition," members of the synod assembly wrote.

While the letter does not raise specific topics or questions to be addressed in the assembly's next session, it did say that to "progress in its discernment, the Church absolutely needs to listen to everyone, starting with the poorest."

"It means listening to those who have been denied the right to speak in society or who feel excluded, even by the Church," the letter said, specifying the need to listen to victims of racism, particularly Indigenous populations. "Above all, the Church of our time has the duty to listen, in a spirit of conversion, to those who have been victims of abuse committed by members of the ecclesial body and to commit herself concretely and structurally to ensuring that this does not happen again."

The letter also highlighted the "significant room for silence" made at Pope Francis' invitation, meant to "foster mutual listening and a desire for communion in the Spirit among us."

"Trust," the synod assembly wrote, is what "gives us the audacity and inner freedom that we experienced, not hesitating to freely and humbly express our convergences, differences, desires, and questions."

"Day by day, we felt the pressing call to pastoral and missionary conversion," the assembly said. "For the Church's vocation is to proclaim the Gospel not by focusing on itself, but by placing itself at the service of the infi-

nite love with which God loved the world."

The letter also shared that homeless people near St. Peter's Square were asked about their expectations of the Church on the occasion of the synod and they replied: "Love!"

## Synod Prays for Peace

Pope Francis asked Mary to look mercifully upon the human family, "which has strayed from the path of peace," and entrusted to her protection the world's regions and nations at war.

"Queen of Peace, you suffer with us and for us, as you see so many of your children suffering from the conflicts and wars that are tearing our world apart," the pope said during a prayer service for peace in St. Peter's Basilica on Friday, October 27.

"At this dark hour – this is a dark hour, Mother – we submerge ourselves in your luminous eyes, we entrust ourselves to your heart, sensitive to our problems," he said, looking at an icon of Mary.

With a black-beaded rosary in hand, Pope Francis prayed with cardinals, bishops, and delegates of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops, recalling Mary's strength and initiative from several Gospel scenes – the visitation, the wedding feast at Cana, Jesus' passion and resurrection.

"Now, Mother, once more take the initiative for us, in these times rent by conflicts and waste by the fire of arms," the pope said. "Teach us to cherish and care for life – each and every human life! – and to repudiate the folly of war, which sows death and eliminates the future."

Pope Francis asked Mary to "touch the hearts of those imprisoned by hatred, convert those who fuel and foment conflict."

"Queen of All Peoples, reconcile your children, seduced by evil, blinded by power and hate," he said.



## Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Monday, November 6: 10 a.m. – Meeting of Corporate Board of Directors of Catholic Charities, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne  
 Tuesday, November 7: 6 p.m. – Adult Education Evening, St. Joseph – Hessen Cassel Church, Fort Wayne  
 Wednesday, November 8: 11 a.m. – Mass and All-Principals Meeting, St. Martin de Porres Church, Syracuse  
 Thursday, November 9: 8:30 a.m. – Meeting of Board of Directors of Our Sunday Visitor, Huntington  
 Thursday, November 9: 4 p.m. – Annual Corporation Meeting of Catholic Charities Board of Directors, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne  
 Friday, November 10: 7:45 p.m. – Catholic High School Retreat, St. Felix Catholic Center, Huntington  
 Sunday, November 12: 3 p.m. – Meeting of USCCB Committee on Religious Liberty, Baltimore



## Forty Hours Devotion



## Parishes are Listed in Order by Date

### 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 7-8

### 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  
 St. Joseph, Fort Wayne: March 10-12  
 St. Joseph, South Bend: March 17-19  
 St. Joseph, Mishawaka: March 17-19  
 St. John the Evangelist, Goshen: March 17-19  
 Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne: March 17-19

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



# 'Life Is a Civil Right': Alveda King Encourages Michiana Pro-Life Supporters

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

**A**lveda King, the niece of civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr., was the keynote speaker for the 32nd Annual Right to Life Benefit Dinner on Thursday, October 19. Sharing about her own abortions and her mother's close brush with euthanasia, the nationally known pro-life speaker offered words of inspiration to 750 supporters gathered in the University of Notre Dame's Dahnke Ballroom to continue the crusade to change hearts and minds until abortion and euthanasia become unthinkable.

King frequently called those in attendance back to prayer and recounted a story that revealed her own heart. When a heckler once told her, "I'm pro-choice; I was born this way," she responded, "Then you need to be born again!"

Instead of giving a talk in the traditional sense, King sat down with Andrew Weiss, the master of ceremonies for the event, and responded to questions, many submitted ahead of time by attendees.

King spoke of growing up in an extended church-going family that was dedicated to the sacredness of all life. Neatly joining civil rights to life issues, she declared: "We're all of one blood and race, the human race. If you love me, you won't kill me or my baby – or tell me I'm not going to be able to take care of him."

As a young woman, King had two secret abortions – one voluntary and one performed without her consent by a doctor she thought was just administering a pregnancy test. But in 1983, "I repented and turned my life over to God," she said. God's forgiveness was all she needed, "but if I tell others about my experience, God is going to heal them, and he's going to bless me."

With permission, she also shared her 91-year-old mother's experiences with euthanasia. Two different times, a blood disorder was causing her a great deal of pain. She felt so bad she wanted to die, so doctors gave her morphine "to keep her comfortable" – until King's daughter "drug Grandma out of the hospital" to get a second opinion. A different doctor found a way to improve the circulation and salve the painful wounds.

"Don't get me wrong," King explained. "I want my mother to go the Lord whenever she's ready, but I don't want her to feel she has to go because



Photo provided by Mary Ivancsics

**Pro-life speaker Alveda King speaks to the crowd during an interview with Andrew Weiss at the 32nd Annual Right to Life Benefit Dinner on Thursday, October 19, at the Dahnke Ballroom on the campus of the University of Notre Dame.**

she's suffering so much."

Characterized as "a guardian of the King family legacy," King told the crowd that "abortion is not a civil right. Life is a civil right. I spend my time not so much fighting against abortion but fighting for life. I am against abortion because I believe that there are better opportunities and choices than to abort a child."

At one point, King asked everyone younger than the age of 40 to stand. The response was very encouraging to those who have been engaged in the pro-life movement for more than 50 years. There was a large group of students from Marian High School and a number of Franciscan sisters (who donated one of the more popular auction items, dinner with the sisters).

Antonio Marchi, Executive Director of Michiana Right to Life, took his position in the organization in June of 2022, around the time the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade. "That lit a new fire under the team," said Marchi, who told the crowd that the organization has two main objectives: offering practical support to meet the needs of expectant moms and educating with the objective of healing our culture that has tragically devalued human life.

During her interview, King underscored the eight initiatives Michiana Right to Life hopes to undertake with the help of money raised through the dinner. They are:

- Hire a professional case worker for the HerMichiana mobile unit, which was on display outside the venue. The vehicle travels throughout St. Joseph, Elkhart, and all contig-

uous counties, including three in Michigan.

- Expand the Life Team Workshops to kindergarten and upper elementary classes.

- Launch the inaugural Michiana African Americans for Life Breakfast.

- Develop an outreach to women traveling out of state for abortions.

- Produce a comprehensive list of pro-life resources, pastors, and congregations.

- Work against the illicit mailing of abortion-inducing drugs into Indiana.

- Formalize strategic efforts to combat euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide.

- Set in motion the organization's most extensive public education campaign to change hearts and minds about abortion.

Marchi also spoke of forging partnerships with churches and other organizations. Major sponsors for the event included Catholic Charities of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Franciscan Alliance, and the University of Notre Dame, in addition to several individuals and couples.

Honorary chairs of the event were Walter and Elaine Nicgorski, who became involved in the pro-life cause by publishing a newsletter that predated the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. In his opening remarks at the benefit dinner, Walter said now that the legal obstacle has been removed and Indiana law is on the side of the endangered unborn, the pro-life movement has "entered a time of new opportunity." He urged friends of life to "give like champions" to work toward a new age of respect for human dignity.

# Report: Medical Abortions Spike in Year Since Dobbs

BY KATE SCANLON

**WASHINGTON D.C. (OSV News)** – The number of legal abortions provided by virtual-only clinics via abortion pill prescriptions spiked 72 percent in the year following the Supreme Court's reversal of Roe v. Wade, according to a report by #WeCount, a research project by the Society of Family Planning, a group that supports legal abortion.

The study is notable because it is the first full-year census of U.S. abortion providers following the Supreme Court decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization. The survey only considered data from licensed clinics within the health care system, researchers said, and does not account for what may be illegal procedures, such as abortion pills ordered from overseas.

The increase in abortions at virtual-only clinics, which use telemedicine to prescribe an abortion-inducing drug regimen to patients, comports with some previous studies showing similar results post-Dobbs. Even before that decision, data from the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed that more than half of the abortions performed in the United States were chemical or medical, rather than surgical.

The #WeCount report, which examined the period from April of 2022 to June of 2023, found that although abortions decreased in states that have banned or limited the procedure, abortions increased nationally.

"The Dobbs decision turned abortion access in this country upside down," Dr. Alison Norris, #WeCount co-chair and a professor at the Ohio State

University's College of Public Health, said in a statement. The increase, she said, demonstrates that people seeking abortions will travel for them despite "tremendous hardships," while those who cannot travel can face "mental, emotional, and economic impacts."

The Catholic Church teaches that all human life is sacred and must be respected from conception to natural death. As such, the Church opposes direct abortion as an act of violence that takes the life of the unborn child.

Asked about the #WeCount report, Destiny Herndon-De La Rosa, Founder and President of New Wave Feminists, told OSV News that "this is why at New Wave Feminists we have always said our goal isn't to make abortion illegal, but to make it unthinkable and unnecessary through practical support."

"You make it unnecessary by creating a society that doesn't penalize pregnant people for choosing life," Herndon-De La Rosa said. "Most of the individuals who contact us need help with housing, child care, health care resources, and transportation. Many work at minimum wage jobs that don't offer any type of family leave, and they know that continuing their pregnancy means they won't be able to feed their other children, so they feel trapped."

"The irony of 'choice,'" she added, "is that abortion decisions are often only made when a person feels they have no other choice at all because society is only willing to provide the cheapest option (such as abortion pills) but won't actually invest in the safety nets that would assist them in choosing life and parenting."



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# Maine Bishop after 18 Killed in Shooting: 'God Is Always with Us'

OSV News – “Evil is part of the world in which we live,” said Bishop Robert P. Deeley of Portland, Maine, during a Mass on Friday, October 27, in Lewiston, Maine. “It’s how we deal with it that is important.”

Bishop Deeley made his comments during his homily at an evening Mass in the adoration chapel at Holy Cross Church in Lewiston two days after 18 people were shot and killed during a shooting spree in the city. It was the deadliest mass shooting since 21 people were killed at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, in May of 2022.

Authorities found the suspect, 40-year-old Robert Card, dead late Friday night from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound, according to Maine Governor Janet Mills, who said she was “breathing a sigh of relief tonight knowing that ... Card is no longer a threat to anyone.”

“Now is a time to heal,” she said. Shelter-in-place orders for Lewiston and surrounding areas had been ordered from Wednesday night until Friday afternoon, and people were asked to stay home. Prince of Peace Parish in Lewiston moved all liturgies online, and offered multiple opportunities for the community to come together in virtual prayer while the shelter-in-place order was in effect.

We have been “joined with you in prayer” during “this

time of trial,” Bishop Deeley told those gathered in person and online on October 27. “It has been a very difficult time, I know, for all of you, and we are reminded in the Eucharist that, of course, the Lord is with us.”

During his homily, Bishop Deeley said it’s important to pray for those in need during times of difficulty.

“It is good to hear the words ‘I’m praying with you and for you,’” he said. “It is good for us to promise someone thoughts and prayers because it is the reality of passing on to another the deepest part of my life; my belief that I am created in the image and likeness of God and His love, and so are you.”

“When we offer someone thoughts and prayers, we’re precisely conveying that truth of faith which is our hope,” he said. “It is the way in which we know in our hearts that, indeed, God is with us. In moments of difficulty, it’s sometimes hard to get our heads around that, and it sometimes takes time, but it is the truth of who we are, it is the truth of our faith, it is the truth that God wants us to hear.”

“We may not be able to explain why bad things happen in this life, but what we do know is that His love is eternal, and that we will never be lost – that God is always with us. He welcomes us to life and to eternal life.”

After the “unspeakable tragedy” of the shooting rampage in Maine, Pope Francis prayed

that God would give the entire United States his “blessings of strength and peace.”

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State, relayed the pope’s condolences to the victims and their families in a telegram to Bishop Deeley. Vatican officials released a copy of the telegram on Saturday, October 28, three days after the shootings at a bowling alley and a bar.

Cardinal Parolin told Bishop Deeley that the pope “was deeply saddened to learn of the terrible loss of life resulting from the mass shooting,” and he expressed “his spiritual closeness to all those suffering from this unspeakable tragedy, especially the families who lost loved ones.”

Commending the souls of the dead to God’s mercy, the pope also prayed for the wounded and for the medical personnel caring for them and recognized the “noble efforts” of the police and other first responders who acted to protect the community.

“With firm trust that aided by God’s grace we can overcome evil with good, the Holy Father invokes upon the people of Lewiston, and indeed the entire country, Almighty God’s blessings of strength and peace.”

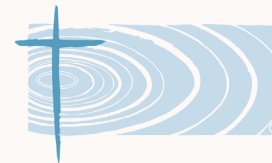
*Catholic News Service contributed to this report.*



OSV News photo/Kevin Lamarque, Reuters

A makeshift memorial is seen in Lewiston, Maine, on Saturday, October 28, near Schemengees Bar and Grille Restaurant, one of the locations of the deadly mass shooting in Maine, where 18 people were killed on Wednesday, October 25.

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## Did you know...?

- The main reason young men do not consider the priesthood is because they have never been personally asked.
- If three different people invite a man to consider priesthood, he is five times more likely to apply to be a seminarian.

### Vocations are everyone's business

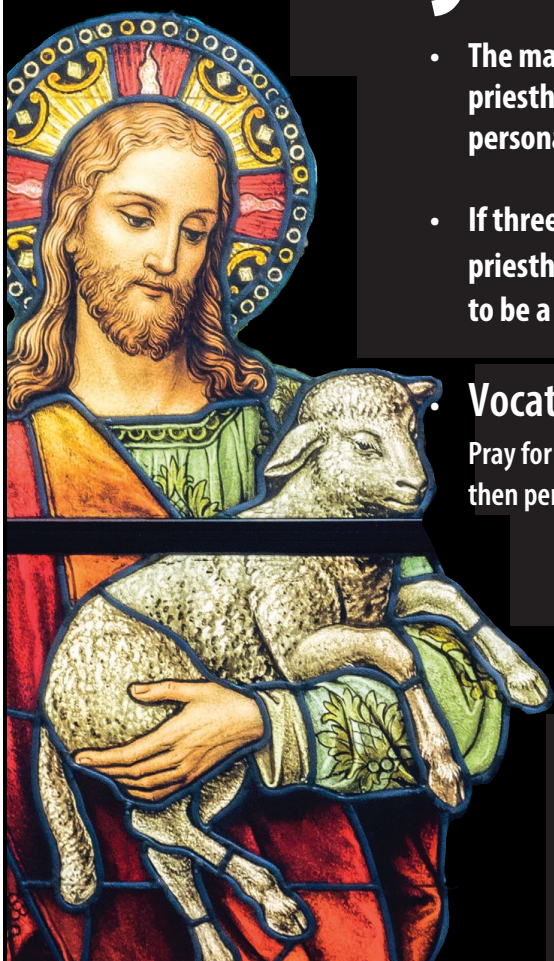
Pray for specific men you know to consider the priesthood — then personally invite them to do so.

**Contact:**

Father Jonathan Norton,  
Director of Seminarians

Father Daniel Niezer,  
Promoter of Priestly Vocations

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## Ohio Voters to Decide Future of Abortion Access in State

COLUMBUS, Ohio (OSV News) – Ohio voters will consider Issue 1 in November, a measure that would codify abortion access in the state's constitution through fetal viability, typically understood to be 24 weeks gestation. The measure, advanced by the Ohio Physicians for Reproductive Rights and Ohioans for Reproductive Freedom, will be on the state's ballot on Tuesday, November 7, and, if passed, would legalize abortion up to the point of viability and beyond, if a physician decided an abortion was necessary for the sake of the mother's life or health. Although Ohio lawmakers enacted a six-week abortion ban, that measure is tied up in state court, meaning abortions are currently legal in Ohio up to 22 weeks of pregnancy. Supporters of the measure argue it would return the state to the legal standard set while *Roe v. Wade* was in place. Opponents argue the measure would go further than that through its definition of fetal viability, which states viability would be determined on "a case-by-case basis." An October 17 Baldwin Wallace University of Ohio Pulse Poll found that 58 percent of likely Ohio voters support passage of Issue 1. "If we lose that initiative, it means that there will be no ability for citizens of Ohio to speak to their own views and have them be reflected in the law," said Marjorie Dannenfelser, President of SBA Pro-Life America.

## As Wars Rage, Catholics in U.S. Pray, Fast for Peace

PHILADELPHIA (OSV News) – With close to 30 major wars and conflicts raging throughout the world – among them, the Israel-Hamas war and Russia's war on Ukraine – Catholics across the United States gathered on Friday, October 27, in response to Pope Francis' call for a worldwide day of prayer for peace. In the Holy Land to date, some 1,400 in Israel, including at least 30 U.S. citizens, and, according to Hamas officials, some 7,000 in Gaza, have been killed. Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez of Philadelphia, speaking at a Mass for the Preservation of Peace and Justice, offered an apology to young people for the violence and division present in the world. Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Illinois, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, released a message on October 27 renewing his call for peace in the Holy Land. He wrote: "We continue to pray for the victims caught in

## Hispanic Leaders Discuss New Pastoral Plan



OSV News photo/James Ramos, Texas Catholic Herald

Auxiliary Bishop Arturo Cepeda of Detroit, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, gestures during a small group discussion at the National Catholic Association of Diocesan Directors for Hispanic Ministry's annual conference in Houston on Wednesday, October 11. More than 250 Hispanic ministry leaders from 109 dioceses in the United States, as well as several bishops, gathered for the event, which focused on the new "National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry," approved by the USCCB in June of 2023. Bishop Cepeda said the new pastoral plan was the "fruit of many years of wisdom and consultation, experiences, ups, and downs, of listening, collaboration, and so many fruits that the Encuentros have brought."

this cycle of violence as well as the regional and international actors who are being drawn into the conflict. We must not grow weary of offering our prayers and support for peace and justice for all concerned. A lasting solution respecting the rights, needs, and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians remains essential to these ends."

## Pope Calls for Formal Investigation into Father Rupnik

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis has lifted the statute of limitations on abuse accusations against Father Marko Rupnik to allow for a formal investigation of the case by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith. "In September, the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors brought to the pope's attention that there were seri-

ous problems in the handling of the Father Marko Rupnik case and lack of outreach to victims," officials in the Vatican Press Office said in an October 27 statement. "Consequently, the Holy Father asked the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith to review the case and decided to lift the statute of limitations to allow a process to take place." The officials continued: "The pope is firmly convinced that if there is one thing the Church must learn from the synod, it is to listen attentively and compassionately to those who are suffering, especially those who feel marginalized from the Church." Father Rupnik, whose mosaics decorate churches and chapels at the Vatican and around the world, has been accused of sexually, spiritually, or psychologically abusing more than 20 women and at least one man in a 40-year period. The pope's statement came days after it was announced that Father

Rupnik, who was expelled by the Society of Jesus in June, had been accepted into the Diocese of Koper, Slovenia, the diocese where he was ordained a priest in 1985.

## Canonization Announced for Argentinian Woman

BUENOS AIRES (OSV News) – Argentina will get its first home-grown female saint in early 2024 with the canonization of Blessed María Antonia de San José. Vatican officials announced on Tuesday, October 24, that San José, born as María Antonia de Paz Figueroa but known throughout Argentina simply as Mama Antula, would be canonized as the pope authorized the promulgation of the decree on the miracle attributed to her intercession. She will be the fifth saint associated with Argentina – four of

whom were elevated to sainthood by Pope Francis. "Mama Antula is considered the mother of the nation. She was a strong, brave woman who believed in Argentina. She was committed to the country and that knowing Christ would transform society," Bishop Santiago Olivera told OSV News. When the Jesuits were expelled from Spain and its colonies in the Americas in 1767, Bishop Olivera said that Mama Antula kept the Jesuits' work going, and she continued to work with the Jesuits until the end of her life.

## Mexican Bishops Call for Solidarity after Hurricane Otis

(OSV News) – Mexico's bishops expressed "closeness" with the country's affected populations and urged generosity after a monster Category 5 hurricane tore through Acapulco, leaving 27 dead and four people missing. Caritas Mexico, meanwhile, mobilized a response to Hurricane Otis, which battered Acapulco around midnight on Wednesday, October 25, as the strongest hurricane to ever hit Mexico's Pacific Coast, according to the National Hurricane Center, causing widespread property damage and flooding. "In these difficult times, we call for unity and fraternity among Mexicans. We urge the provision of generous assistance for those affected, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. May no one remain indifferent to the suffering of others," officials with the Mexican bishops' conference said in an October 25 statement.

## Georgia Court Temporarily Allows 'Heartbeat' Ban to Stand

ATLANTA (OSV News) – The Georgia Supreme Court on Tuesday, October 24, rejected a lower court's ruling allowing a state law restricting abortion after six weeks gestation to remain in effect amid ongoing legal challenges. The law, a so-called "heartbeat" ban, called the LIFE Act, prohibits with some exceptions abortion after fetal cardiac activity can be detected. Fulton County Superior Court Judge Robert McBurney called the law "unequivocally unconstitutional" last year because it was enacted in 2019 while *Roe v. Wade* was still in place. But the Georgia Supreme Court rejected McBurney's ruling in a 6-1 decision. "When the United States Supreme Court overrules its own precedent interpreting the United States Constitution, we are then obligated to apply the court's new interpretation of the Constitution's meaning on matters of federal constitutional law," Justice Verda Colvin wrote in a majority opinion.



# Celebrate Opening Weekend

**December 1-3**

Free and Open to All

[raclinmurphymuseum.nd.edu/](http://raclinmurphymuseum.nd.edu/)



Mexican, *Our Lady of Guadalupe*, 1729, Oil on canvas, 50 7/8 x 37 5/8 in (129.22 x 95.57 cm). Gift of Mr. Ignacio Aranguren, ND '52, his wife Pirri, and their sons Luis, Ignacio, ND '85 and Santiago, ND '92, 2002.018



# National Vocations Awareness Week

(November 5-11, 2023)

How is **God** calling  
— You? —



## Discerning your vocation?

Here are a few tips from the Holy Cross Office of Vocations:

- 1 Prepare your heart.** Begin not by *asking* God but by *knowing* God. Attend regular Mass and Confession, reflect on Scripture, pray, and offer service.
- 2 Ask the question.** Ask for the desire to receive the answer so that when it comes you might embrace it.
- 3 Listen for God's call.** Waiting for an answer takes patience, but God makes his will known to those who seek it with sincere hearts.
- 4 Address fears and questions.** It is in answering God's call that we find our greatest joy. If you think you may be called, follow the QR code below to learn more about the process of discernment or to reach out to a Vocation Director.



CONGREGATION OF  
**HOLY CROSS**  
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[vocations@holycrossusa.org](mailto:vocations@holycrossusa.org)

[cscvocations.org](http://cscvocations.org)

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# How Two Young Priests Are Inspiring Vocations

BY CLAIRE KENNEY

This past May, Bishop Rhoades named Father Jonathan Norton and Father Daniel Niezer to their current roles as Diocesan Director of Seminarians and Diocesan Director of Vocations, respectively. In their roles, they will walk alongside current seminarians and those considering a priestly vocation.

"For the first time in recent diocesan history (at least), we have expanded our vocations office to include two priests instead of one," Father Niezer said.

Father Norton and Father Niezer grew up in Fort Wayne and attended Bishop Dwenger High School. Neither are far from their time in the seminary themselves, as Father Norton was ordained a priest in 2015, while Father Niezer was ordained in 2019.

In their new roles, each works to gain more priests for the diocese. Father Norton's role as Diocesan Director of Seminarians is to shepherd those currently in formation at seminary. Father Niezer's role as Diocesan Director of Vocations works to recruit new priests. They've only been in the roles for a few months.

"In this role (Diocesan Director of Seminarians), I will walk with men who have decided to respond to God's calling and enter seminary," Father Norton said. "I help them through the application process and discernment by the bishop on whether they are accepted by our diocese for formation."

Father Niezer explained: "My goal is to ensure that there are no obstacles between God's invitation and our response. I want to make sure that no vocational call goes unanswered. One of my greatest fears is to think that God



Joshua Schipper

**Father Daniel Niezer, Pastor of St. Dominic in Bremen and the chaplain of Marian High School in Mishawaka, is the new Diocesan Director of Vocations.**

may be calling young men and women to beautiful vocations, but yet those individuals may not be listening nor in a place to receive those great calls."

The two also remain in their current pastoral roles, with Father Norton serving as Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw and Father Niezer remaining as Pastor of St. Dominic in Bremen and the chaplain of Marian High School in Mishawaka.

Juggling the responsibilities of the roles can be challenging but also rewarding, the priests told Today's Catholic.

"I am still adjusting to this new role, balancing responsibilities between the parish and

the Vocations Office," Father Norton said. "But I am honored to have this responsibility, because it's a unique ministry that few priests have."

And serving in two roles can cultivate valuable crossover, he added.

"I am excited for how my parish will come to love these men because they care about what I do," Father Norton said.

For the two young priests, guiding other young men through their discernment brings such hope and joy, they said.

"In just a few months of being in this role, I've had numerous formal conversations with great young men who are discerning a vocation to the priesthood here in our diocese," Father Niezer said. "That has been a very unexpected gift!"

Like other vocations within the Church, the priestly vocation is holy and urgent.

"When we live our vocation with great faith and dedication, God will work marvelous gifts within us, and we will become saints," Father Niezer said. "Whether you are faithfully living your vocation to the priesthood, religious and consecrated life, or to holy matrimony, God will reap an abundant harvest, and we need many more laborers for his harvest."

Father Niezer continued: "The call is not only urgent, but it is a great joy and blessing to accept God's invitation. We lose nothing in answering His call, but gain everything that is of value to God in this



Bob List

**Father Jonathan Norton, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw, is the new Diocesan Director of Seminarians.**

beautiful life."

Father Norton and Father Niezer each said they rely on the support of their brother priests in doing this important work.

"I have been most grateful to our pastors and priests in the diocese who have been tirelessly working to cultivate the Christian faith in their parishes and have been referring young men to us in the hopes that they may discern a vocation with us here in the diocese," Father Niezer explained.

Like in any facet of life or line of work, Father Norton and Father Niezer said these new roles in the diocesan Vocations Office require them to lean on God.

"Ultimately, this is the Lord's work, so I want to be sensitive to the spiritual aspect of this work by inviting our people, families, and parishes to simply pray more for vocations, make more frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and practice their faith with greater zeal and devotion in all of the ordinary circumstances of their life," Father Niezer said.

The work of formation and seminarian support carries much anticipation.

"And I look forward to walking with these men in their formation, especially since (God willing) they will be ordained for our diocese and join this great presbyterate," Father Norton said.

To learn more about vocations in our diocese, visit [diocesefwsb.org/vocations](http://diocesefwsb.org/vocations).

## Prayer for National Vocations Awareness Week (November 5-11)


God our Father, we thank you for calling men and women to serve in your Son's Kingdom as priests, deacons, and consecrated persons.

Send your Holy Spirit to help others to respond generously and courageously to your call.

May our community of faith support vocations of sacrificial love in our youth and young adults.

Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Source: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops



**LITTLE FLOWER**

**HOLY HOUR**

**FOR VOCATIONS**

7 p.m. | First Tuesday of the Month

St. Mother Theodore Guérin Chapel  
1139 S. Calhoun St., Fort Wayne

Each month is led by a different priest.  
[diocesefwsb.org/discern-priesthood](http://diocesefwsb.org/discern-priesthood)





# Calling All College Students: Faith-Filled Summer Jobs Await

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

Do you know any college students looking for opportunities to strengthen their faith as they work with children, teens, and other young adults? Across the diocese, state, and region, colleges, youth camps, and other organizations are looking to fill a variety of positions from full-time summer work to part-time jobs. Some will accept applications next spring, but many want to line up their staffs before the end of 2023.

## Totus Tuus

The mission statement of Totus Tuus (Latin for "totally yours," the motto of Pope St. John Paul II) is, "To inspire in young people a true longing for holiness, a deep desire for daily conversion, and openness to their vocation by the constant challenge to give themselves entirely to Christ through Mary and by continually strengthening their prayer lives in imitation of her." The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend is seeking teams of two men and two women each, with the goal of providing summer programming in multiple parishes for middle and high school youths (in the evenings) and younger students (such as a vacation Bible school with robust, Eucharist-focused content). Missionaries dedicate time each day to their own life of prayer, which provides a foundation for their summer field work. They are housed with parish families. Applications are being accepted from now until March 31, 2024. For more information, visit [diocesefwsb.org/totus-tuus](http://diocesefwsb.org/totus-tuus).

## Catholic Family Land

This family camp is run by the Apostolate for Family Consecration, a private association based in Bloomingdale, Ohio. Catholic Family Land is seeking college and young adults to serve as Alumni Corps members whose main responsibility is "supporting families to grow in faith and holiness," according to the organization's website ([afc.org](http://afc.org)).

## University of Saint Francis

The University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne is looking to hire college students to serve as counselors at several summer camps. These include the Beauty Will Save the World Summer Camp, the Wilderness Skills and Nature Camp, World Building Camp, and Business Leadership Camp. The purpose of these programs is to introduce local

families to the Saint Francis community, especially for low-income students. As they serve as mentors, camp counselors have an opportunity to grow in their own faith as they learn and live the Franciscan values of service, respect, prayer, and fostering peace and justice. Experienced senior camp counselors also help present lessons as well as working one-on-one with faculty members to create lesson plans. Hiring for summer 2024 begins in early December. Students who work in all the camps can expect five or six 25-hour work weeks throughout the course of the summer. For more information, email [camps@sf.edu](mailto:camps@sf.edu).

## St. Meinrad

Those chosen for College Ministerial Internships at St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in southern Indiana spend six weeks being formed in Benedictine spirituality for the sake of Church ministry. They live in an intentional Christian community at St. Meinrad Monastery, participate in daily liturgical prayer and study, and they minister as catechists and other staff members at the community's summer conferences, balancing theoretical learning and practical service. Applications are due early in November. Email [oboc@saintmeinrad.edu](mailto:oboc@saintmeinrad.edu) to learn more.

## Catholic Youth Summer Camp

The well-known Catholic Youth Summer Camp of Damascus, with its main campus located in Centerburg, Ohio, staffs its retreat and conference center with full-time missionaries. In a typical summer, 7,500 middle and high school students attend camps where they are awakened, empowered, and equipped to live the adventure of the Catholic faith. Missionaries are trained to evangelize through music, worship, drama, and skit ministry. Some missionaries utilize their talents in media or production. All are expected to fundraise, but they are paid a summer stipend. Applications are open until Wednesday, November 15, and can be found at [damascus.net/mission](http://damascus.net/mission).

## South Bend Area Colleges

For those currently enrolled at the University of Notre Dame, Holy Cross College, or St. Mary's College, there are several opportunities.

Notre Dame Vision Mentors-in-Faith work with high school students who come for five-day summer sessions to explore



Provided by Brian Florin

Before he was ordained a priest, Father Brian Florin, at left in the middle row, served as a mentor for the Notre Dame Vision Program.

God's calling to use their talents to serve the Church and the world. The program includes nationally known speakers, but participants often express appreciation for college mentors who lead small faith-sharing groups with high-schoolers from across the country. The Notre Dame Vision program is seeking gifted servant-leaders from the three colleges willing to share their own faith stories and serve others. Besides those who work with high school students in dorms and small groups, there are also music mentors and master mentors returning for a second summer. All Mentors-in-Faith take a course for college credit and receive extensive training in pastoral skills, as well as participate in retreats and reflection groups.

Father Brian Florin, Parochial Vicar at St. John the Evangelist Church in Goshen, is a Vision alum. He said his work in the summers of 2014 and 2015 "was instrumental in being able to hear God's call and respond generously with my life." He said the intellectual, human, spiritual, and pastoral formation he received through Vision were the precursor of the same four dimensions in his seminary studies. He further stated that his goal as a small-group mentor was to "facilitate an encounter with Jesus through

discussion, prayer, and the sacraments." He added, "I found that as I served these young people, my heart was on fire with the love of a father" – his first experience with the spiritual fatherhood he now lives out as a priest. He said that the "genius of Vision is truly in the investment and formation of the college mentors-in-faith. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to serve as a mentor for

Notre Dame Vision!" To learn more about the program, visit [mcgrath.nd.edu/vision](http://mcgrath.nd.edu/vision).

Many of the same college students also serve as mentors for Holy Cross College's Saints and Scholars program, which invites participants to "pray with the saints, learn with the scholars, and heal the world," as well as to explore what kind of saint God might be calling young adults to become. Tracks include public health, media, ecology, education, and visual arts. Email [ssi@hcc-nd.edu](mailto:ssi@hcc-nd.edu).

The Notre Dame Alumni Association is looking for nine student leaders to work for three weeks in July (roughly July 5-26) in the Family Volunteer Camp program. The program is designed for families of alumni who have children between the ages of 9 and 18, and 125 individuals per week participate. Family groups spend a week living, praying, and reflecting at Notre Dame, as well as volunteering at more than 20 local service agencies. These volunteers go to different sites each day and do everything from building houses to visiting the elderly to escorting children to parks and beaches. The student program leaders lead these families in prayer and service, troubleshoot at the work sites, and mentor children of alumni who may be experiencing the joy of service for the first time. They have about a 40-hour work week, with housing provided if needed. Many are current Notre Dame, St. Mary's, or Holy Cross students; others may be the children of Notre Dame staff or faculty on summer break from other colleges. Applications are accepted in early spring. Learn more at [my.nd.edu/page/family-volunteer-camp](http://my.nd.edu/page/family-volunteer-camp) or by emailing [service@alumni.nd.edu](mailto:service@alumni.nd.edu).



Every vocation changes our plans, disclosing a new one, and it is astonishing to see how much inner help God gives us.

ST. POPE JOHN PAUL II

SPONSORED BY THE SERRA CLUB OF SOUTH BEND





# Mass Celebrated for St. Vincent de Paul Society Members

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

Before the COVID-19 pandemic canceled what was once an annual event, members of all the St. Vincent de Paul Society chapters in St. Joseph County would gather for a Mass with the bishop and a celebratory dinner. On Wednesday, October 25, at St. Joseph Church in Mishawaka, more than 100 Vincentians were delighted to resume the tradition.

With Bishop Rhoades in Rome participating in the Synod of Bishops, the Mass was celebrated by Father Mark Gurtner, Vicar General of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, with the assistance of Father Chris Lapp, Pastor of St. Joseph, and Deacon Mike Plenzler of St. Anthony of Padua in South Bend.

In his homily, Father Gurtner repeated an apt line from the day's Gospel, Luke 12:42-43: "Who is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute the food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so." Such stewards clearly include not only pastors and parents but Vincentians,

Father Gurtner said, who are charged not simply with distributing material goods but, according to their Rule, with serving cheerfully, listening in order to understand rather than to judge, respecting their neighbors' wishes, and helping them recover their dignity.

For Bishop Rhoades, Father Gurtner thanked all those present for their kindness in serving Christ in the person of the poor.

After a potluck dinner, Anne Watson, Executive Director of the St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Joseph County, said

her most important message was also "thank you" to all the parish volunteers, the "keepers of the mission," said Watson, who said she was encouraged to report 77 new members out of a total of about 500.

Watson shared some striking statistics on the increased demand for food and other assistance throughout the past year. Home visits to neighbors in need increased by 50 percent, and 55 percent more people came through the pantry at the council office.

Watson said that between October of 2022 and September

of 2023:

- \$3.1 million worth of food and services were provided
- 65,810 people were fed
- 5,962 homes were visited
- 94 children received beds through the Sweet Dreams program
- 1,444 children received Christmas presents.
- 1,144 families requested help who have never needed it before.

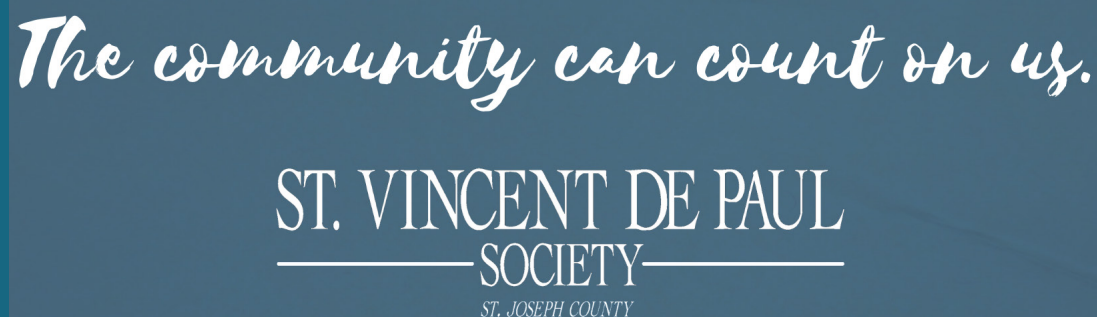
Watson also shared more good news on the local front: So many families and businesses signed up to sponsor families for Christmas through

St. Vincent de Paul Society that the organization is able to enroll 423 families, the largest number in at least five years.

Watson pointed out that the wider community may not hear about St. Vincent de Paul as much as other service organizations because the work tends to be quieter and more personal. The St. Vincent de Paul Society has been serving St. Joseph County since 1904; records from those early years include delivering coal as well as food and helping widows and job-seekers recently released from prison. Watson showed a video featuring two individuals served in the past year who were effusive in thanking SVdP members.

Speaking to students at Holy Cross College in late October, Watson pointed out that Blessed Frederic Ozanam was a college student when he and a small group of friends founded the first Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris in 1833. It is now the largest Catholic lay organization in the world.

Attendees were sent off with a quote from Blessed Frederic, who said, "Let us do without hesitation whatever good lies at our hands."



## Finding Healing, Friendship in 'Surviving Divorce' Program

BY KASIA BALSBAUGH

Pam Maxwell, a parishioner at Christ the King Catholic Church in South Bend, recounted the following story:

"A man was at Sunday Mass, praying heavily about his divorce situation. After Mass, he spoke to a young priest, with whom he had an impromptu confession in the back pew. The man could tell that the priest was being quite thoughtful about what sort of penance would be appropriate. Finally, the man said to the priest, 'I can make a suggestion, if you'd like.' The priest accepted his offer. [The man] said that for his penance, he should sign up for the 'Surviving Divorce' group. The priest heartily agreed."

The Surviving Divorce program, published by Ascension Press, was developed to help people like the man in Pam Maxwell's story process their divorce situations from a Catholic perspective. Maxwell has been involved with the program since 2020, when she was approached to begin the ministry at Christ the King. After training and an interlude because of COVID-19, Maxwell is currently running

the Fall 2023 sessions. "As long as we have people interested, we'll continue to run it," Maxwell said.

The Surviving Divorce program spans 12 weekly sessions, each centered around a different topic such as dealing with anger, family, or finances. Besides acknowledging the psychological toll of a marriage breakdown, the series also offers practical advice,

such as how to navigate the annulment process and the Church's teachings on relevant issues.

Maxwell said participants in the program have been in almost every stage of the process – separated, about to separate, civilly divorced, annulled, thinking about going through the annulment process.

They also come from different parishes across the area.

Maxwell brings her own experiences with divorce and

annulment to her role as facilitator. "I really like to dispel the myths," Maxwell said. So many people think "that you can just buy an annulment," she said.

In a typical week's session, participants begin by touching base about their situations and how they're doing that week. Then, they watch a half-hour video on the topic of the week, followed by a group discussion. The videos feature several

Catholic speakers, priests, psychologists, and people who have gone through separation situations as Catholics. Some of the people telling their personal stories are featured in more than one video. "Depending on the subject matter, you can kind of see their growth," Maxwell said. She added

that Lisa Everett, Director of Marriage and Family Ministry for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has also supple-

mented the program with enriching prayers and readings for participants, including what popes have said about divorce or about saints who suffered marital separation.

Maxwell called the program a "place to come and speak freely with people who are going through or have gone through similar situations."

"People have someone to talk to," Maxwell said. "There's camaraderie. They're not alone. That can be really important to some."

Maxwell said one woman has even returned to go through the program a second time. The participants feel free, Maxwell said, to talk openly about their situations and the various emotions that come with separation, including the common feelings of guilt, embarrassment, and unworthiness.

An educator who recently went through the Surviving Divorce program at Christ the King agreed with Maxwell that the camaraderie is an important benefit of the program.

"Maybe the most significant thing is the fact that other individuals of faith have gone through similar circumstances," the participant said, adding that the group formed "deep friendships" and still keep in touch even after the end of the

program.

The participant said that one of the topics that really resonated was the principle of forgiveness – by all parties. "Before you forgive others, you have to forgive yourself," the participant recalled.

Maxwell said that Holy Cross Father Steve Lacroix, Pastor at Christ the King, has been a "great mentor for this program."

"I'm really grateful that we've been able to offer the Surviving Divorce program at Christ the King," Father Lacroix told Today's Catholic in an email. "For people of faith who suffer the trauma of divorce, the healing they need can only come from Christ. However, I know that a lot of times divorced parishioners wonder about their place in the Church and feel different from the happy families they see at Sunday Mass. It's important that we accompany them through this process so that their relationship with the Lord can grow stronger, especially at a time when they really need to lean on that relationship for healing."

For more information on the Surviving Divorce program in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, visit [diocesefwsb.org/divorce-ministry](http://diocesefwsb.org/divorce-ministry).

*"I know that a lot of times divorced parishioners wonder about their place in the Church and feel different from the happy families they see at Sunday Mass."*

HOLY CROSS FATHER STEVE LACROIX



# Following the Saints or Followed by the Saints?

**W**e like to think we follow the saints, but sometimes the saints follow us.

As I walked home from class in Tours, France, I had an irresistible urge to explore the church I was passing. As I entered, I marveled at the architecture. A choir of nuns happened to be singing vespers.

The moment was like the scene where the main character experiences a revelation in every Hollywood movie, except it was playing out for me in real life.

I knelt in a pew at the back of the church. The nuns kept chanting. And I began to pray. Then I noticed something strange about the church. The altar appeared to have two tabernacles. How strange, I thought. This required investigation.

I rose and approached the sanctuary. Even as the sun fell, the neo-Byzantine church was luminous. Gazing up at the brass chest perched on top of the high altar, I couldn't determine what it was. I searched around for a brochure.

Then, thanks to the help of reading, I learned that the chest was not a second tabernacle, it was a reliquary. It contained a relic of the skull of St. Martin of Tours. And, in fact, the church was not only dedicated to him but included his tomb. Twin staircases descended on either side of the high altar (not unlike St. Peter's in Rome). I continued

my exploration.

The dimly lit crypt flickered in the candlelight. Ex-votos, mementos of prayers answered and favors received, adorned the sandstone walls. The smell of beeswax and the cold damp of the subterranean refuge were intoxicatingly peaceful. Again, I knelt in prayer. I prayed for my family. For my vocation. Probably for help with my French, too.

It was the first visit I made to a saint's tomb. And it was a complete accident.

I was baptized in St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church in Martinsville, Indiana. It was my grandmother's parish, my mother's family church. It was the place where I received the grace of faith. And here I was, an undergraduate in France, receiving grace through St. Martin yet again.

The Basilica of St. Martin of Tours once was one of the greatest monuments in the Christian world. Today, all that remains of the ancient church is one tower. The current church was rebuilt after the French Revolution. The building hadn't just fallen into despair. Revolutionaries used the church as a stable, then subsequently ripped it stone from stone.

Then, to make sure it couldn't be rebuilt, they sold the stones. But it was rebuilt.

And there's a lesson in that. Jesus always has a way. Often that way is through His saints,



## GUEST COMMENTARY

FATHER PATRICK BRISCOE

who pursue us. The saints invite us to come to them, not for their own glory, but to know Christ.

St. Martin's story shows this clearly. A Roman soldier, he famously split his cloak in two and gave half to a beggar on the street one cold winter night. Christ later came to him in a dream, revealing that He had been the beggar. The inscriptions around his tomb bear eloquent testimony to the power of his intercession.

St. Martin's love of Christ is what made him a saint. And through the centuries, pilgrims can discover that love anew for themselves. Devotion to him is what inspired the reconstruction of the once-destroyed basilica. And through Martin's intercession, the faithful are still discovering new grace.

I know St. Martin was pursuing me that day, now 16 years ago. We are closer to the saints than we often think. And, pray God, may we one day be numbered among them.

Father Patrick Briscoe is Editor of Our Sunday Visitor.

# Leap of Faith: Taking Risks, Beginning Anew

**I**'ve been following the press around the most anticipated biography of the year: "Elon Musk" by Walter Isaacson. I'm interested in the controversial innovator as well as the author's writing process, which involved shadowing Musk for two years.

Isaacson, an acclaimed journalist, gained surprising access to Musk, sitting in on high-profile meetings and negotiations, studying the billionaire in real-time as he made headlines and profits and mistakes.

One of the author's central talking points, articulated again and again in the press circuit, resonated with me: We have become a nation with more referees and fewer risktakers. In our beginning, in our glory days, the scales were tilted toward risktakers. These are the people who founded countries and churches, companies and movements.

By contrast, Isaacson says, modern culture is largely defined by referees. These are the folks who sit on the sidelines and offer commentary. They criticize, cancel, and correct the risktakers – often from the comfort of their couch, through anonymous online profiles.

I've been reflecting on this claim through a Catholic lens. The prophets, the early Church fathers, the saints – it certainly holds true in religion.



## TWENTY SOMETHING

CHRISTINA CAPECCHI

The people with the strongest convictions didn't think twice about taking risks. They were compelled by an undeniable drive.

The Catholics I most admire today take risks for their families, spurred by their faith. They see the perils and pitfalls of modern secular life and they dare to build something different.

That's what Karen and Tully Wyatt did. By any measure, the Catholic parents of four had the perfect life. They had built their dream home on an idyllic cul-de-sac in a coveted school district.

But Karen, now 41, a realtor and Beautycounter executive director, felt a stirring in her heart. She yearned for rural life.

Most days, she dismissed it. "It seemed like a retirement dream – or maybe it was just a dream altogether," she said. "There were too many unknowns, so many moving pieces that seemed impossible to fall into place. But my heart

CAPECCI, page 13

# When We Follow Him, God Gives Us Strength in Our Trials



## THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MONSIGNOR OWEN F. CAMPION

### 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

**T**he Book of Malachi provides this weekend's first reading. The prophet's name, Malachi, reveals his role. In Hebrew it means "messenger of God." As a prophet, he brought God's message to the people.

Often in prophetic writings, as in this weekend's reading, the prophets wrote in a way in which God spoke in the first person. The prophets presented themselves merely as earthly instruments through whom God spoke, but the actual communicator was God.

Malachi did not write at a time of crisis for God's people,

as was the case for other prophets, or when life was filled with peril and destitution. Malachi, nevertheless, shared with all the prophets the opinion that when the people were sluggish in their religious observance, or when they altogether had rejected God, they risked their own well-being.

Lack of fervor, in the estimates of the prophets, was the height of ingratitude. By contrast, God was always merciful, always faithful to the Covenant.

This weekend's reading, again with God's words given in the first person, accuses the people of sin. God is the perfect and all-knowing judge. He is merciful, but God does not prevent people from sinning. It is their choice. He also does not interrupt the consequences of sinning.

St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians supplies the second reading. In this reading, Paul reassures the Christians of Thessalonica, to whom the letter is addressed, that he cares deeply for them and especially

for their spiritual vitality.

Essential to these feelings of care and love has been Paul's proclamation of the Gospel. He could do nothing greater for the Thessalonians than to share with them the saving story of Jesus.

For its third reading, the Church presents St. Matthew's Gospel. This passage is the last in a series of stories in which Jesus discusses, or argues, with the Pharisees or with others. As often elsewhere in the Gospels, Jesus denounces the Pharisees' hypocrisy.

Pharisees were learned in Jewish law and tradition, usually occupying central places in synagogues, regarded as persons very knowledgeable in religious matters, hence the Lord's reference to the "chair of Moses." Still, they were humans, subject to temptation. They were not perfect, and they knew it if they were intellectually honest.

Humans are always insecure and confused, burdened by their inadequacies. To compensate, to convince themselves or

others of superiority, humans often seek places of privilege or control over others.

Jesus tells the disciples to serve others. He calls them to be bold. He encourages them. With God's grace, nothing needs to be feared.

## Reflection

For weeks, in these biblical readings from St. Matthew's Gospel, Jesus has assumed the role of the final authority, of the ultimate judge. Jesus pronounces on the most supreme of all laws, the law of Moses.

For Matthew, Jesus judges as the Son of God, in a position to pronounce on anything and everything. Matthew depicts Jesus always presenting the wisest and most reasonable of judgments on matters that usually perplex others.

In this weekend's Gospel, Jesus directly addresses the most basic of human inadequacies: the deep fear within us all that we, even unwittingly, will make mistakes and pay the price.

Be strong, the Lord admonishes, there is nothing to fear. Be sincere. Follow the Lord in confidence.

Supporting this view are the readings from First Thessalonians and from Malachi. God is always with us in mercy, love, guidance, and protection. He sent to us the prophets, the apostles, and of course Jesus.

## READINGS

**Sunday:** Malachi 1:14b-2:2b, 8-10; Psalms 131:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 2:7b-9, 13; Matthew 23:1-12

**Monday:** Romans 11:29-36; Psalms 69:30-31, 33-34, 36

**Tuesday:** Romans 12:5-16b; Psalms 131:1cde, 2-3; Luke 14:15-24

**Wednesday:** Romans 13:8-10; Psalms 112:1b-2, 4-5, 9; Luke 14:25-33

**Thursday:** Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12; Psalms 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; John 2:13-22

**Friday:** Romans 15:14-21; Psalms 98:1-4; Luke 16:1-8

**Saturday:** Romans 16:3-9; Psalms 145:2-5, 10-11; Luke 16:9-15



# Managing the Growing Chorus of Opinions

As our children get older, the number of voiced opinions under our roof seems to be growing exponentially by the day.

Blessing 1 wants to listen to one particular kind of music; Blessing 2, another; Blessing 3 points. Blessing 1 wants to watch one particular TV show; Blessing 2, another; Blessing 3 screeches. Blessing 1 wants to play with a particular toy; Blessing 2 inevitably wants to play with the same toy; Blessing 3 tackles and attempts to eat said toy.

What we eat, when we go to the grocery store, which playground we visit, who gets to hold the phone during grandparent FaceTime, how long is bath time, how short is bedtime, which four snacks must be consumed in 30 minutes, how much dinner is enough dinner, how much dessert is too little dessert, how many crayons/Legos/marbles/playing cards need to be poured out on the floor in order to achieve a satisfactory playtime experience – in all things, there is a constant flurry of various points of view, all stemming less from a desire to achieve the common good and more from the individual will. (Parents sometimes included.)

“So. Many. Opinions.” I find myself frequently remarking to my husband. It’s wonderful, of course. We wouldn’t change a thing. But, boy, the dynamics of decision-making in our home have drastically changed over the past six years. And, inevitably, tears flow or tempers flare when opinions differ. In other words, we live in a community.

Managing this community – primarily the points at which authoritarian rule necessarily trumps spirited democracy –

is a constant balancing act, as every community leader knows. With this in mind, I went looking for some ground rules for our domestic church. And I ended up, interestingly enough, doing a deep dive into the Vatican’s proposed “attitudes for participating in the synodal process,” released in the September 2021 official handbook of the Synod of Bishops on synodality.

Thinking about them in the context of a domestic church was an interesting exercise. Several resulting ideas, based on principles from the handbook, are as follows:

- Take time for sharing, with honesty and courage at its roots. We should encourage our little ones to speak from their hearts, sharing their opinions and their reasons for those opinions. They should not be dismissed because they are little.

- Listen to one another with humble hearts. Once we invite our children to speak, we owe them the dignity of our undivided attention. Put phones down, remove AirPods, look our little ones in the eyes.

- Redefine winning. For example, we should try not to simply declare a “no” to snacks, but also a “yes” to an earlier dinner, mindful of small, hungry tummies.

- Be open to conversion and change. Perhaps our kids have a point that we parents haven’t considered. Maybe they have a suggestion that might enhance family life. Parents should seek to be open to a shift in our own, sometimes narrow or self-centered, thinking.

At the same time, as is true in the context of the universal Church, we know there are things on which our domestic churches cannot compromise.



## NO GREATER JOY

GRETCHEN CROWE

- Mass and prayer time are non-negotiables. Participation is required, and negative attitudes must be checked at the door.

- Following God’s commandments is also not negotiable: We must put God first, be respectful, not hurt others, not take what isn’t ours. We must tell the truth and speak the truth in love.

- We must love God with our whole hearts and think about our neighbors – or brothers and sisters – as much as we think about ourselves.

- Invoking the Holy Spirit for proper discernment within our family, we must say “no” to the temptation to follow individual desires and “yes,” always, to the will of God and the teachings of the Church.

Such is the way of holiness; such is the path to heaven, and we owe it to our children to show them the way.

When the synod for America ended in December 1997, Pope St. John Paul II remarked on how “my soul is opened through the action of grace toward God, who is the source of ‘every good endowment and every perfect gift’ (Jas 1:17).”

As we continue to grow and journey together, may our domestic churches – and our universal one, as well – confidently be able to say the same.

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

### CAPECCHI, from page 12

kept longing. We’d search Zillow and daydream.”

In the fall of 2020, they visited friends in a small Kansas town. “We loved every minute – small-town values and a slower pace of life,” Karen said.

She and Tully were convinced a smaller town would serve them well. Their hunt began around the same time they began home schooling. Something new felt possible.

They found a Catholic hybrid school on a 100-acre farm and fell in love.

“Our oldest was 11, and if we wanted her to feel like she grew up in the country, we needed to make the move soon,” Karen said.

The Wyatts now live on

52 sprawling acres set down a winding country road – complete with cows, chickens, a donkey, a horse, and a big, fenced-in garden. Their ranch is an hour from downtown Dallas.

“Our new life feels worlds away, a turn-back-time lifestyle mostly spent outdoors with very little screentime,” said Karen, a member of St. William Catholic Church in Greenville, Texas. “Days pass slower. We spend hours on the porch watching the most beautiful orange sunsets.

Another blessing is the satisfaction we’ve found in physical labor – working in the garden with our hands, feeding our chickens and cattle, building fences and chicken coops. Our children approach their chores with a heart of joy rather than obligation.”

Karen shares her country life on Instagram (@thewyattfarm) and urges others to consider a similar move – even on a small patch of land – to embrace a slower life steeped in Catholic values.

“We’ve learned that, when you feel peace to follow the Lord’s plan, He provides for every need,” she said. “Placing our lives under His direction and literally taking a leap of faith was the best feeling we’ve known. The rewards have been tenfold. Our marriage, our children, our daily life all reflect His hand guiding us toward goodness.”

Christina Capecci is a Freelance Writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota.

## SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for November 5, 2023

Matthew 23:1-12

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A: A teaching about true humility. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

SAID	CROWDS	DISCIPLES
MOSES	PRACTICE	TIE UP
HEAVY	LIFT A FINGER	MOVE
BE SEEN	HONOR	BANQUETS
SEATS	RABBI	ONE TEACHER
ON EARTH	FATHER	HEAVEN
GREATEST	SERVANT	EXALTS

## NO HONOR

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

## HUBERT

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Hubert was a married courtier who became a priest after his wife died. According to legend, he was called to serve God while hunting; he reportedly saw a crucifix between a stag’s horns and heard a voice say, “Unless you turn to the Lord, Hubert, you shall fall into hell.” He was ordained by St. Lambert, bishop of Maastricht in the Netherlands, and succeeded the murdered Lambert. After moving the see to Liege in Belgium, he served for 20 years, ending idol worship, converting many, and tirelessly preaching Christ. He died peacefully while traveling to dedicate a church; this patron saint of hunters and dogs is also invoked against rabies.





Joshua Schipper

## Unique Nativity Depictions on Display at Saint Francis

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

The University of Saint Francis will host an exhibition featuring various depictions of the Nativity of Jesus from Saturday, November 4, through Wednesday, December 20, at the Mimi and Ian Rolland Art and Visual Communication Center. The exhibit will celebrate the university's namesake, who, eight centuries ago this year, staged the first Nativity scene.

The collection of pieces on display came together after reaching out to around 30 regional artists who were asked to interpret the Nativity and take whatever approach they wanted to portray it, ranging from literal depictions to the very abstract. Among the pieces

that will be on display are a collection of old Christmas cards depicting the Nativity and posters designed by art students.

One piece, depicting the Canadian Christmas Carol, is particularly unique because the artist incorporated the Algonquin tribe into the Nativity scene.

Justin Johnson, Gallery Director, said that the motivation was not to assemble an exhibition of assimilated, repetitive pieces, but rather to allow artists to "reflect on their own faith and their own approach to the subject."

The gallery opens with a public reception on November 4 at 6 p.m. and will also be featured during the university's Holiday Art Bazaar on Saturday, December 2. For up-to-date gallery times and availability, visit [calendar.sf.edu](http://calendar.sf.edu).

## Knights Host Regional Soccer Challenge



Provided by Ryan Grill

Knights of Columbus Councils 5521 and 8617 hosted the Regional Soccer Challenge on Saturday, October 7, at Queen of Peace Church in Mishawaka. Nine students qualified to compete at the State Finals Soccer Challenge Championship in Noblesville. From left are Nathan Rhorer, Lauren Underwood, Ryan Grill, Aryana Grill, Tyler Graham, Lucy Warner, Joe Curylo, Julio Deleon, Elizabeth Curylo, Hunter Popenfoose, Beretta Opliger, and Mauricio Nuevez.

## Pioneers Give Back to the Community

Students at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School stand in front of boxes of canned goods collected for St. Mary's Soup Kitchen. In the span of two weeks in mid-October, students in preschool through eighth grade collected 715 cans of food.



Provided by St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School

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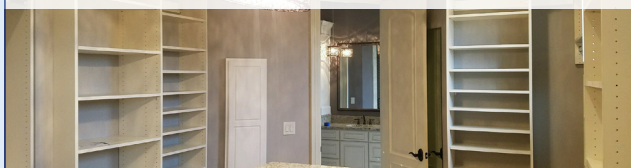
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# WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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.

## Veteran's BBQ Lunch

**FORT WAYNE** – A free lunch to thank all veterans will be held at St. Jude Church, 2130 Pemberton Ave., on Thursday, November 9, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the basement. Dine in or carryout. Hotdogs, hamburgers, pulled pork, sides, and desserts will be provided. Contact Kris Church at 260-484-6609 or [kchurch@stjudefw.org](mailto:kchurch@stjudefw.org) for information.

## Bishop Luers High School Open House 2023

**FORT WAYNE** – Bishop Luers High School, 333 E. Paulding

Rd., will host an open house for prospective students/parents on Thursday, November 9, from 6-8 p.m. All grade levels are welcome to tour the school, meet teachers and coaches, and learn more about programs offered at Bishop Luers. Contact Jenny Andorfer at 260-456-1261 or [jandorfer@bishopluer.org](mailto:jandorfer@bishopluer.org) for information.

## St. John Bosco Annual Bazaar

**CHURUBUSCO** – St. John Bosco Parish, 216 N. Main St., will host a bazaar on Friday, November 10, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday,

November 11, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Freshly baked cinnamon rolls will be offered from morning to afternoon. Stay and enjoy a lunch of delicious homemade soup, sandwich, and chips served all afternoon. Handmade crafts, homemade baked goods and candy, and the famous Hand Rolled Noodles will be offered for sale, as well as yard art, birdhouses, jewelry, millenary items, Christmas tree ornaments, and so much more! There will also be a raffle for a handmade quilt or one of several fine prizes.

## REST IN PEACE

### Fort Wayne

Loretta Richter, 92,  
St. Charles Borromeo

Joseph Brown, 65,  
St. Vincent de Paul

### Granger

Mary Ann Barson, 84,  
St. Pius X

John Lyon, 91,  
St. Pius X

### Monroeville

Gertrude Brames, 85,  
St. Rose of Lima

### Mishawaka

James Barnhart, 69,  
St. Joseph

Frances Hirl, 83,  
St. Joseph

Elizabeth Rill, 104,  
St. Joseph

John Skevington, 81,  
St. Joseph

### South Bend

Jane Volk, 70,  
Cathedral of St.  
Matthew

Loretta Weber, 85,  
Cathedral of St.  
Matthew

Lorraine Nowak, 95,  
Holy Family

Carl Szymanski, 84,  
Holy Family

Hattie Chambliss, 87,  
St. Augustine

Joe Sniadecki, 92,  
St. John the Baptist

## St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel Annual Holiday Craft Show

**FORT WAYNE** – St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel will have a holiday craft show on Saturday, November 11, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the school, 11521 US 27 South. Come and enjoy 85 booths of crafters. Great place to go for early holiday shopping.

## Little Flower Holy Hour for Vocations

**FORT WAYNE** – The Little Flower Holy Hour is sponsored by the Vocation Office. This monthly event is from 7-8 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month, September-May, at the St. Mother Theodore Guerin Chapel next to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

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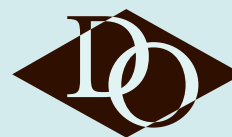
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**ALL-SCHOOLS, from page 1**

the Baptist, Father Gurtner joked, "In Fort Wayne, I asked St. John the Baptist [how the saint died], and he said, 'Cut off his head,' and I said, 'What does that mean?' and he says, 'That he's dead.'"

After laughter from the audience died down, Father Gurtner went on to say, "But what St. John the Baptist shows us is that to be faithful to God, to preach the Gospel, sometimes is very hard [and] has hard consequences for us. And St. John the Baptist was still willing to do what God was asking of him."

Lora Mulstay, a fourth-grade teacher at Queen of Peace Catholic School in Mishawaka, does a lot of work to prepare the fourth graders for their big day. Fourth graders research their saint for weeks before the All-Schools Mass, working both at school and at home with parents.

Mulstay has attended several All-Schools Masses, and the tradition holds a special place in her heart. "I love the All-Schools Mass," she said. "I think it's wonderful that all of the students and teachers on this side of the diocese can get together to celebrate Mass. Even in such a big arena, it still feels intimate and special."

It's not only the fourth graders who have roles at the All-Schools Mass. High school students serve as cantors, altar servers, lectors, and have the opportunity to participate in a student choir, band, or handbell choir.

At the end of the Mass, Daniel Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive Officer of Quality Dining and a sponsor of the All-Schools Masses, led the auditorium in offering thanks to everyone who made the Mass – and Catholic education – possible: ushers, teachers, parents, priests. Fitzpatrick then led the crowd in praying a Hail Mary for Bishop Rhoades. Fitzpatrick also encouraged the students present. "You are the future of our Church," he told them.

Father Gurtner also left the students with something to think about as All Saints' Day approached. "I want you to think about why you chose the saint you did," he said at the end of his homily. "And I want you to think about one thing about that saint that you say to yourself and to God, 'I want to be more like that.' More patient, more faithful to Jesus, more love for the poor, whatever it might be. Rejoice today in the saints!"



Photos by Kasia Balsbaugh

**Fourth-grade students from St. Adalbert Catholic School, dressed as their favorite saints, wait to be dismissed after the All-Schools Mass on Tuesday, October 24.**



**Father Mark Gurtner, Vicar General of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, celebrates the All-Schools Mass with other priests from the diocese on Tuesday, October 24.**

**The student choir, band, and handbell choir perform during the offertory at the All-Schools Mass in South Bend on Tuesday, October 24.**

